

Episode 3 - Amanda

Music and Wellbeing

Singing, humming and tapping to a tune can help young children to understand and express their emotions. This in turn helps children to self-regulate and communicate their feelings.



Move to the music

Children love to move! Encourage your child to bounce along to a happy melody, or sway with a slower song. They can use their arms or their whole bodies. Along with the health benefits of moving our bodies, this can help your child to hear the pace, rhythm and emotion of a song.

Challenge: Ask your child to 'move like the music', matching the tempo and mood of the song.

Find everyday opportunities to sing

- Sing with your child as often as you can. Turn household chores or an everyday occurrence, such as bath time or tidying toys away, into a sing along. You can use regular nursery rhymes, favourite songs, or make up your own. Try singing the names of the items you are using to the tune of 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star'.
- Many of us sing lullabies or play calming songs for our children at bedtime. Try doing the opposite in the morning! Play or sing an upbeat song when you wake your little one. This can energise them and make them feel excited for the day ahead.
- Ask your child's Key Person what songs they sing at nursery, so you can play your child's favourite tune at home.

Use an instrument

It doesn't *have* to be a professional instrument – though it absolutely can be. Whether it's a piano, a drum kit or banging on pots and pans, using an instrument can help your child to connect with the music in a new way. Ask your little one how a certain song makes them feel, or watch how they react to songs from different genres. Do they bang louder when a song is faster? Do they make softer noises to classical music?

Make a mood playlist

Certain songs evoke emotions or help us to recall memories. Build a playlist of songs for different moods, so you've got a go-to soundtrack for certain activities.

- Try creating a playlist for these moods or times:
 - Happy/energetic
 - Sad/reflective
 - Calming/sleepy
- You can ask older children to help build the playlist according to their favourite songs.
- Talk to your child about the songs. How do they make them feel? What do they notice about the song? Is it loud or quiet? What else does it sound like?