MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Why music and movement are important:

Music helps children learn to do new things with their bodies, they learn that movement can communicate messages and represent actions. Most young children are very comfortable with movement, singing, and chanting. These activities are social activities that help children feel a part of the group. Music can help set the mood for the day. Quiet, soothing music helps children stay calm, marching music helps children become more active and gets them moving. Music includes both producing and listening to music. Examples of producing include, singing existing songs, chants, or nursery rhymes, making up new songs, making sounds with different musical instruments and toys. Movement includes dancing, marching or exercising to music or rhythms or acting out content of songs, rhymes, or chants with large muscle body action.

What Children Learn:

• How to participate in a group
• To express myself
• “Auditory discrimination” recognizing differences in sounds
• Listening skills
• Concepts of fast, slow, loud, and soft
• Balance and coordination
• Principles of music and rhythm
• Memory skills and sequencing
• Cooperation and social skills
• Enhance self-concept and identification with my culture and other cultures by sharing familiar songs and dances
• Increase awareness of body movements
• Learn new vocabulary
• Develop large motor skills

What materials should be available:

• Easy to operate tape recorders/CD player and earphones
• A variety of music; fast, slow, soothing, lively, folk, classical, country, jazz, rock, ragtime, and representation of different cultures
• A variety of instruments; drums, rhythm sticks, kazoos, tambourines, bells, maracas, and representation of different cultures
• Props to use while listening to music; scarves and ribbons

ECERS

In order to achieve a score of 5 or above in music and movement, enough musical instruments for at least half of the children to use at once plus some music (at least three different types) to listen to needs to be accessible for use. Music activities that extend children’s understanding of music are offered occasionally (ex. Guest musician) and creativity is encouraged with music activities (individual dance encouraged). Music must be available as both a free choice and a group activity daily.
When you comment on or ask children about their work, you are conveying the following to them:

- I am aware of what you are doing
- I am interested in your efforts and therefore in you
- I will help you look closely at your own work
- I am aware of your growing confidence

All of these interactions are very important in helping children develop self-confidence and self-esteem.

How to expand on music and movement through conversation:

- Ask open-ended questions (that require children to think and respond): “Have you ever heard that before?” “What would happen if...?” “Tell me about what you are doing?” “Are you making music that is loud or soft?” “Do you think we could make up a new song for clean up time?”
- Expand vocabulary: tempo (fast/slow), rhythm, instrument, movement, pitch (high/low), volume (loud/soft), classical music, bluegrass music, tambourine, xylophone
- Ask questions that encourage children to use information: “Can you do this?” (describe a position). When you play music during art, have the children “draw to the music” then ask “What happened to your painting when the music got faster?” “How are you moving your hands?” “Can you do that again?”
- Reinforce music and movement using descriptive comments: “I like how your movements are matching the tempo of the song.” “Look how everyone is moving his or her scarves the same way to go along with the music.” “You are all listening to the directions of the song so well, and then doing the movements while watching out for your neighbors, you are cooperating!”