



MUSIC EDUCATION ADVOCACY KIT

TALKING ABOUT MUSIC EDUCATION



Feel free to use any or all of these quotes to help you in advocating for music in your area.

'I would teach children music, physics and philosophy; but more importantly music; for in the patterns of music and all the arts, are the keys to learning.'

Plato

The vast majority (85%) of Australians agree that "the arts should be an important part of the education of every Australian kid"

Saachi and Saachi Australians and the Arts, Australia Council, Australia

In Australia, 36% of households contain at least one person who now plays a musical instrument. This equates to a rough estimate of 4 million people of all ages (5+ yrs) who play.

Australian Attitudes to Music, Nexus Research, 2001

Almost two-thirds of the population (64%) would completely agree that music is an activity that a child can enjoy all their life. Furthermore, music was viewed as being able to develop a child's creativity (58%) and that a school band was a good way of developing such skills (56%).

Australian Attitudes to Music, Nexus Research, 2001

The majority of people (63%) start playing a musical instrument when they are aged 5-11 yrs.

Australian Attitudes to Music, Nexus Research, 2001

'The arts and humanities help to lay the groundwork for accomplishment. We have seen it in our schools, where test scores are up and drop-out rates are down as a result of arts education.'

Bill Clinton, former US President

'Superior skills are needed to survive competitively in the global context. Acquiring them has to begin as early as possible in a child's education, and we see that it comes through arts education . . . Ashland support arts education-not only to build better kids but to build a better workforce.'

*Dan Lacy, Vice-president, Ashland Inc.
Making the Case for Arts Education, Ontario Arts Council*



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Australian teachers and students talk about what music in school means to them

'I think it's a deeper way [of knowing]. You can get a certain experience from playing by yourself, but it's nothing to what you get in a small ensemble -an enormous experience. In a sixty-piece ensemble whose souls are intertwined, making a sound, my God, that's a pretty big thing. It's something out of this world, when you feel like you're going to burst into tears. It's that feeling, and you can't create that, you can only create the situation that makes it possible.'

Jane, conductor of a wind ensemble, describing her understanding of the value of ensemble playing to students.

'I think it is . . . actually getting to know them, through the music, and how they play and so on, and what they like to play. It sort of shows you a different side to people as well.'

Dennis: teacher

'Oh that was good, [creative projects]. I liked that. I remember doing something with James in a keyboard group and I still remember that it was good because we were [creating it] as we were going along. It was better-it was you making it, and it sounded good.'

Margaret, a sixteen-year-old piano player and composer, describing her experiences.

'I loved the creative activities. I always got excited when we were given a task to do that was creative. I remember once we were to make an answering machine jingle. That was one of my first experiences of making music for a purpose and that was really good fun. I love making my own music. I was glad that was part of the music syllabus.'

Edward, a seventeen-year-old guitarist and clarinet player, describing the opportunity for creative work in the classroom.

Linda: 'I was four years old, and it was just before my birthday And I still remember the picture of me sitting in front of the TV and there was a Philharmonic orchestra or something with a solo violinist and I remember exactly when I first went 'ohhh'. I don't remember anything else about being four except just this vision of a violin player getting a standing ovation from so many people, and sounding so good. And I just went [loudly] 'Mum I want a violin, now.' And she had never seen me so instantly interested in something and she said 'Oh my God better get her a violin now. So, I got one for my birthday. And I loved just the whole thing from there, from this one vision.'

Interviewer: 'So you heard really nice playing? What attracted you about the playing, was it the whole thing?'

Linda: 'Just the whole concept of so many people being so interested in something that you had a talent for. And just being able to stand up in front of so many people and saying look, this is what I'm good at. '

Early memories of what attracted a student to music and drove her to be a musician.

'To a certain extent, the way I think and often the way I speak is often about being able to talk about the music, [it] gives you skills, and social skills. Learning how to express [your self]-you can just play something that's hard to describe verbally . . . it's always a good thing to do, so it's helped me. And yeah a lot of things I say, a lot of adjectives, . . . I'll think, ahh, that's a music term. '

Sixteen-year-old-drummer Jack discussed how his experiences with music have affected his ways of thinking.



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'It kind of makes me think in different areas . . . I think listening to music has a big effect on the way I think.'

Brian taking about music

'I'm into it because it gives me inspiration and it has meaning.'

Margaret

'I don't think anything comes near to it, I really don't. Nothing else in your school life, even academic achievement.'

Jessica talking about what music means to her at school.

What Australian school principals say about the value of the music program in their schools

'In respect to the music program here at Huonville, and to a great extent in the Huon Valley, we strongly value music as an essential part of the education of primary students. Not only do they learn music skills and appreciation, instruments and voice, the curriculum involves many areas of the Essential Learnings including thinking, communicating, creating preferred futures, building strong citizens, maintaining well being and valuing diversity.'

Great music curriculums depend on committed, passionate teachers who in turn nurture self-confident, skilled, proud young students, a simple recipe really!'

*Rob Banfield
Principal
Huonville Primary School*

'I see music as an integral and extremely valuable part of our school educational program. For many high school students, it is the one area in which they can really excel. I could cite several instances where music and the music teacher have made the difference between a student remaining at school and gaining success or dropping out and being reduced to failure. For primary students, not only does a good music program give them the opportunity to experience another medium, I also believe that there is a direct link between rhythm and the ability to learn and memorise for many students. A good music program which is tuned in to the needs of students not only forms close links between school and life for many students, but it also develops close links with parents and our wider community. Schools can't exist without one.'

*John Marshall
Principal
St Helens District High School*





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'Being one of the multiple intelligences, music makes an important contribution in providing a balanced education. Music promotes the acquisition and development of many skills. It enhances hand/eye co-ordination, fine and gross motor skills, SELF CONFIDENCE, CONCENTRATION and memory. Music also provides rich opportunities for purposeful interaction with others. As an integrated part of the curriculum, music aids the development of literacy and numeracy skills. There is a strong body of research which indicates children who are exposed to a rich related arts experience perform better in other areas of their academic pursuits. Some children who have difficulty in other subjects at school can shine in music, thus building self esteem and a positive attitude to their learning.'

*Peter Marmion
Principal
Lansdowne Crescent Primary School*

'The music program is a crucial part of our school. By giving importance to the Arts and show-casing it both publicly and privately, it provides a school with a soul. It is also an important part of the extra curricula program and provides another avenue for boys to focus their energies. A number of boys come to us because of the music program.'

*Ian Morgan
Principal
New Town High School for boys*

'Our program and experiences demonstrate clearly the importance of the arts and music in particular as a critical component in a child's education and overall development.'

As well as the obvious and well documented reasons relating to social, intellectual, aesthetic, spiritual and emotional etc well-being of young people music in our School has contributed significantly to continuation of history and tradition, a sense of community and belonging within and across class and grade groups, houses, the performing arts and the whole school. It is central to celebration and the concept of performance lends itself perfectly to the new curriculum developments. As well as an opportunity for performance in its own right, music and the associated arts becomes a vehicle through which many of the essential learnings can be addressed-and this is already indicated at our School in the ways in which students engage in all the 'real work'/ problem solving/ project based matters. '

*Judy Bennett
Principal
Ogilvie High School for girls*

With thanks to all involved in providing and collating quotes for this site.

During 2004 we will include pictures on this module for use with quotes and other advocacy material.

