



Music Education Boosts More Than Test Scores

School is much more than a place where students gather to learn. For children, school is their first opportunity for social development and introduction to people outside of their family unit. Lessons learned in school go beyond mathematics and language arts. Students learn to cultivate individual interests and find other people who share their interests. Music is one of the ways like-minded children come together.

When many people talk about the benefits of music education, they're quick to point out all of the quantitative and measurable results of that music education.

For instance, numerous studies have shown the positive impact music programs can have on children in other areas of study.

Dr. Laurel Trainor, a professor of psychology, neuroscience and behavior at McMaster University, has said that young children who take music lessons show different brain development and improved memory com-

pared to children who do not receive musical training. Stanford University researchers have found that musical training improves how the brain processes the spoken word, a finding that researchers say could lead

school perform significantly better in mathematics by grade 12 than those who do not participate in music programs.

There are many reasons why music education can help to make a child a better

student, but there also are other benefits that go beyond the classroom environment. Being involved in music also is a social endeavor, and music education can set the course for lifelong friends and help create social groups that last through school and beyond.

Music education breeds familiarity during a school career, when going from class to class or from school to school every year can be nerve-racking and unfamiliar. Walking inside of a band room, whether in elementary school or high school, can create a sense of belonging. It is also a place where students not involved in sports or other activities can



Marching band and chorus can be enjoyable extracurricular activities for students who do not gravitate toward sports or academic clubs.

to improving the reading ability of children who have dyslexia and other reading problems. Furthermore, in an analysis of data on more than 25,000 secondary school students, researchers at the United States Department of Education found that students who report consistent involvement in instrumental music during middle school and high

gather.

Children who move a lot due to a parent's work may find that joining the marching band or participation in the choir is the one portion of school that is familiar no matter where they attend school. While neighbor-

hoods may change and teachers differ from school to school, music can be a reliable constant.

While not every child will go on to be the next, great musical sensation, thanks to music education at school, he or she will have learned

lessons in working as a team and other social benefits that will help in all areas of life.



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