



**ANGELA RUSS-AYON**  
**BODY SHAKES & BRAIN WAVES**

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**WHY MUSIC?**

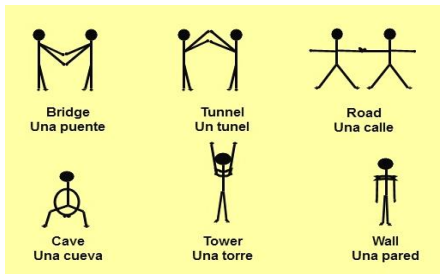
Music prompts greater connectivity between the brain's **left and right hemisphere** and between the areas responsible for **emotion and memory**, than does almost any other stimulus.

**MOVEMENT** and **RHYTHM STIMULATE** the **FRONTAL LOBES** and enrich **LANGUAGE** and **MOTOR** development.

**WARM-UP THE BODY - TEMPO & TONE**

Play music and use a **tone of voice** that is **upbeat** to get children energized, at a **mid-tempo** to move but not lose them, and play music at the **resting heart rate** to calm them down. Use a voice that is high-pitched to get children active - and low-pitched to settle them down.

"Build a Bridge" 🎵 *Smart Moves 1 & Smart Moves 2* CDs  
 To: "If You're Happy & You Know It"



Expand on this well-known melody to build shapes, mimic an animal or form of transportation, or introduce other concepts "Spend a penny (1 finger), spend a nickel (5 fingers), spend a dime (10 fingers)!"

🎵 *Math Music & Motion* CD

**HOW CAN WE BUILD BRAIN PATHWAYS?**

- Physical and verbal interaction with caregivers
- Sensory-motor activities (indoors and outdoors)
- Physical and/or verbal responses to instruction
- Moving to music with lyrics that provide prompts
- Crossing the midlines when we move

Whenever we **cross the mid-lines** of the body, the two hemispheres of the brain communicate across the **Corpus Callosum**. **Neurons** and **synapses** are firing and attempting to connect!

- ▶ Left / Right
- ▶ Top / Bottom
- ▶ Back / Front

The more connections made in the brain, especially before the age of 7, the faster we are apt to learn, and the more information we are likely to retain.

MEMORY AND LEARNING OCCUR WHEN THE NEURONS AND SYNAPSES IN THE BRAIN REORGANIZE AND STRENGTHEN THEMSELVES THROUGH REPEATED USAGE.

The **left to right tracking ability** is necessary for the brain to be ready to read and write effectively. Also, moving as directed can help children visualize where they are in the world - learn the concept of beginning, middle, and end - understand different sizes and shapes - and map shapes and symbols.

"Children should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time."  
 NASPE 2002 - Nat'l Ed. for Sport and Phys. Ed. [www.aahperd.org](http://www.aahperd.org)

**VESTIBULAR SYSTEM:** The vestibular system is a sensory system that is responsible for providing our brain with information about motion, head position, and spatial orientation for balancing and stabilizing our head and body during movement. Activities that help develop the vestibular system are swinging, rocking/rocking horse, riding a scooter board, spinning on a swivel chair, hammocks, hanging upside down, etc.

**TRANSITION CHILDREN USING BRAIN BREAKS:** When you move children from the table to the carpet, or from the carpet into a line, or bring them in from outside, or redirect them from reading to writing, give them a simple physical activity to do as they make their transition.



**PROPS & EQUIPMENT:** Introduce scarves, streamers, balls, ropes/laces, instruments, or child-safe **manipulatives** into everyday activities. Props help develop ocular control skills and can bring exciting new **visual** and **physical aspects** to any music & movement activity. Even our bodies can be a prop or an instrument. Ask the children to make letters & shapes (with hands, bodies, laces, chalk, shadows), or tap out rhythms by patting their laps, clapping, or tapping their feet.

**ENHANCING DIRECTIONALITY:** Consciously using **prepositions** and **opposites** when directing children on where and how to move expands their vocabulary and helps them communicate more effectively. Abstract concepts, like opposites, are difficult to explain but become more concrete when demonstrated using motion. Positional words also assist children when they begin to develop their writing skills. "Belly on top. Belly below. Three has nowhere else to go." 🎵 *Smart Songs 1* CD

**CLAPPING GAMES:** Age-appropriate clapping games can engage brain circuitry, boost cognition, promote pattern extension, relieve boredom, and have other wonderful benefits for ALL AGES! There are many clapping games and chants. Choreograph your own variation or make up a new game altogether.

"HIGH, LOW, PICCOLO" 🎵 *Clapping Games and Chants* CD  
 My name is high, low, Piccolo - Piccolo, high, low - high, low, Piccolo - Piccolo, "Hello!"

**MUSIC & MEMORY:** We kick start the memory process by creating memorable **episodes** and **novel** experiences that children will take home, repeat it, and teach to someone else. Children tend to remember more in a comfortable environment, and when they can... control their moods, read other people, react to emotions appropriately, explain their own thoughts, and justify their actions.

- COGNITIVE FUNCTION:** A variety of habits improve cognitive function:
- New and novel experiences
  - Making social connections
  - Meditation
  - Physical Activity
  - Getting enough sleep
  - Brain Games
  - Reducing chronic stress
  - Visualizing fictional stories

**SIMPLE WAYS TO KEEP MOVING**

- Chalk & Rope Activities: shapes, numbers, letters, patterns, pathways
- **Locomotor Moves:** walk, run, jump, hop, crawl, march, gallop, climb
- **Non-locomotor Moves:** bend, stretch, lift, rise, twist, flex, shake, push
- Cut-outs: foam/paper/fabric shapes, colors, numbers, action words
- Equipment: to pass, roll, bat, bounce, toss, catch, kick
- Line up: motor skills, animal acts, balance beanbag, "1,2,3 FREEZE"
- Interpret story content: "Very Hungry Caterpillar" - Line up and be a caterpillar, ball up into a chrysalis, uncurl, fly like a butterfly
- Animal Mimicry / Puppetry: foam/paper/fabric and other materials
- Dancing: Free dance, dance freeze, choreograph a dance
- Partnering games: Clapping, circle dances, parachute play, jump rope, follow the leader
- Moving along **pathways:** straight, curved, zigzag, waves, squiggles

**Thank you for listening, and welcome to the CLUB!**