

2. The significance of singing

Song is an important relational tool for babies and toddlers, particularly in the pre-verbal stage. It promotes connection, closeness, communication and confidence.

“Singing can facilitate intimacy; supports language development; can be a means to improve relationships with families; and enhances the wellbeing of practitioners during their working day”

(Powell et al, 2013)



Look at the photo. Think about when, how and why you use song.



The significance of singing

What the research tells us

Song is a spectrum ranging from spontaneous melodic vocalisations and “motherese” to structured songs.

- Babies enjoy song! Educators report that singing leads to qualitatively different interactions than talk and a shared sense of joy. Babies respond to singing with heightened engagement, demonstrated through eye contact, smiles and movements ^(1,2,3).
- Whilst singing is often used as a functional tool to distract, calm, soothe or manage, it also offers an important means of building emotional closeness and connection for babies ⁽¹⁾.

- Singing with others supports musical development by providing opportunities for turn taking and shared rhythm. Video analysis of babies and toddlers at home found a sense of playfulness, shared musical culture, choice and repetition were important in encouraging musical engagement ⁽⁴⁾.

Find out more:

1. Powell et al. (2013) 2. Powell & Gooch (2015),
3. Young et al. (2022), 4. Voyajolu (2021)

Download our pamphlet,
Singing with young children
on the Froebel Trust website.



Think about how you could integrate spontaneous singing, lullabies, rhythmic play, and face-to-face sound imitation throughout the day.

