

CHILD-INITIATED  
MUSICAL PLAY...

**ChIMP  
Champs**

SPREAD THE  
WORD!

## ChIMP Champs Training at The Oaks Children's Centre, Holmleigh Road, Gloucester GL4 0RN

23rd Jan 2012 3.30-5.30pm



ChIMP Champs = Child Initiated  
Musical Play Champions

ChIMP Champs seeks to gain a balance of high quality adult-led and child-initiated music in early years settings.

Circle time singing, songs for washing hands or lining up and guided instrument play are all excellent activities and should quite rightly be woven into a child's day. These are generally adult-led activities.

Spontaneous vocalisations or musical sounds generated by a child engaged in play can be overlooked but these behaviours, best revealed through video and reflective practice, provide insights into a child's musical preferences (rhythm, song, group or solitary music). These activities are child-led.

A balance between child-led and adult led musical activities is a good basis for excellent music in your setting.

The team

Alison Harmer is an early years musician and was involved with the Music Mushrooms projects.

Liz Terry is a South West SingUp coordinator and is a champion of singing and vocal health.

Rose Smith is a singer/songwriter who works in early years music in the North of the county.

What is going well musically at your setting?  
What stops your setting being even more musical?  
What shall we do now?

We think you're great. You've come to a training event in your own time because you know that music is good for the children you care for.

You're already doing lots of excellent work with a good song collection which is regularly sung and a number of staff who have confident voices. How can you make your music provision even better? Here are some suggestions. We think you'll have even more great ideas and if you're happy to share them, we can improve the lives of many children.

Talk to us about what gets in the way of making your setting musical - is it

lack of confidence, ideas, time? Let's work together to sort this out!

How's your musical instrument collection? Have you a good selection of tuned and untuned musical instruments? Have you considered wrapping soft cloth neatly around beaters to calm the impact of a loud drum/chime bar?

How's your CD/MP3 collection? Is there music that YOU like there so that you can share your enthusiasm with the children? Does your collection span the globe to include many genres of music.

Can you record music? Can you email a recorded child's improvised song to their carer?

Often, the complaint is that musical instruments are noisy and disturb other play. Many settings place instruments outside to cope with this problem. Another answer is to build a den.

Alison found that musical play in a den lasted longer, was contained and was more intently exploratory.



**Singing Games** are a wonderful all inclusive activity that makes singing and music fun and accessible. The games are compelling to sing, engages children's imaginations and gives children an open invitation to enter into role play and to take a turn at singing. They have a steady pulse (beat);the ability to feel a rhythm is crucial to learning the pattern of language and can therefore improve children's speech ,reading and writing skills.

### **Doggy doggy where's your bone?**

*Everyone calls:* Doggy doggy where's your bone? (GG,EE,GG,E) when singing this line the child who has been chosen to 'steal' the dog's bone steals it very quietly!  
Bone can be a scarf, bean bag etc

*Doggy calls with eyes still closed:* Someone stole it from my home.(GG,EE,GG,E)

*Everyone calls:* Who stole the bone? (G,E,A,G,E)

*Whoever has hidden it says in strange voice:* I stole your bone. (G,E,A,G,E)

Doggy guesses (3 goes and if doesn't guess right then the child who has stolen it owns up!)

Child who stole the bone gets to be doggy in the middle.



### **The King Is In The Castle**

Standing or sitting in a circle. Choose a king to stand in the middle- can wear a crown and a cloak if you have them! All sing:

The **king** is in the castle **bow down** low x 2

**Bow down** low, **bow down** low

The **king** is the castle, **bow down** low

The king chooses a queen so then interchange the words king with queen,bow with curtsy.

Then the queen chooses a prince...and so on. Here are few character ideas to keep bringing in (children choosing who will play the roles in the middle so growing in number), princess, cook (stir the dough), soldier (marching to and fro), servant (watch her sew), giant (Ho ho ho), ghost (woooohh)etc. Children will also have ideas to rhyme with'oh' sound!

**Apple Tree, Jump Jim Joe and The Tree in Wood - see [www.singup.org](http://www.singup.org)**

Sing Up wants to enable more and more children to enjoy an unbroken tradition of singing from their earliest years. The website has songs suitable for Early Years children and it is all still FREE. Singing is recognised as an excellent medium for development across all six areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Need more information about why music works? [www.youthmusic.org](http://www.youthmusic.org) and download the Early Years Evidence Review by Douglas Lonie

### **Good Books**

Singing Games & Rhymes for Early Years - Lucinda Geoghan

'Play songs' - Sandra Kerr and Leon Rosselson

3 Singing Pigs, Bobby Shaftoe - Sue Nicholls. .

Sounds Like Playing-Marjorie Ouvry.

Music 3-5 - Susan Young

[www.youthmusic.org.uk](http://www.youthmusic.org.uk)

<http://www.teachingmusic.org.uk/r/NancyEvans>

[www.singup.org](http://www.singup.org)

### **Good Sites**

This observation path is adapted from the Youth Music website



ChIMP happens in the right environment - just listen!

Here are some pointers to help you support it

What's going on?  
How did it start?  
Which child/ren are you going to focus on?



How are the children relating to each other, the environment, the adults?  
What excites them?  
What are they curious about?  
What are they scared/courageous about/ "touching the edge" on?  
What boundaries are they meeting with?  
Can you pick up on narrative elements?

Are the children taking on characters?  
What expressive languages are the children using? This could be facial expressions, drawings, song, vocalisations, dance...



Any themes that you can pick up on and expand?

Through voice play, movement and dance, made-up songs, instrumental play, traditional songs or pop songs?

How to be present AND get out of the

This is based on Alison's musical play research and Playwork theory by Sturrock and Else.

**Play maintenance.** Supplying the right instruments and the right environment and getting out of the way.

**Simple involvement.** Finding and supplying the beater that sounds better on the xylophone the child is using. Turning off the CD player playing music in the background.

**Medial intervention.** Being close and responding gesturally or facially in an affirmative way to the musical play, adjusting the immediate environment to make sure it isn't inhibiting play and returning to play maintenance. Echoing back a vocalisation.

**Complex intervention.** Engaging the child in musical conversations, maybe with an additional pair of beaters, taking turns on an instrument but only if the child shows you through gesture, voice or facial expression that this is welcome. Mimicking and extending short passages of the child's musical play, being always attentive to the child's acceptance of adult contribution and returning to play maintenance if necessary.