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Music Play



Music is a powerful way to connect students, calm them, and help them express their thoughts and feelings. For children who are non-verbal or have Autism, music can also be a powerful way to connect without words. Here are some ideas to consider:

Low Tones: Consider musical instruments that provide low tones, like drums, rain sticks, or chimes. These calm the nervous system versus higher, abrupt sounds.

Mirroring: Some children with Autism have phrases, sounds, or gestures that they repeat. Mirror those back to the child! It is a way to communicate and establish a connection, if they struggle with eye contact or direct, reciprocal communication.

Conga Line: A great way to engage the students as a group is to create a musical parade through the playground. Start with a simple song they all recognize, add some clapping and movement, and the children will engage!

Drum Circle: With a few hand-held rhythm instruments, you can create a small group activity that helps students make eye contact, follow directions, practice patterns and sequencing, and more. And it is fun!

Keep the Rhythm Going: Using rhythm can be as simple as children tapping the table, a drum or their leg. They can tap a beat to a simple chant to understand rhythm. For children who speak too fast, have them tap the syllables of their words to slow their pace and improve articulation.

Provide Non-Speaking Options for Learning New Dances: Though some components of music are verbal, like singing, children can engage with music without using words. Some children may have difficulty processing words, communicating or expressing their feelings, and they may engage with a song better in non-verbal ways.

Instead of asking for a verbal answer, have children demonstrate their knowledge about what move you just taught them.

Create a choice chart so children can indicate the option they want instead of saying it out loud.

Play a song for the children, then have them draw a picture or write about the song.

