

Organization of American Kodály Educators, Inc
3415 S. Sepulveda Blvd, Suite 1126, Los Angeles, CA 90034
310.441.3555 | info@oake.org | www.oake.org

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Dear Families,

Educators across the globe are looking for creative solutions to the crisis facing our students today. Music teachers everywhere are rising to the challenge of providing rich and engaging instruction, working with your children to make joyful music in the absence of the traditional, inherently social music classroom.

In preparation for many different scenarios of instruction in the coming school year, music organizations are working together to create guidelines for music-making in a variety of settings while also engaging in research to help us better understand the implications of COVID-19, so that we can make the best decisions for our students.

However, there is one thing we do know: the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic is taking a heavy *emotional* toll on our students. Music classrooms provide a safe-haven for these students' social-emotional development. We know that the social engagement that is provided in the classroom suffers severely in a virtual setting. In the event that students are taking part in a virtual learning environment this fall, we invite **you**, the family unit, to join them in the music-making process. Music-making is a communal act, meant to be shared with others. Through activities such as group/solo singing, instrument playing, games, and dances, students actively build collaboration and communication skills, understanding of others' experiences, the ideal of contributing to a community, and a comprehensive music language and literacy skills. We suggest finding ways to bring music to your home, where you can share in a time of learning through play. Here are some examples that allow you to experience music together with your child:

- Playing musical games (hand-clapping, beat-passing, or singing games)
 - What songs and games do you remember from your own childhood?
- Creating music and sound effects for stories
 - How can your favorite folktales or picture books be brought to life with music?
- Dancing and movement
 - Crank up Spotify or YouTube and just dance together
- Sharing songs with siblings
 - What songs have your older children learned in music class that they could share?
- Playing musical instruments
 - Do you play any instruments? Share it with your children! Form a family band!
- Exploring found sounds in and out of the house
 - How can everyday household objects be used to create music?

Now more than ever, we seek to continue the academic, social, and emotional development that children find in our classrooms. We sincerely hope **you will join us** in reimagining music education through family music making.

Warm regards,

The Organization of American Kodály Educators

Donna Menhart, President: president@oake.org | Lauren Hirsh, Executive Director: director@oake.org

"It is not just children's music - it is family music." -Ruth Crawford Seeger