

HOW MUSIC BRINGS US TOGETHER:

The Power of Music in Building Communities

Music has the ability to make us feel connected. The more we use music to bring us together — literally and figuratively — the greater our potential for increased empathy and social connection. The following are ways to use music to create strong families and communities, and heal our minds and bodies.



Listen to Music as a Family

Researchers found that young men and women who shared musical experiences with their parents during childhood — and especially during adolescence — report having better relationships with their moms and dads as they enter young adulthood. While shared musical experiences at all age levels were associated with better perceptions of parent-child relationship quality in young adulthood, the effect was most pronounced for shared musical experiences that took place during adolescence.

Join a Band or Choir (Even Virtually)

Performing music involves coordinating our effort if we want to produce a beautiful sound. When we sync with others musically — harmonizing or clapping to keep the beat — we tend to feel positive social feelings toward those with whom we’re synchronizing. Studies have found that this occurs even if the other people are not visible to us or even in the same room. Though it’s unclear exactly why that happens, coordinating movement with another person is linked to the release of pleasure chemicals (endorphins) in the brain, which may explain why we get those positive, warm feelings when we make music together.



If there’s a choir, choral ensemble or band at your place of worship, or employment, consider joining. Your local community college also is a great place to start (or continue) your musical journey. [Singers.com](https://www.singers.com) provides a list of choral groups that may be of interest to you in the Chicago metropolitan area.

Sing Out Loud!

Singing out loud for 30 minutes has been shown to significantly raise oxytocin levels. Oxytocin is a hormone that is produced naturally in both men and women and is often referred to as the “love hormone” due to its involvement in bonding, attachment, trust and compassion. This explains the trusting and loving bond that is created when mothers sing lullabies to their newborn babies.

Use Music to Heal Your Body and Mind

Music therapy is the clinical use of music to accomplish physical and mental health goals such as reducing stress, improving mood, and self-expression. It is an evidence-based therapy well-established in the health community. Music therapy experiences may include listening, singing, playing instruments or composing music. Musical skills or talents are not required to participate.

Singing out loud for 30 minutes has been shown to significantly raise oxytocin levels in both amateur and professional singers.

Music therapy may help you psychologically, emotionally, physically, spiritually, cognitively and socially. A short list of benefits includes:

- 🎵 Lowering blood pressure
- 🎵 Improving memory
- 🎵 Enhancing communication and social skills when experiencing music with others
- 🎵 Observing your thoughts and emotions
- 🎵 Reducing muscle tension
- 🎵 Developing healthy coping skills to manage your thoughts and emotions
- 🎵 Increasing motivation
- 🎵 Managing pain
- 🎵 Increasing joy



Music has long been known to bring people together in a way that nothing else can. Whether it’s a group of friends singing along to a favorite song or hundreds of strangers swaying to a shared melody, music has the power to break down barriers and unite people from all walks of life. Music can be a powerful force in helping to build communities, create a sense of belonging, and heal our hearts, minds and bodies.