

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC SRIG
in collaboration with
THE MUSIC EDUCATION RESEARCH COUNCIL OF MENC

#6
1984

NEWSLETTER NO. 6
September, 1984
Jonny H. Ramsey, National
Chair

7003 Spring Leaf Drive
San Antonio, TX 78249
(512) 692-9037

SRIG CHANGES AND GOALS

Greetings to all Early Childhood Music SRIG members as we enter the 1984-85 school year!

The purpose of Newsletter No. 6 is two-fold: (1) to notify members of SRIG leadership changes and (2) to clarify SRIG goals for the coming two years.

SRIG LEADERSHIP CHANGES: Those SRIG members who attended the Chicago MENC Conference in March are aware that Dr. Mary R. Tolbert of Ohio State University stepped down as the National Chairperson of our SRIG. We all owe Dr. Tolbert our gratitude for her diligent work with the SRIG over the past four years. Under her creative guidance and chairmanship, our organization began as a research conference at Ohio State University in 1979, became affiliated with MENC as a SRIG in 1980, and has grown to a membership of over 150 music educators in the past four years. Truly, Dr. Tolbert has been an inspirational leader. We hope to continue and strengthen the organizational foundation which she has laid. We extend our most grateful thanks to Dr. Tolbert and our best wishes to her in the future.

The National Chairmanship has been assumed by Jonny H. Ramsey of San Antonio, Texas. Past Divisional Leaders and Task Group Leaders will continue in their positions during the next two years. Below is a list of SRIG leadership with mailing addresses:

National Chair: Jonny H. Ramsey, 7003 Spring Leaf Drive,
San Antonio, Texas 78240
(512) 692-9037

Divisional Leaders:

Eastern Division: Shirley Shelley, University of Maryland,
College Park, Maryland 20742

North Central Division: Dorothy T. McDonald, 2097 Music
Building, University of Iowa,
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Southern: Gene M. Simons, Dept. of Music, University of
Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602

Southwestern: John W. Flohr, Texas Woman's College, Denton,
Texas 76201

Western: Glenn Fifield, Utah State University, Logan, Utah
94322

Northwestern: Currently unfilled

Task Group Leaders:

Task Group I: Needs Assessment Study, Music for Kindergarten
Gene M. Simons

Task Group II: Teacher Education for Early Childhood Music
Dorothy T. McDonald

Task Group III: Musical Capabilities of Children, Ages 3-5
Shirley Shelley

Task Group IV: Music in Infancy
Donna Brink Fox
Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY

Task Group V: A Developmental Framework for Music in Early
Childhood
Marilyn P. Zimmerman
School of Music, University of Illinois
Champaign-Urbana, IL 61820

FUTURE SRIG GOALS: The Early Childhood Music SRIG over the past four years has exhibited numerous strengths. Our Task Group organization has led to more collaborative efforts in early childhood music research among our membership. The SRIG has stimulated individual research projects in the field and has assisted graduate students in their thesis research efforts. Furthermore, the SRIG has stimulated wide-spread grass roots interest in the field of early childhood music as reflected by our diverse membership of over 150 music educators.

Building on these strengths, the major goals for the coming two years will be three-fold:

- Goal 1: To stimulate further collaborative work among SRIG members
- Goal 2: To expand our dissemination processes to report research findings to the field
- Goal 3: To stimulate new research in early childhood music.

To accomplish Goal 1, it is necessary that we immediately update our current SRIG membership mailing lists and clarify membership interests and roles. Our SRIG includes a diverse membership, from those individuals interested in assisting with on-going Task Group research projects to those individuals only interested in receiving the SRIG Newsletter.

TO ASSIST TASK GROUP LEADERS IN PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION, WE ASK ALL SRIG MEMBERS TO COMPLETE THE SHORT FORM INCLUDED AT THE END OF THIS NEWSLETTER AND RETURN IT TO THE NATIONAL CHAIR BY SEPTEMBER 30. We ask that those individuals who wish to participate actively in Task Group research projects and work to please indicate so on the form. By checking active participation in a Task Group, you will be committing yourself to working with the Task Group Leader to plan, implement, and otherwise assist in on-going work of the group. Task Group Leaders will be communicating directly with you as soon as membership lists are updated.

Those individuals who simply desire to receive SRIG Newsletters without participating in Task Group work should so indicate on the form.

We currently have 5 Task Groups. However, others may be formed if there is an interest within the SRIG. The form provides space for you to indicate a possible new Task Group topic area if you so desire.

To accomplish Goal 2, the future SRIG Newsletter will devote some space to report current research in the field of early childhood music. This Newsletter includes such information. The Feature Article and the article entitled Research of Interest in this Newsletter reflect this new commitment. We encourage any member to submit short articles or abstracts to the National Chair for possible inclusion in future Newsletters.

To accomplish Goal 3, the SRIG will work with MERC to disseminate calls for research in the field of early childhood music. Please note the Call for Research included with this Newsletter. In addition, graduate students and other researchers are encouraged to seek information on research topic areas through the SRIG. Such requests should be directed to the National Chair.

We look forward to an exciting future for the SRIG. With SRIG members working together, we will be able to accomplish these goals during the next two years.

1984

Between 1980 and 1982, members of SRIB Task Group II: Teacher Education for Early Childhood Music conducted a needs assessment of teachers responsible for music instruction in early childhood centers. The assessment included a survey of teachers in early childhood centers affiliated with colleges and universities across the nation conducted by Task Group II Leader Dorothy T. McDonald, as well as smaller in-state surveys of preschools conducted by other Task Group members. Dr. McDonald presented a preliminary report of her national survey at the SRIB meeting in Miami in 1980. Below is a summary of the results of that survey which may be of interest to those who instruct early childhood educators.

FOCAL ARTICLE

The Creative Arts in Preschool Education

by

Dr. Dorothy T. McDonald, The University of Iowa

Most early childhood educators feel that experiences in the arts are an important part of preschool curricula. They are no longer regarded as "frills," but as necessities to the social, emotional, and cognitive development of children. Early childhood publications have reflected this interest in the arts. One therefore might assume that the arts are "alive and well" in early childhood centers.

Whether or not this describes the current status of the arts in preschool education, however, was the main question in a survey conducted in 1980. The answers which preschool teachers provided on a questionnaire entitled "Teachers' Perceptions: The Creative Arts in Preschool Education" are summarized in this article and provide an overview of the state of these arts in early childhood curricula; in addition, they give some indication of how preschool teachers feel about being arts instructors.

The questionnaire respondents were 149 teachers in early childhood centers affiliated with colleges and universities in the United States. Twenty-five states in all parts of the country were represented. Almost 90% of the respondents were female; approximately 50% of them worked with 4- to 6-year-old children, and 55% were full-time instructors.

Question 1: DO YOU INCLUDE INSTRUCTION IN MUSIC, VISUAL ART, RHYTHMIC MOVEMENT, AND CREATIVE DRAMATICS IN YOUR CURRICULUM?

Affirmative answers were given by 69% of the teachers. This group also indicated that objectives and goals for arts instruction were formulated and evaluated on a regular basis in their centers. 31.3% however responded that actual planning for these experiences was infrequent.

Question 2: OF THE ARTS--MUSIC, VISUAL ART, RHYTHMIC MOVEMENT, AND CREATIVE DRAMATICS--WHICH IS MOST FREQUENTLY INCLUDED IN THE CURRICULUM?

Seventy-eight percent of the respondents reported that music activities were the most frequently presented--several times a week. Almost as many (74.6%) cited visual art activities, and half (52.4%) rhythmic movement. Dramatics were planned infrequently, as only 31.8% of the teachers reported more than occasional use of dramatics in the classroom.

Question 3: DOES THE INCIDENCE OF INCLUSION OF CREATIVE ARTS EXPERIENCES REFLECT YOUR PARAPROFESSIONAL PREPARATION IN THESE AREAS?

79.8% of the respondents stated that they had completed methods courses in music; 78.5% in visual art; and 63.7% had received some preparation in rhythmic movement. However, only 9.9% had any preparation in dramatics. These figures appear to reflect the frequencies reported in Question 2 for arts activities in these teachers' schools.

Question 4: DO YOU FEEL YOUR PREPROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN THESE AREAS WAS ADEQUATE?

Only 41.3% felt that their training in these areas was adequate. 22.7% perceived it to be inadequate, and only 7.5% reported no training at all. 28.2% indicated that their preparation was adequate in some areas but not in others.

Question 5: IN WHICH AREA WAS YOUR PREPROFESSIONAL PREPARATION MOST ADEQUATE?

Of the 121 teachers who responded to this question, 45.4% chose visual art. Music was next, with only 33.8%. Less than 10% chose rhythmic movement or dramatics.

Question 6: DO YOU WORK IN THESE ARTS AREAS LESS THAN, ABOUT AS MUCH AS, OR MORE THAN YOU ANTICIPATED YOU WOULD?

While approximately half of the respondents said they worked in these areas about as much as they had anticipated, rather a substantial percentage reported more work than they had foreseen--37.6% in music, 28.1% in visual art, 30.3% in dramatics, and 35.6% in rhythmic movement.

Question 7: IN WHICH ARTS AREA DO YOU FEEL MOST SUCCESSFUL IN TEACHING?

Fifty-three teachers chose music, and 42 chose visual art. Seventeen cited dramatics; eleven, rhythmic movement.

Question 8: WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL BACKGROUND, INTEREST, AND INVOLVEMENT IN THESE ART AREAS?

More than two-thirds of these teachers reported some musical training other than that received in methods courses. 38.2% stated that they played the piano, and another 32.8% played other musical instruments. 62.1% checked the statement, "I paint, draw, or engage in visual arts activities with self-satisfaction." About half reported they had had some training or experience with movement and drama activities.

Question 9: IS YOUR BACKGROUND TRAINING A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN YOUR FEELING OF SUCCESS IN TEACHING IN THESE ARTS AREAS?

Of the teachers who felt most successful in teaching music, 90.5% had background training. 64.2% of those who felt most successful in teaching visual art reported some training and/or experience in this area. Only seventeen teachers chose dramatics as their most successful area, but of this number, 70.5% had participated in drama activities. The number of teachers who chose rhythmic movement was even smaller (N=11), but ten of these eleven had received either music or dance training.

Question 10: HOW COULD YOUR PARAPROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN THE ARTS HAVE BEEN MADE MORE ADEQUATE?

This was an open-ended question, soliciting free responses. Listed below are summarizations of these answers.

1. More specific preparation is needed, particularly in rhythmic movement and drama.
2. The specific needs of early childhood educators need to be addressed. Many college methods courses focus on arts instruction for elementary school children, neglecting goals and techniques for younger students.
3. Functional skills, particularly in music, need to be developed. Many teachers felt they needed music reading, guitar, autoharp, or piano skills.
4. Overall goals and objectives for preschool arts instruction need to be emphasized in methods courses rather than "activities." For example, one teacher wrote, "I feel that my sense of music comes from my own experience rather than any sense of the field."
5. More attention should be given to the "arts-in-education" concept. A respondent summarized this concern: "People seem to specialize in one art or the other. I want to spend time with a teacher who is really strong in fine arts and socio-emotional development."

While the results of this limited survey cannot be generalized to describe the status of arts instruction and perceptions of teachers in all early childhood centers, they can serve to provoke questions among teachers and directors responsible for the paraprofessional and in-service training of preschool teachers. Sundin (1979) has written that "only

When adults perform activities for themselves will these activities give rich information to the children." The results of this survey seem to affirm this. While background experiences in the arts appear to be the best predictor of "success in teaching," more adequate preprofessional training is needed in rhythmic movement and creative dramatics in particular.

Sundin, Bertil. "Music in Preschool Teacher Training." *Council for Research in Music Education* 59 (1979): 107-11.

RESEARCH OF INTEREST

Below is a list of some recent early childhood music research which may be of interest to readers. Each listing includes a mailing address for individuals who wish to get further information about the research.

Apfelstadt, Hilary. "An Investigation of the Effects of Melodic Perception Instruction on the Pitch Discrimination and Vocal Accuracy of Kindergarten Children." (University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC).

Busse, Bernard W. "Combined Arts Curriculum for Early Childhood Education." (School of Education, Ruffner Hall, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903).

Flohr, John W. "Longitudinal Study of Young Children's Improvisation Behavior." (Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX 76201).

Fox, Donna Brink. "The Pitch Range and Contour of Infant Vocalizations." (Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY).

Kostka, Marilyn J. "Effects of Practice and Vocal Range Preference on the Singing Performance of Four- and Five-Year-Olds." (Ortega Elementary School, Austin, TX).

Miller, Linda B. "Music in Early Childhood: Naturalistic Observation of Young Children's Musical Behaviors." (School of Education, Bailey Hall, Lawrence, KS 66045).

Montgomery, Janet M. "Development of Testing Procedures for Assessing the Ability of Preschoolers to Discriminate Melodic Direction." (Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY).

Ramsey, Darby S., and Paasev, Jonny H. "A Study of Musical Loudness Discrimination of Three- to Five-Year-Old Children." (Division of Music, The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX 78285).

Sies, Wendy L. "Young Children's Creative Movement to Music: Categories of Movement, Rhythmic Characteristics, and Reactions to Changes." (Center for Music Research, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL).

Sommers, Edith Kiemer. "Musical Discrimination in Infants." (Systematic Musicology Division, School of Music Dn-10, University of Washington, Seattle, WA).

Theiss, Judith, and Shelley, Shirley J. "Bodily Rhythmic Movement of Young Children In Response To Selected Expressive Qualities in Music." (University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742).

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Society for Research in Music Education will sponsor a session to disseminate the results of research projects at the MENC National Convention in Anaheim, April 9-12, 1986. Researchers whose projects are chosen for presentation will prepare a poster describing their projects and will be available during the session to discuss their work with interested music educators. They will be asked to furnish 200 copies of an abstract describing their project and 12 copies of a complete report of the project, 2 of which go into MENC National Archives. Participants also must respond to post-convention inquiries about their work, including requests for copies of their report. This will not be a paper reading session. Instead, the music educators who attend the session will be free to mingle with the presenters and spend time discussing the projects which interest them most.

Those who wish to submit a project should comply with the following guidelines:

Submit four copies of an abstract no longer than 600 words summarizing the project. Also submit 4 copies of a full report of the project. The full report should go into greater detail than the abstract. There is no limit on the length of the full report, but participants should consider the cost of the duplication if a large number of people request copies of the report. The author's name and institutional affiliation should appear only on a separate cover page. All submitted materials must include the title of the project, and each submission should include a self-addressed stamped letter-size envelope and a self-addressed stamped postcard. The card will be used to acknowledge receipt of the submission; the envelope will be used to announce the screening committee's decision and give additional details about the session. Submitted abstracts and reports will not be returned.

Submissions should be sent to Carol Rogel Scott, MENC Program Chairperson, School of Fine and Performing Arts, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, WA 98119. Submissions must be postmarked by August 1, 1985 and received by August 15, 1985. Incomplete submissions will be rejected. Incomplete submissions include: abstracts with no papers, studies with incomplete data analyses, and intentional fragmentations of a single study.

All submissions will be screened by a panel of qualified judges. Applicants will be notified of the committee's decision by November 1, 1985. Those whose submissions are accepted will be expected to participate in the session or send a representative if something prevents their own participation.

SRIG MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to update our current mailing lists and to assist Task Group Leaders in ascertaining Group interest, please complete the questions below and return the completed form by September 30, 1984 to: Jonny H. Ramsey, National Chair, 7003 Spring Leaf Drive, San Antonio, TX 78249. It is critical to future SRIG work that all SRIG members complete and return this form.

1. NAME _____
2. MAILING ADDRESS _____
3. PHONE _____
4. DO YOU WISH TO BE AN ACTIVE TASK GROUP MEMBER DURING THE FUTURE (i.e., work with the Task Group Leader and members on planned group projects)?
 YES _____ NO _____
5. IF YOU RESPONDED "YES" IN QUESTION 4, PLEASE INDICATE THE TASK GROUP IN WHICH YOU DESIRE TO WORK (check one):
 _____ Task Group I: Needs Assessment Study, Music for Kindergarten
 _____ Task Group II: Teacher Education for Early Childhood Music
 _____ Task Group III: Musical Capabilities of Children, Ages 3-5
 _____ Task Group IV: Music in Infancy
 _____ Task Group V: A Developmental Framework for Music in Early Childhood
 _____ Other. I have an interest in a topic area not related to the above. Please describe:

6. Do you wish to receive the Early Childhood Music SRIG Newsletter in the future?
 YES _____ NO _____