MAKING MUSIC.

MAKING CONNECTIONS.

Melodic Connections
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A message from Melodic Connections Executive Director

My yearly reflection and usual moment of gratitude has left me a bit pensive this year. When I am not at work or with my family, I am sad. Our world is filled with fear. And this fear trickles down to all of us ... all the way down to our small children.

The biggest difference:
Children reach out for help, instinctively.
Two arms reach up, telling us what they need.
Daily, my son Henry tells me: “I need a hug.”
And it is just the cure he needs. A moment. Together.

Adults? We tend to hunker down. Try to solve it ourselves.
And most of those solutions are in our homes, alone, or in our offices, alone.

It doesn’t have to be this way. We have collected so many pictures and stories this year. A picture of two friends at Common Time, who met 20 minutes before; now smiling, laughing, singing together. A picture of a mom holding her child in her lap, smiling as she and her daughter play keyboard together.

If we, the staff and board at Melodic Connections could get everyone to understand that – MUSIC – is one of the most powerful ways to bring people together – to make them smile again, feel safe and connected – then our job would be done.

But, the work is joyful. The road is lined with music! So, my friends, travel with us. We have much work to do in 2020. Together.

Betsey Zenk Nuseibeh, MEd, MM, MT-BC
Founder and Executive Director

Stay Connected!

Connect with Melodic Connections students, families, community musicians and other supporters just like you. Every one of us is made for making music.

Connect with us!
Sign up for our newsletter at www.MelodicConnections.org
What if we lived in a world where we all felt safe, connected and like we belong?
What if we could create that world simply by making music together?

Common Time and A Song or Two are two of the ways we’re making that happen.

COMMON TIME

Ellen and Cynthia have been friends for years. They met at work, where Cynthia loved people and loved to talk. As a form of Alzheimer’s disease began to steal the words that had come so easily all her life, Cynthia stopped socializing and spent most of her time alone. Ellen brought her to Common Time, where making music together became a new language they could share. They kept their friendship going, even when words were lost, by singing songs and playing instruments together.

“For my friend Cynthia who has dementia, Common Time lets her spend more time in a joyful place with people who care about other people. It really doesn’t get better than that.”
Ellen Beyer, Melodic Connections parent & monthly donor

Common Time is a music gathering that brings people together in active music making. After Common Time, people say they feel more connected to those around them, more positive, adventurous, and inspired to try something new.

A SONG OR TWO

David showed up at school that day frustrated, angry and not able to sit still. Only four years old, he couldn’t yet tell his teachers what he needed. When the music began, he stayed outside the circle, until a music therapist placed a small egg shaker in his hand. The vibrations from the guitar, the rhythm of the simple instruments, and the sound of his friends’ voices drew him nearer. Four weeks later, David sat cross-legged in the circle and turned the pages of a book, while his classmates sang along. His classroom experience was transformed, with a song or two.

“I just know in my soul that music is so important. It has given Mark a way to connect to the family.”
Lee Ann Conroy, Melodic Connections parent & volunteer

A Song or Two is active music making in preschool classrooms that uses music therapy and trauma responsive care to build resilient students. Making music together activates the parts of the brain that help us feel safe, so we can connect and attune to ourselves and those around us.
PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: The Lullaby Project

Melodic Connections is excited to announce our partnership with Weill Music Institute of Carnegie Hall and the Lullaby Project. The Lullaby Project pairs mothers and fathers with professional artists to write and sing personal lullabies for their children. We will team up with Talbert House and The YWCA of Cincinnati in 2020 to create original songs to strengthen the attachment bonds for families facing crisis.

"writing songs for our children can give them something of us to hold onto, and to reassure them that our bond is not a fragile thing."

James Stephenson, Melodic Connections songwriter who will be working with dads in Talbert House’s Fatherhood Project

The Lullaby Project is a partnership between Melodic Connections & Weill Music Institute

James and a dad from Talbert House’s Fatherhood Project collaborate on an original song.
Melodic Connections reached two important milestones this year. Our staff of 12 completed a combined 504 professional development hours to become certified in Trauma Responsive Care through the Tri-state Trauma Network and Finding Hope Consulting. Melodic Connections was also named one of four area participants in the Resilient Children and Families Expansion Project, through which we will receive an additional 30-40 hours of professional development.

INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY CATEGORY

- K-12 Education
- Preschool Education
- Adult & Teen Mental Health
- Community Music Studio & Disability Services
- Aging and Dementia

NEW TOOLS FOR CONNECTING PEOPLE THROUGH MUSIC

These new trainings will help us:

1. Use active music making to help people create deeper connections and work cooperatively with each other.
2. Implement trauma informed music interventions in schools to address Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and support resilience skills in students, teachers and parents.
3. Use community-based music to find pathways to leadership and belonging for people of all abilities.

OUR ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

130 supporters celebrated MUSIC. HERE. NOW! with us at MadTree Brewing

- We raised $57,000 to support our programming.
- Join us again at MadTree Brewing for our next celebration of music.

ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS IN OUR MISSION:

In 2019, Melodic Connections engaged 174 volunteers for a total of 841 hours, a dollar value of $21,387.

2019 Revenue and Expenses

- Revenue: $57,000
- Expenses: $51,000

- Revenue Sources:
  - Contracts and Partnerships
  - Grants
  - Fundraising
  - Professional learning / job shadowing
  - Site and building enhancement
  - Other mission/administrative

- Expense Categories:
  - Donations
  - Programming
  - Operations
Bundled against the night, they gathered at The Cincinnati Nature Center to observe the winter solstice. Guided in a drum circle by Melodic Connections’ Percussion Effect leader Daniel, they created an ancient rhythm together, as the sun set on the year’s shortest day.

Around a crackling fire, as the planet shifted from dark toward light, making music together was the spark that ignited these 45 strangers in community. This drum circle was just one of the ways you helped nearly 3,000 people create more meaningful, connected moments in their lives this year, through music.