

Tokyo

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The 2009
Tsubaki-kai
Art Show





Wiggle with your Child

by Nana Kinno

Most child and parenting experts will agree that movement is a crucial part of children's early development, as it is their first means of self-expression and spatial understanding. Through music and dance, children acquire invaluable physical and social skills, at the same time gaining mental stimulation that will enhance their level of creativity. Kids love to watch other kids, but they learn equally from mimicking their own parents—their number one role models. Kids also enjoy watching their parents have a good time.

So, does this mean you have to enroll your child in ballet, tap dancing, piano, and singing lessons? Not necessarily—sometimes you need look no further than within your own home. A relaxing yet fun environment can be created anywhere, as it begins in your mind. Think of a favorite song—the kind that floods you with precious memories, puts a smile on your face, and fills you with warmth every time you hear it. This song should move you, or trigger emotions within you.

Whether it's *We are Family* or *Dancing Queen*, *Macarena*, *New York, New York*, or *Bohemian Rhapsody*, all songs go from 'simmer' to 'boil over' point. As the song begins and it's simmering, sway side-to-side and lay low to the monotone beat and rhythm. As it reaches the boil over point—or what's usually the main chorus—put your hands in the air, reach up, and jump. Simply put, duck down for low notes, and reach high for high notes. When in doubt, put on *YMCA*. If only The Village People knew what a smashing hit they'd be among toddlers (or perhaps they did)!

The movements described above are loosely based on a technique used in music education called eurhythmics (also known as rhythmic gymnastics), introduced by Swiss musician and educator Émile Jaques-Dalcroze in the late 19th to early 20th century. A method now widely used in public schools across the United States, eurhythmics encourages one to learn and experience music by incorporating movement. It is a way for one's eyes, ears, mind, and body to feel the same rhythm.

Dancing and singing with your child (even off-key) is indeed the key to a healthier and happier relationship for years to come, and it even acts as a great stress reliever. And who among us doesn't want to shake off a bit of stress at the end of a long day?

Baby Loves Disco



Since April 2008, Baby Loves Disco JAPAN (BLDJ) has been transforming the hippest venues in the jungles of Tokyo into childproof discos as toddlers, preschoolers, parents, and grandparents looking for a break from the routine playground circuit let loose for some post-naptime, pre-dinner fun.

Baby Loves Disco JAPAN Vol.8: Pre-Summer Splash!
 Sunday May 31, 1-5pm at SMOKE, 4F GYRE Bldg. (next to Kiddyland in the heart of Harajuku). The venue is airy, bright and green, with a spectacular view of Omotesando from the terrace. Highlights include a live DJ, chill out zone, diaper changing station, stroller parking, a special healthy, organic food menu, model search for a kids' fashion show, and special appearance by Stuart-o from MXTV.

For details check www.babylovesdisco.co.jp.