

## **Music Together of Decatur Generations Classes Are a Win-Win!**

- **Singing engages the whole brain.** Studies show that a senior's active engagement with music provides a host of benefits for the older brain, increasing oxygen and blood flow, stimulating focused attention, activating memory, even temporarily mitigating the symptoms of dementia for older adults. Music also lights up the young child's brain, stimulating and strengthening important neural connections for music as well as for other areas of learning.
- **Music does a body good.** For both young and old, singing engages the body, exercising the lungs, stimulating major and minor muscle groups (tap those toes!), and promoting coordination. For children, music-learning is multisensory: important musical knowledge happens through experiencing movement, both through their own bodies and through the model of others.
- **Singing really does make us happy.** Studies show that singing reduces stress and makes seniors feel happier, decreasing risk for depression. Cortisol levels in babies are regulated when they are sung to lovingly, resulting in a sustained "quiet-alert" state, which supports learning.
- **Singing together equals meaningful connections.** When people of all ages make music in a community with their voice and body, they have great fun together and often experience "belonging," being part of something deeply important and purposeful.
- **Singing creates memories, old and new.** Music can spark the recall of past experiences for seniors, even those with dementia. It helps the past truly come "alive," giving them access to deep feelings activated by remembering an event or moment from the past. It can help them connect the dots back to the past. But making music in an intergenerational setting can also help seniors create new memories, through pleasurable shared music experiences. For parents and children, making music with an extended "family" of multiple generations is often (at first) a novel experience. The new experiences inspire the creation of rich family memories that can last a lifetime.

**[www.MusicTogetherOfDecatur.com](http://www.MusicTogetherOfDecatur.com)  
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