From very early ages, children demonstrate their enjoyment of music by smiling, clapping, bouncing, and dancing. Children soon learn that they can strike objects and make sounds that will cause others to listen, allowing them to become musicians in their own right. This study offered many opportunities for children to investigate music making firsthand by experimenting with and creating instruments, interviewing musicians, and identifying their feelings and preferences with different music experiences.

We are music makers

From a very early age, children demonstrate their enjoyment of music by smiling, clapping, bouncing, and dancing. Parents instinctively use music to calm and soothe children, express love and joy, and engage and interact with them.

Our preschool started exploring music-making last month. We explored many musical instruments, investigated how music is made, and learned new ways to generate sounds. We learned that we could create patterns through music and express ourselves through singing and dancing. Our preschool did many sound repetitions, encouraging language and memorization. We also explored cultural instruments and music, which modeled inclusiveness and a sense of belongingness.

Music is essential for the development of our keiki. It is not just about singing and dancing. Arthur O’Shaughnessy once said: We are the music makers and the dreamers of dreams. We are the movers and shakers of the world, forever, it seems.
Welina mai kākou!

“Ike ‘ia nō ka loea i ke kuahu.”
An expert is recognized by the altar he builds. It is what one does and how well he does it that shows whether he is an expert.

This month’s ‘ōlelo noʻeau demonstrates how we might determine if a person is an expert at something. People who claim to be experts will be judged by their ability to do what they said they could do. We need to remember, however, that every expert was once an amateur. Everyone needs to start at the beginning, and with time and dedication, they can reach the level of an expert.

Our children are also amateurs striving to be experts at things. As caregivers, one of the most valuable things we can give our children is time: time to practice, time to fail, and time to become experts at what they enjoy most.

Be a positive role model

Our keiki’s most influential role model is not a superhero, a princess, or a Disney character. Whether or not they know it, parents and caregivers influence keiki’s development and personality most. Parents and caregivers play a huge role in modeling values and likes/dislikes. Keiki are like sponges, often picking up on their caregivers’ good AND bad habits. They look to their caregivers to set the example, so it’s important to exhibit the behaviors that caregivers want their keiki to follow.

It isn’t easy, but being a positive role model for keiki requires thinking ahead, exhibiting self-control, and using opportunities to teach keiki how to deal with challenges. When keiki can observe their parents or caregivers work through challenges, they are better able to work through those same challenges on their own.