

Kidznotes
1309 Halley St.
Durham, NC 27707

Oct. 21, 2020

SPEECH TEXT

Kidznotes: Changing Lives One Instrument at a Time
Anna Barson, Speaker

Let's start with a quick exercise. I want everybody to close your eyes for a second and think about your favorite song. Maybe it's a song you grew up listening to. Maybe it's your first dance song from your wedding. Maybe it's a song you just discovered last week. I want you to think about how that song goes, and think about how it makes you feel when you listen to it.

Pretty good, right? Music is powerful. So powerful, that it has the ability to alter emotions and move people. Music isn't just something that generates feelings. Studies repeatedly find that music training is positively associated with more complex brain development, higher school achievement, and other gauges of long-term social, economic and emotional

-MORE-

well-being. Music is a tool.

Kidznotes sees these immense benefits of music in action. Kidznotes is a music for social change program based on the El Sistema [el sis-teema] model of youth orchestras – a model from Venezuela. El Sistema [el sis-teema] was a program launched in 1975 by a composer and conductor named Jose Antonio Abreu [Ho-say Antonio uh-bro]. The program is free for young children from impoverished backgrounds.

The goal? Using classical music to transport children to another world with all its possibilities and promises. El Sistema's [el sis-teema] mission is not to create professional musicians. They want to promote the collective practice of music through symphony orchestras and choruses to help children and young people in achieving their full potential and acquiring values that favor their growth.

This model inspired the vision for Kidznotes. Our vision is

-MORE-

to be a catalyst for change that uses music to build a thriving network of children, families and partners in which the passion for music unleashes the human potential to transform lives and communities. Kidznotes partners with Durham and Raleigh public schools. Our students are split into four ensembles, each ascending in skill level. All instruction takes place in group settings, including instrumental ensembles – like band and orchestra - vocal ensembles, and instrument-specific group classes.

Our students get incredible opportunities through Kidznotes. To fully engage students in the program, we hold classical, orchestral training sessions for eight hours weekly. Our instructors are trained in the El Sistema methodology and approach. The students give frequent performances throughout the year in small ensembles and larger groups. These informal and formal performances help our students become comfortable in front of audiences and build group solidarity.

Kidznotes also takes our students outside the “classroom.” We enjoy field trips to concerts, and take part in workshops, master classes, and demonstrations by our guest performing artists. These music-related activities foster our students’ awareness and appreciation of the larger arts community and its possibilities. They foster pride in our students’ own accomplishments.

Music is powerful. Music is a tool. Music is learning. Music is connection. At Kidznotes, we are lucky to get to see the impact of music on children every day. Together, with music, we can change lives. Please consider making a donation to Kidznotes through our website kidznotes.org. Thank you.

###