

**EXPLORING SOCIAL MEDIA
TO EDUCATE PARENTS ABOUT
MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

by

Stephanie A. K. Kistler

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music

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by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore social media as a forum for parent education in music. Using a qualitative design, I acted as teacher-researcher-facilitator of a private Facebook group for parents (N=35) of young children over a period of 8 weeks. I collected all posts on the group, recorded all conversations with participants, created and conducted pre and post-study questionnaires, and kept a research journal as data. I analyzed these data sources by hand for patterns, categories, and themes that were relevant to my research questions: a) how do parents describe their musical interactions with their children as a result of participation in the research group? And b) how does social media, particularly Facebook, function as an educative tool in early childhood music?

Through constant comparison of all data sources, seven themes emerged: The Musical Child, Parent-Child Musical Interaction, Intentionality, Awareness, Differing Needs, Social Interaction, and Facebook Functionality. My research findings indicated that parents' music making at home is playful and relevant; and parents who identify themselves as non-musicians lack confidence in musicking, both of which are consistent with extant literature. Yet in contrast to prior research, musician and non-musician parents reported participation in developmentally appropriate musical interactions at home with their children, regardless of their musical background. Facebook had benefits and drawbacks as an educative forum. However, musical parent

education through a private group on Facebook, led to increased intentionality, awareness, and music making for participants and their young children.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Parents are their children's first teachers. In the early years, the home environment is the foundation upon which all other learning takes place. Parents and caretakers play an essential role in providing rich and supportive learning environments that are critical to children's growth (Bruner, 1960; Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; Goldberg, 1997; Gordon, 2007; Montessori, 1967; Pestalozzi, 1974; Piaget, 1962). The home is a critical musical learning environment for every young child and parents are a child's most important music teacher (Gordon, 2003).

Role of Parents in Early Childhood

The primary role of parents in children's learning is evident in current early childhood education policies and practices throughout the United States. The National Association for Education of Young Children Position Statement (NAEYC) points to the importance of secure and nurturing relationships with adults, particularly parents, in children's growth (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). Likewise, NAEYC encourages teachers to build mutual partnerships with parents toward children's development and learning.

Educational leaders and researchers emphasize parents' participation in the learning of young children (Malaguzzi, 1998; Montessori, 1967; Pestalozzi, 1974; Piaget, 1962). Pestalozzi (1974), an educational philosopher in the eighteenth century, believed that parents are a child's first and most influential teachers; that all school learning builds upon what has already occurred within the home. At the turn of the 20th century in 1897, Montessori proposed a view of early childhood education, where parents are collaborators alongside children in the learning process. Parents and teachers alike function as guides for children. Likewise, Malaguzzi, the developer of the Reggio Emilia Approach in Italy in the 1940s, described parents and teachers as partners and facilitators in learning. Parents and teachers do not give knowledge to children rather they are co-creators of knowledge (Piaget, 1962; Vygotsky, 1987). Parents scaffold learning as children actively develop new ideas using their current and prior knowledge (Bruner, 1960). They facilitate this process by removing any barriers to learning so that the child can construct new knowledge through a variety of experiences with their environment. The child then applies prior knowledge and skills to a new skill or idea presented in this engaging setting created by the parent. Thus, the child acquires a new understanding of self and the world not from direct instruction, but from parental guidance and interaction with his or her environment.

Role of Parents in Musical Development

Parents support children's development through a diversity of experiences, particularly musical ones (Gordon, 2003). Parents are usually the first adults to interact musically with their child (Trehub, 1999). From a child's earliest moments, "parents are the first music teachers, transmitting to children the songs they remember, and filling their ears with the songs they love" (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2002, xiii). Parents instinctively communicate to their infants through infant-directed speech that is musical in nature (Papousek, 1996). They use musical speech and song to encourage emotional responses in their children (Trevvarthen, 1999). This musical give-and-take, a peek-a-boo exchange (Bruner, 1966), is a natural and intuitive part of parenting that is consistent across cultures (Papousek, 1996).

Musical turn taking is also foundational to the parent-child relationship. Parents use song and musical speech with children to reinforce social skills such as turn-taking (Trevvarthen, 1999). Singing lullabies and play songs are extensions of this communication, as caregivers convey loving messages to their children (Trehub & Schellenberg, 1995). The consistency with which musical interaction occurs between parents and infants indicates the importance of music for parenting and socialization.

Levinowitz stated, "It is appropriate to the parental role to include the nurturing of music development along with other basic skills of life. In fact, it is extremely important that parents be the ones who create the appropriate musical environment" (1993, p.9). Parent modeling and participation are essential to children's musical growth (Alvarez & Berg, 2002; Cardany, 2004; Hoffman, 2006; Reynolds, 1995). In

fact, research indicates that a musical home environment supports music achievement of preschool and kindergarten age children (Apfelstadt, 1983; Bedsole, 1987; Dibble, 1983; Gawlick, 2002; Jenkins, 1976; Kirkpatrick, 1962; Lenz, 1978; Mallett, 2000; Wendrich, 1981; Woodward, 1992).

The attitudes, values, and goals held by parents shape the priorities parents set for their children (Marjoribanks & Mboya, 2004; McPherson, 2008; Sichivitsa, 2007). Parents with a musical background are more likely to provide a nurturing musical home environment (Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2003; DeGrätzer, 1997; Ilari, 2004). Yet, a common misconception among parents is that music in preschool is enough for their children. Because parents view themselves as not ‘musical,’ they believe someone else should teach music to their child (DeVries, 2009).

Parents need assistance with knowing what to expect musically from their children (Cooper & Cardany, 2012; DeGrätzer, 1997). They can mistake musical activities as non-musical (Berger & Cooper, 2003; Fox, 1989); however, young children’s musical behaviors can be identified by adults (Custodero & Johnson-Greene, 2007). Based on a study of 67 North American parents of 6-10 month old children researchers suggest that parents are often unaware of how much they sing with their children (Trehub, Hill, & Kamensky, 1997) and have more capacity for musical interaction than they might realize (Custodero, 2006). Instead of relegating musical learning to the teachers in their children’s schools (deVries, 2009), parents need to know how to support their children’s musical development (Cooper & Cardany, 2012; DeGrätzer, 1997).

All children have musical potential in their early years, as long as parents and teachers provide the appropriate environment (Turner, 2004). Gordon (2003) posited that parents are a child's most important teacher and the home is the most important musical learning environment for every young child. Since children's musical experiences begin in the home, and those experiences directly affect music aptitude¹ before age nine, parent education about their children's musical development is essential to children's musical growth. Parents must take on the responsibility of guiding their children in music so that their children do not "develop only a limited understanding and enjoyment of music" (Gordon, 2003, p. 4).

Statement of the Problem

Researchers and early childhood music practitioners acknowledge the importance of parents and the home environment in the musical growth of young children (Gordon, 2003; Levinowitz, 1993; Valerio, Reynolds, Grego, Yap, & McNair, 2012; Cooper & Cardany, 2012; Cardany, 2004) Without support from parents and caregivers, children's innate musicality will cease to grow and flourish

¹ Music aptitude is the "measure of one's potential or capacity to learn music" (Gordon, 2007, p. 46).

- a) Developmental music aptitude is a child's music aptitude until approximately age 9, which changes based on the quality of music environment in which the child is immersed.
- b) Stabilized music aptitude is a person's music aptitude which stays constant after age 9.

(Gordon, 2003; Moorhead & Pond, 1941). However, there is a mismatch between what children need and what is currently known about parents' music making at home (Cardany, 2004; Cooper & Cardany, 2012; deVries, 2009; Park, 2012; Valerio et al., 2012; Wu, 2012).

Parent Education

Research indicates that parents often sing with their infants (Papousek, 1996; Trevarthen, 1999), but musical interaction fades as children develop ability with language (Custodero, 2006). Many parents express an appreciation for music, but a lack of comfort with singing or making music with their children, therefore self-identifying as non-musical (Ilari, 2006; deVries, 2009). Early childhood educators, parents and writers of parenting magazines, emphasize the extra-musical benefits of music in early childhood over musical learning (Cardany, 2004; Gawlick, 2002; Nardo, Custodero, Persellin, & Fox, 2006; Sims & Udtaisuk, 2008); for them, music is there to support cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development without emphasis on children's musical well-being.

However, many parents are interested in their children's musical development. They recognize that they lack knowledge about musical learning in early childhood (Cooper & Cardany, 2012; DeGrätzer, 1997; Valerio et al., 2012). Parents want to know how to nurture their children's development (Cooper & Cardany, 2012; DeGrätzer, 1997; Park, 2012). In order to understand both its importance and how to

support it, parents need to be educated about the musical development of their children.

Social Media

Social media could be useful in closing the gap between children's musical needs and the capacity of their parents to respond to those needs. Social media has potential as an avenue for musical parent education. "The meteoric rise of social network sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube changed the communications landscape forever" (Waddington, 2012, p. 3). Introduced over the past two decades, internet-based social media networks are rapidly changing communication and community interaction worldwide. Of people with Internet access, 70% use online social networks (Waddington, 2012). The first documented use of the term *social media* occurred in the 2004 Merriam Webster Online Dictionary (Sponder, 2012), the same year that Facebook began. In 2012, Facebook announced it had reached one billion users worldwide (Sengupta & Bilton, 2012), after less than a decade. As one of many social media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, Google +, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Wikipedia, SecondLife, World of Warcraft, FourSquare, and Yelp, one in seven people use Facebook. With such widespread use and integration into people's daily lives, social media offers unique educational opportunities (Hill, Dean, & Murphy, 2014; Wankel, 2010). Social media offers an accessible, affordable, and convenient tool for parent education in musical development. However, as I found in a

search for related literature, use of social media is largely un-researched with regard to parent education and early childhood music.

Although parents spend more time musicking with their children than they realize, parents cite lack of time, lack of knowledge, and lack of value for music as reasons for not musically interacting with them (deVries, 2009). Social media could be a tool to overcome those issues. Social media plays an integral part in people's everyday lives (Nielsen, 2012) and holds the potential to educate users (Taylor, King, & Nelson, 2012; Wang, Sandhu, Wittich, Mandrekar, & Beckman, 2012; Wolf, Wolf, Frawley, & Torres, 2012). Thus, by using social media, a teacher-researcher can deliver educative material without adding an additional time burden on parents. Through education, parents will understand music's importance in children's development, will likely value it more, and make it a priority.

Koops (2012a) sought to use social media as a tool for educating parents about children's musical development. Koops explored the role of an online message board to educate parents whose children participated in an early childhood music class. Parents mentioned increased awareness, education, reflection on musical development, and connections with the teacher, other parents, and their children as benefits of the message board.

Like Koops, in this study I sought to educate parents about musical development through social media. A recent study indicated that most young parents regularly spend time on Facebook (Bartholomew, Schoppe-Sullivan, Glassman, Kamp Dush, & Sullivan, 2012). Because most parents of young children already use Facebook, I used

a Facebook group as the main platform to interact with parents in contrast to a researcher-created forum. Whereas, Koops (2012a) used a convenience sample of parents who were already participating in the researcher's early childhood music class with their children, I looked for an audience beyond parents who are already involved in early childhood music programs.

Parents and caretakers are unaware of musical development (Cooper & Cardany, 2012; DeGrätzer, 1997; Valerio, Reynolds, Grego, Yap, & McNair, 2012) and are subsequently unaware of how to support musical development or interact musically with young children (Cooper & Cardany, 2012; DeGrätzer, 1997). Because of this, there is a need for research regarding the use of new tools to educate this population.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the terms below will have the following definitions:

- Development- The act or process of growing or causing something to be more advanced. For young children development often refers to areas of competence such as social, cognitive, physical, emotional, artistic, and musical growth.
- Early childhood- Phase of development for children ages 0-5 years. (Early childhood officially encompasses 0-8 years, but this study focuses on children before entering formal schooling).
- Musical development- The process through which a child becomes able to sing in tune, feel beat, and move expressively to music; the building of a musical foundation of tonal and rhythm anchors in order to foster a child's capacity to audiate or think musically.

- Parent education- Systematic curriculum intended to share information, engage awareness, or cultivate skills to the participants regarding parenting.
- Musical parent education- Systematic curriculum intended to impart information, promote awareness, or encourage skills to parents regarding musical development in their children.
- Musical home environment- A home where the parents provide physical and personal resources such as instruments and props, music activities, parent-child musical interactions/experiences in support of their child's musical learning.
- Web 2.0- Considered the second generation of internet, Web 2.0 functions through collaborative and participatory information-sharing (user-generated content), in contrast to websites that require use of HTML, specialized computer code used to publish on a webpage.
- Social media- Internet-based platforms that use Web 2.0 to facilitate creation and sharing of User Generated Content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).
- Social networking- Web-based services that allow persons to a) create a public or somewhat public profile within a system, b) express a list of users with whom they are connected, and c) view and visit their connections and those made by others in the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).
- Facebook- The most popular social networking site worldwide that allows users to create profile pages, share status updates, and use the "like" button.
- Status updates- The main feature of Facebook- descriptions of a person's current activity or thoughts, and sharing of pictures, articles, and video clips while including one's opinion about the content.
- Post- Anytime a user "puts up" text or another item. Also referred to as "posting."

- Comment- A direct response to another user that is written below the original post.
- Like- On Facebook, participants can choose to “like” a picture or post as a means of acknowledging or appreciating another user’s post.
- Share- Only when referring to actions on social media, this is when one re-posts what another user posted onto a group page, or on someone else’s profile page.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to use social media to educate parents about ways to interact musically with their young children, through a Facebook group. This research will contribute to the dearth of literature surrounding the use of social media as an educative tool for parents in the realm of early childhood music education.

Research Questions

The research questions framing this study were as follows:

1. How do parents describe their musical interactions with their children as a result of participation in the research group?
2. How does social media, particularly Facebook, function as an educative tool in early childhood music?

Role of the Researcher

By developing weekly lessons, videos and discussion prompts, and administering the Facebook group, I acted as a teacher-researcher-participant within this study. As a mother of young children, I was a participant, sharing my experiences of interacting musically with my children. As the teacher-researcher, I designed the

study and research tools used to collect, manage, and analyze all data. At the conclusion of the study, I present findings and provide recommendations for practice and future research.

Significance of the Study

Parent education in music using social media is a relatively new area of study. By studying social media as an avenue for musical parent education, there is potential for improved and increased parent education in the future. When educated about musical development and possible ways to support it, parents could be empowered to interact musically with their children. In turn, children would gain more opportunity to reach their musical potential.

Chapter 2

RELATED LITERATURE

Parents are a child's first music teacher; yet, parents acknowledge that they do not know how to support their children's musical development. In this study, I explored the use of social media to educate parents about early childhood music. In the literature review that follows, I examine research that relates to the use of social media to educate parents about interacting musically with their young children. The research questions framing this study were:

1. How do parents describe their musical interactions with their children as a result of participation in the research group? And,
2. How does Facebook function as an educative tool in early childhood music?

This review of the literature will consist of five sections: a) musical development in early childhood, b) music at home, c) obstacles to musical interaction, d) musical parent education, and e) social media as an educative tool.

Musical Development in Early Childhood

Early Childhood

Early childhood refers to the period in children's lives from infancy through eight years of age. In this study, I focused on the first five years, before formal

schooling begins. During early childhood, children with typical development experience a great number of cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and musical changes that progress over time. Often considered a “critical period” (Siegler, 2006), these early years form the foundation for all future learning.

Children’s learning emerges through play and is “the work” of children (Hirsch-Pasek, Golinkoff, Berk, & Singer, 2009). Nurturing their growth in a non-threatening, supportive environment enables them to explore, create, and grow socially, emotionally, cognitively, physically, and musically. It is through informal and exploratory learning that children develop an understanding of the world around them.

Musical Development

Young children are innately musical. “Children are born with unlimited potentials to learn the language and music of their cultures.” (Chen-Hafteck & Mang, 2012). Humans are musical before birth. By the third trimester, a fetus can recognize and respond to musical patterns (Adachi & Trehub, 2012; Trehub & Schellenberg, 1995). Infants recognize sounds and have musical preferences, particularly for their mother’s voice (Trevvarthen, 1999; Trevvarthen & Malloch, 2012). Young children can differentiate elements of music and speech and are capable of hearing and responding (Adachi & Trehub, 2012; Papousek, 1996). Consequently, before birth through age eight is the most important period to nurture a child’s musical ability (Gordon, 2003).

Young children’s musicality develops in a natural progression. Language and music learning follow a parallel sequence (Burton, 2011; Gordon, 2003; Pinzino, 2007; Reynolds, Valerio, & Long, 2007). In language: children first listen, engage in babble- experimenting with sounds from the environment, imitate the language they

hear, then converse- creating sentences on their own, and then they read and write. In music: children first listen, engage in babble- experimenting with musical sounds from the environment, vocally imitate the music they hear, and then communicate- improvising musically, followed by reading and writing. This process of musical development relies upon the child's development of audiation, the ability to think musically (Gordon, 2003). An environment that supports musical thinking and learning is crucial for musical development to occur.

Young children are musical innovators; they express themselves through music. Spontaneous music making is at the heart of young children's everyday creative expression (Burton, 2002). Children narrate the day through song, dance, and music play (Adachi & Trehub, 2012; Custodero, 2006; Trehub & Trainor, 1998) and naturally discover music with excitement (Moorhead & Pond, 1941). Making music with others is pleasurable and a means of socialization for children (Moorhead & Pond, 1941; Papousek, 1996).

A nurturing environment supports the development of musical skills as children age (Welch & McPherson, 2012). Young children need significant others for musical growth. Here, parents play a foundational role in children's musical development (Gordon, 2003). "The participation and modeling of parents and caregivers regardless of musical ability, is essential to a child's musical growth" (Hoffman, 2006, p. 2). Musical play is a form of interaction between parent and child. Reciprocity and musical exchange are a natural part of this relationship (Trehub, 1999; Trevarthen, 1999). Musical learning transpires as a social process between the young child and others. However, research indicates that parents need information about musical development in order to cultivate this unique way of knowing within their

young children (Cardany, 2004; Cooper & Cardany, 2012; deVries, 2009; Gordon, 2003; Koops, 2011, 2012; Levinowitz, 1991).

Music at Home

To educate parents about interacting musically with their children, it is important to understand what is already occurring within the home. In this section, I will discuss the literature that illuminates home musical environments. The most prevalent characteristics of musicality in the home are singing, musical play, and parent musical background.

Singing

Singing is the most common musical interaction between mothers and their young children (Custodero, Britto, & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Ilari, 2004). In a study of 60 families with infants 6-10 months of age, researchers asked parents to write down every instance of singing to their infant in a single day (Trehub, 1999). Parents were to write down the song (known song, part of a song, humming or singing w/o words, invented song), singer, time of day, and context in which it occurred (play, mealtime, etc.). Mothers were the singer for 74% of all singing episodes, while 14% were fathers, 8% were siblings, and 4% were others. When the researchers compared results of working versus stay-at-home mothers, this disparity (of mothers singing so much more) still existed. Mothers without a musical background expressed surprise at how

often they sang to their infants, which was almost as much as mothers with a musical background. Spontaneous singing that fit the moment occurred regularly throughout the day. Mothers commonly used songs to assist with parenting tasks such as feeding, preparation for sleeping, and diapering, while fathers usually sang almost solely as play. Some fathers reported never singing to their infants, which their wives confirmed. All mothers sang at least some of the time.

Because mothers are already singing more at home than fathers are, mothers could be an effective audience for musical parent education. By focusing on mothers who already willing to sing, they are probably more likely to apply knowledge about musical development to their musical interactions in the home. In contrast, educating fathers about their children's musical development could encourage fathers to sing with their children more often, which would also support their children's growth.

Researchers found two general categories of songs as primary to song repertoire among parents: lullabies and playsongs (Trehub & Schellenberg, 1995). Though each has distinct characteristics, lullabies and playsongs are usually distinguished based on their purpose: lullabies are soothing and help a child sleep and playsongs engage children in play and active interaction. In North America, parents most commonly sing playsongs. In contrast, in most other countries, lullabies are culturally more preferred for children (Trehub, 1999). Further research regarding parents' descriptions of their music making at home would give insight into the uses and roles of music for families today.

In a study of families with young children, Custodero (2006) captured stories of ten families and the phenomenon of singing within them. Over a three-month period the researchers collected data through parent interviews, observations of children, parent journals of children's musical activities and researcher reflections after visits with participants. Parents received the option to write down observations or use a hand-held audio recorder. Parents were encouraged to journal in order to reveal the musical occurrences that they noticed and their feelings about their observations, in contrast to measuring frequency.

The results of the study indicated that singing practice in these families involved routines, conventions or traditions, and play. Music was used to "make special" everyday (p. 52). The researchers found there was mutual partnership in music making, where children initiated and had choices in what they would sing. They concluded that a variety of traditions and repertoire choices demonstrated music's role in supporting social groups, by creating and maintaining traditions through song and family identity. With only a small sample size (N= 10), it is unclear if this trend of musical traditions occurs on a broader scale.

Parents sing with their children (Custodero, 2006), with mothers singing more than fathers (Ilari, 2004; Trehub, 1999). The studies reviewed demonstrate that singing serves many purposes. Mothers will commonly use songs to assist with parenting tasks such as feeding, preparation for sleeping, and diapering (Custodero, 2006; Trehub, 1999). Around the world, songs are often lullabies, as parents soothe and relax their children (Trehub & Schellenberg, 1995), while in North America, parents more

commonly sing playsongs (Trehub & Schellenberg, 1995). Fathers in particular will usually sing as a form of play. Parents also incorporate musical routines into their homes (Custodero, 2006; Trehub, 1999). This could indicate musical traditions function as a facet of family life.

Musical Play

As discussed above, Trehub (1999) and Custodero (2006) reported similar findings that indicate the pervasiveness of spontaneous songs or musical play. Parents often improvised or changed songs to fix the context, such as new words to a familiar song. Playfully interacting through music was common.

Custodero, Britto, and Brooks-Gunn (2003) likewise reported a regularity of musical play within the home based on in-depth telephone interviews with a national sample of parents (N=2017; 68% completion rate) who had children under the age of three years. Four hundred nineteen Hispanic and 392 Hispanic-Black parents participated in the study, while 560 participants were Caucasian. The researchers asked questions about the interviewee's interactions with his/her child, thus the frequency of musical interaction with the other parent is unknown. The researchers found that the majority of parents were singing and playing music with their children daily (60%) and 32% were doing so weekly. Similar to Trehub (1999), mothers interacted musically with their children more than fathers did.

Based on the researchers' report, singing and some form of "playing music" is occurring at home. However, based on the researchers' discussion it is not clear what

“playing music” entails. Music educators and researchers lack a clear understanding of the kind of musical play that occurs in the home. A greater clarity regarding musical play is necessary to support parents’ musical interactions with their children.

Parent Musical Background

Many researchers have studied the impact of parent musical background and home environment on children’s musical achievement. A musical home environment positively influences achievement in music for preschoolers and kindergarteners (Apfelstadt, 1983; Bedsole, 1987; Dibble, 1983; Gawlick, 2002; Jenkins, 1976; Kirkpatrick, 1962; Lenz, 1978; Mallett, 2000; Wendrich, 1981; Woodward, 1992).

In a study of parent attitudes toward music instruction and home music environments on music aptitude of 161 preschool children and their parents, Mallett (2000) found that home musical environment was predictive of developmental music aptitude. Mallett used a researcher-created survey to obtain information about family demographics, home musical environments, and parent/caregiver attitudes about preschool music, and tested 3 and 4-year old children’s music aptitude using Audie. Parent attitudes were less influential on aptitude, but correlated with musicality of home environment.

In a study of mother-child musical interactions, Ilari (2004) conducted semi-structured interviews with 100 mothers (50 immigrant from five continents and 50 second generation Canadian) of infants between 7-9 months of age. Sixty-five participants were first-time mothers, while the other 35 had multiple children. None of

the women characterized themselves as professional musicians, while half had some musical training (median = 2 years). The participants were 60 professionals, 33 housewives, and 7 students, graduate or undergraduate. Professionals reported singing more to their infants, which the researcher suggested could relate to maximizing quality time and bonding with their child.

Based on the results of the study, the researchers suggest the indirect effects of musical training on mothers and children related to repertoire choices. The mothers with more musical training cited choosing classical music, while those without a musical background would more often mention using pop music. Those participants who reported that they had a close relative as a musician improvised or invented songs more frequently than those who did not have a musical background. Mothers who did not improvise chose to sing lullabies or more stereotyped children's songs. The mothers' musical backgrounds influenced their repertoire choices and comfort with musical play.

Wu (2005) surveyed the attitudes and behaviors of 486 Taiwanese parents of young children (ages 2-5) regarding early childhood music. Parents highly valued musical learning and believed that all young children have musical potential. Parents believed that early musical learning experiences would influence children's appreciation for music and creativity later in life. These perceptions correlated significantly with parents' participation in singing, movement, and listening with their children at home. Those parents who reported a musical background were more likely to acknowledge the importance of early childhood music education.

Similarly, Cardany (2004) explored perspectives of twelve parents concerning music and music education for their preschool children (ages 3 to 5). Cardany conducted interviews with a) parents of children currently enrolled in preschools that provided music or b) parents who had children that participated in music education programs for preschoolers. The researcher also observed parents and their children at home. Cardany concluded that parents' attitudes toward music were shaped by their perceptions of enjoyment that they, their children, or other family members experienced. The parents' belief about whether their children had interest in and enjoyment of music became a primary motivator for participating musically with their children or providing music for them. Parents viewed music as basic to family life, but most were unaware of their role in their children's musical learning. Parents felt that music has the potential to improve their children's lives, particularly emotionally and socially.

Similarly, in a study of the role of home and school environment on the music achievement of eight preschool children, Gawlick (2002) found that musical home environment has a strong influence on student musical achievement. Based on in-depth observations of preschools, parent surveys about home environment, and researcher-developed music achievement evaluations of the preschool participants, the researcher concluded that musical home environment has a greater influence on music achievement than music at school.

Consistent with the literature reviewed (Cardany, 2004; Ilari, 2004; Gawlick, 2002; Mallett, 2000; Wu, 2005), musical background influences musical interaction at

home. Parents who have a musical background place a higher value on music. Those who value music participate musically with their children.

Summary

The aforementioned studies, demonstrate the importance of educating parents regarding the worth of early childhood music. Singing is foundational to musical interactions at home. Music making often involves family traditions or musical play. A musical home environment positively influences preschool and kindergarten children's musical achievement. Parents' musical backgrounds also correlate with beliefs about the value of music and musical interactions at home. However, parents without musical background or family had limited capacity to improvise and create music, thus musically play, with their children. Parents need the understanding and skills to be able to interact musically while playing with their children. When educated about musical development, parents will be empowered to engage musically with their children; thus, creating a musical home environment for the next generation.

Obstacles to Musical Interaction

Researchers have found that parents value music in early childhood (deVries, 2006; Custodero, Britto, & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Ilari 2004). The literature reviewed thus far depicts musicality that families with young children have reported doing, while also illustrating the impact of music at home on children's musical development. However, there are factors that are preventing parent-child musical interactions from occurring. In order to educate parents about musical development in

early childhood, it is important to have an understanding of the influences on parents' ability to make music at home with their children. This section will illuminate issues preventing parents and their children from playing together musically.

Change in Musical Interaction

Researchers found a decrease in musical interaction as children's linguistic capability increases (Custodero, Britto, & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2007). In a large-scale (N =2017) telephone survey, as discussed in the last section, Custodero, Britto, and Brooks-Gunn (2003) studied self-reported family singing and playing music in relationship to family demographics. Families reported regular singing and musical play. However, results indicated a sharp decline in the frequency of all parental singing and playing music for children after 24 months of age. A similar decrease in musical interaction between parents and young children occurred based on birth order, with the first child receiving the most musical interaction. As the researchers pointed out, there is evidence of a need for parent education to support musicking, especially as children become toddlers.

Custodero and Johnson-Green (2007) confirmed the change in parent-child musical interaction, as children become toddlers. Researchers conducted a U. S. national survey, Study 1, using in-depth telephone interviews with a randomized sample of parents with children four to six months of age (N=904, response rate 40%).

Respondents chose to answer the prompt *Is there anything else you want to tell me about how or why you use music with your baby?* Codes (N= 2228) were identified

and separated into Bornstein's parenting domains: nurturant, material, social, or didactic. The highest percentage of keywords was associated with social caregiving (n=1,092, 49%) or people-focused responses. The fewest keywords were associated with didactic caregiving (n=385, 17%) or activity-based responses. Material and nurturant caregiving seemed to go together and comprised 34% (n=774) of the keywords, related to infant's overall wellbeing. These results indicate that parents of infants associate music with relationships as demonstrated through nurturing and facilitating the physical well-being of their children.

In a follow-up questionnaire (Study 2), the researchers examined how musical interactions change as children develop, particularly when mobility and language begins between 9 and 16 months. Three hundred thirty-nine parents of 10-month-old to 16-month-old infants from the same population provided written responses to the original question, *Is there anything else you want to tell me about how or why you use music with your baby?* Researchers used the same coding process as Study 1, with 2388 codes. In contrast to the first study, nurturant and didactic (development and intelligence) domains were linked (n=812, 34%). However, the social domain (n=883, 37%) remained constant. "Parents' responses revealed that as their babies grow, nurturant caregiving becomes more closely tied to the teaching of infants; music's use as a teaching resource is closely associated with basic care— skills that music can teach are considered necessary (Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2007, p. 31)."

Music is a parenting strategy that evolves as children grow (Custodero, Britto, & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2007). The results of the previously

discussed studies clearly indicate a shift in parents' use of music from that of care to educative. The research also indicates an overall decrease in musical interaction over time (Custodero, Britto, & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Not only do parents change how they use music with their children, there is also a change with how much it is used. Based upon the research reviewed, there is a need to educate parents regarding musical development and interacting musically with their children, particularly as they become toddlers.

Extra-musical purpose

Like Custodero and Johnson-Green (2007), deVries (2009) found that music often fulfills an extra-musical function in the home. In a small-scale survey (N =63 responses, 63% response rate) of three Australian preschools, deVries (2009) explored parents' musical practices in the home. After collection of responses, parents participated in focus groups to gain further insight into what influences their musical practices in the home. As a follow-up to the survey, eleven parents who were willing participated in a discussion group of five or six people.

Survey and discussion group responses indicated that parents do not regularly participate in music with their young children due to five main reasons.

1. Lack of time- cited as primary factor.
2. Perception that preschools provide a complete musical education.
3. Lack of knowledge about music.
4. Reliance on commercial products like cds, and dvds for musical experiences.

5. Emphasis on extra-musical value of music over musical learning.

However, deVries found that parents do value early childhood music. There are multiple challenges that make it difficult for parents to incorporate music into their homes, particularly time and lack of knowledge about music. This study demonstrates a need for music educators to work actively with parents in order to support the musical development of children.

Music at school

Many parents believe their children are receiving a complete musical education at school (deVries, 2009). In a study of the role of home and school environment on the music achievement of eight preschool children, Gawlick (2002) found that musical home environment has a strong influence on student musical achievement. Based on in-depth observations of preschools, parent surveys about home environment, and music achievement evaluations of the preschool participants, the researcher concluded that the four preschools investigated did not meet the Performance and Opportunity-to-Learn Standards recommended by the National Standards for Music. In most cases the parents, directors, and classroom teachers lacked music skills and training in early childhood music education.

In the National Survey of Music in Early Childhood, researchers conducted a survey of early childhood centers about the use of music and its implementation within those centers (Nardo, Custodero, Persellin, & Fox, 2006). The sample was taken from NAEYC accredited centers across the U.S. (N =8000). Using a

computerized program, a randomized list of 1,000 centers with state-by-state dispersion was prepared. Researchers mailed the surveys with a cover letter. Two weeks later, they mailed a follow-up postcard, and contacted an additional 50 centers to try to increase response rate. Of the original sample (n=1,050), there were 293 usable returns (28% response rate).

Researchers indicated that informal singing and movement occurred regularly at most centers. The majority of centers also indicated musical free play and availability of instruments for children to explore un-supervised. However, the researchers found that only 28% of preschools enlist early childhood music specialists to teach music, while 79% of classroom teachers were expected to deliver musical instruction. Staff generally developed the curriculum and if the teachers valued music, they could choose to incorporate it in the curriculum. Staff training in curriculum development averaged 18 hours, but music curriculum received on average only 15 minutes of training time. Directors of centers placed very little emphasis on musical skill development, while extra-musical benefits such as group togetherness and supporting learning of other subjects were the focus of musical activity in the classroom. Creativity emerged as an expressed objective of music instruction for many, while a lack in musical creativity was evident in descriptions of musical engagement. The researchers point to a disconnect: early childhood educators often value music, but need training and collaboration with music specialists in order to develop the skills necessary to facilitate access to music learning for all young children.

In the home and at school, children experience music, but music is often merely a support for extra-musical goals (Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2007; deVries, 2009; Nardo et al., 2006). Many parents believe that the music education their children receive at school is enough to support their children's musical development (deVries, 2009). However, research indicates the opposite. The musical education that most young children receive in early childhood centers is not adequate for supporting musical development (Gawlick, 2002; Nardo et al., 2006).

Absence of Music in Print Media

Sims and Udtaisuk (2008) analyzed all 2004 calendar year volumes of three parenting magazines: *Parents* (12), *Parenting* (11), and *American Baby* (12) for musical content. The researchers studied every page of each magazine, for any text or photo that mentioned explicitly or clearly portrayed musical topics, objects, or music. They noted any mention of research or attribution to an author and categorized the items as adult or child focused. Of all 35 issues, music was the main topic of only five articles: two full-length articles about music-related content, two articles, and one advice column where music featured prominently in the discussion. In child-related articles, authors usually mentioned music as a means for soothing a child or reducing stress. Citations about music in the magazines focused on music as entertainment or as a tool to facilitate parent-child bonding. In parent-focused musical content, topics used music in relation to a) reducing stress or monotony, b) parents' musical preferences/abilities, c) childbirth, and d) social functions of music.

Overall, parenting magazines contained very little music-specific content. There was an absence of clear, high-quality recommendations for parents and minimal use of music research as a resource. The musical content placed emphasis on music for commercial or utilitarian purposes. The content in these three major parenting magazines is indicative of a greater value system among parents: a paucity of music, other than music for extra-musical purposes. Without accurate, meaningful information about musical development and how to support it there is a clear gap in parent education. Parents need to be educated about musical development.

Summary

The research I reviewed indicates the absence of music in print media (Sims & Udtaisuk, 2008) and the absence of music and qualified music teachers within the preschool setting in the United States (Gawlick, 2002; Nardo et al., 2006). In Australia, deVries (2009) found that parents rely on caretakers and teachers to educate their children musically. If parents rely on teachers to also foster musical development, their children are receiving an incomplete musical education. Additionally, parents' musical interactions with their children decrease over time (Custodero, Britto, & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2007). There is a need to educate parents about their children's musical development so that they can play an active role in the process and not rely on preschool music alone.

Parent Education

There is a clear gap in parents' knowledge regarding musical development. In order to support developmentally appropriate parent-child musical interactions within the home, parents need education on music. Musical parent education is a systematic curriculum intended to impart information, awareness, or skills to parents regarding musical development in their children. In this section of the literature, I will review studies where the researchers explore parents' knowledge of their children's musical development, or where the researchers purposefully educated parents about children's musical development.

Using the Child Music-Related Behavior Questionnaire (CMRBQ), a researcher-developed instrument, researchers studied parents' documentation of their children's musical behaviors (Valerio et al., 2012). The researchers distributed 763 questionnaires to ten early childhood centers in the southeast. Parents completed one questionnaire per child under the age of five or one about their youngest child. There was a 32.5% return rate for 249 questionnaires.

The data were analyzed with MANOVA, which revealed significant interactions between parents who reported performing the most music activities and reporting of music-related behaviors in their children. Parent musical activity level related to documentation of children's musical behaviors. The researchers noted that music behaviors are identifiable, in particular by parents who participate musically with their children. When parents recognize musical behavior, they are probably more likely to

support it. The researchers recommended that early childhood music educators and researchers should continue to encourage parents to interact musically with their children and provide ways for parents to musically interact with their children. By educating parents about musical development, they will better recognize musical engagement and likely musically participate more regularly with their children.

In response to low parental participation in a large community music program, DeGrätzer (1997) began a program for three-year-olds and their parents called *Playing music with mum or dad*. The program organizers examined ways to encourage parental involvement in their children's musical education. For ten months the researcher held one hour classes of eight to nine children and the same number of adults (fathers as much as mothers, especially on Saturdays). The same adults attended class every week, because "efforts focused on the adult, the fundamental cog in this complex machinery" (p. 52). As a result, parents reported improved communication with their children through participation in the program. "Playing with mum or dad" continued to function as a part of the local community music program. DeGrätzer surveyed parent participants in 1992, the first full year of the program and again in 1995. Seventy-one percent of respondents were positive about the improved parent-child relationship through the program and mainly discussed extra-musical benefits of the class. Musical activity at home because of participation increased 88% in the first year and 90% in 1995.

Deliberate parent education had a positive impact on parent-child relationships and augmented musical activity at home. By focusing on the parents, involving them

through active participation in class, and building their commitment to and understanding of musical development, musical interaction increased. The parents were better able and prepared to continue musical learning with their children beyond the class.

In a multiple case study, Park (2012) explored the influences of six music modeling sessions on mothers' musical interactions with their two-year old children. Park developed a flexible curriculum after visiting parents in their homes. Park modified the curriculum on an ongoing basis dependent on what occurred in the most recent music modeling session. Data sources were videotapes of all sessions, interviews, mothers' journals, follow-up survey, and field notes from visits at participants' homes. Park found that the mothers' ability to interact musically with their children improved in a relatively short time. By imitating the researcher and their peers, participants constructed their pedagogical skills and musical knowledge. Results from the follow-up survey suggest that the quantity and quality of mother-child musical interactions occurring at home depend more on circumstances (e.g. pregnancy, returning to work) than on musical backgrounds. Musical modeling was an effective approach for educating mothers about appropriate musical interactions with their children.

Koops (2011) conducted interviews with five mothers regarding their perceptions of current and desired involvement in early childhood music classes. Themes regarding current involvement in music and music class included modeling without forcing, exploring varying roles between parent and child, and interacting with

a group of parents and their children. Parents had no interest in having “more say” in the class, but did trust the teacher to make musical and educational decisions during the music classes. They were also interested in obtaining more information about musical development and the teaching method used during classes. Koops recommended that teachers partner with parents by seeking their insight about children’s musical preferences and behaviors at home. Music teachers and parents should collaborate in children’s musical learning. Koops suggested that teachers should educate parents about musical development, while also acknowledging the expertise the parents bring in working with their children.

In a program evaluation of an early childhood music program, Cooper and Cardany (2012) surveyed parents regarding their perspectives on a) overall experiences with the program and instructor, b) free play, c) circle/group activities d) song starters and manipulatives, e) resource pages, and f) interns and observers. Of 52 families participating in the program over four semesters, 26 returned surveys representing 34 children (20 boys, 14 girls), for a 50% response rate. Overall parent response to the program was positive. Parents of younger children (2-3 yrs.) valued free play more highly than parents of older children (4-5 yrs.). Parents mentioned a desire to have information regarding what to expect from their children. One parent also expressed interest in receiving resource pages by email or online, instead of paper.

Cooper and Cardany concluded, “[m]usic educators who teach early childhood must be concerned with the music development of the child and the music

development and experiences of the parent” (p. 106). Through continual focus on parent-child interaction, music educators can build the confidence of parents for interacting musically with their children at home. The researchers used resource pages as a physical extension of their musical classes to facilitate bringing music home. Parents requested email or online versions, which could indicate a greater readiness among parents for more parent education online. This shows that parents are interested in learning more and value bringing musical materials into the house.

Summary

Deliberate parent education had a positive effect on parent-child relationships and increases musical activity at home (DeGrätzer, 1997). Parents are interested in learning more about musical development, including a readiness for using online materials, not just paper resources (Cooper & Cardany, 2012). Through education, parents can improve their musical interactions with their children (Park, 2012). When parents recognize musical behaviors, they musically interact more often with their children (Valerio et al., 2012). By educating parents about musical development, they could be more likely to recognize musical engagement and participate musically more often with their children.

Social Media

In this final section of the literature review, I will first discuss definitions and types of social media, followed by research on the use of social media to educate adult

learners, particularly parents. Due to the limited amount of research within music education, only three studies to date, most of the literature comes from other content areas in order to inform methodology in this research.

Introduction to Social Media

Social media is the creation and exchange of user-based content based on the framework of Web 2.0. (Hunsinger & Senft, 2013; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Instead of content and sites published by individuals or organizations, Web 2.0 utilizes the World Wide Web through ongoing involvement of many participants. Web 2.0 is the platform for the development of social media as we know it today. Continuous modification occurs in a collaborative and participatory manner through User Generated Content. User Generated Content must at minimum fit these two criteria: a) It must be on a public website or social networking site available to a select group of people; and b) It needs to demonstrate some level of creative effort, not just re-posting an existing news article. Social media, then, can be defined as the “Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media may be grouped into different categories: content communities such as Pinterest or Yelp, macro-blogs such as WordPress or mini-blogs like Twitter, virtual game worlds like World of Warcraft, collaborative projects like GoogleDocs, social networking sites such as Facebook or LinkedIn and virtual social worlds like SecondLife.

People clearly value social media. Compared to 2011, use of social media apps increased by 76 percent and time spent on social media increased by 24 percent (Nielsen, 2012). More than half of people aged 24-34 years (the likely age group of parents of children in early childhood) use social media, particularly social networking services, at the office. “It allows you to easily stay abreast of people you want to stay connected with via casual conversation” (Qualman, 2009, p. 4). Social networking sites are web-based services that allow persons to a) create a public or somewhat public profile within a system, b) express a list of users with whom they are connected, and c) view and visit their connections and those made by others in the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). The function and specific nature of these criteria may vary between sites. Social networking sites enable people to connect not just with people they know or did not know, but also to share and see other people’s networks, making connections that would otherwise have been unavailable (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social media empowers people to stay connected not just with people, but with events, ideas, goods, and services (Nielsen, 2012).

Facebook

Begun as an online communication medium for students at Harvard, Facebook became the definitive social networking site. Facebook supports a system of user (individual or groups) profile pages that allow members to connect with “friends” and “friends of friends” through status updates. As of September 2012, Facebook had acquired more than one billion users, establishing itself as the most popular social

networking site in the world. “Scholars from a wide variety of disciplines—ranging from law, economics, sociology, and psychology, to information technology, management, marketing, and computer-mediated communication—have recognized the importance of Facebook” (Wilson, Gosling, & Graham, 2012, p. 204). In a literature review of empirically-based, peer-reviewed articles on social sciences research about Facebook, the researchers (Wilson et al., 2012) collected 1,226 articles that fit their criteria. These articles focused on how, who, and why people use Facebook. According to the Center for Learning and Performance Technologies (Hart, 2014) survey, Facebook ranked ninth among top online learning tools in 2012 and 2013 (Hart, 2014). This indicates many users’ belief in the educative potential of Facebook.

Facebook as an Educative Forum

Over the past few years, educators have begun studying the effectiveness of using social media as an educative tool. Due to the variety of research conducted on social media, this review of the literature will focus on three sub-topics relevant to the current study: a) Facebook as educative forum, b) social media and parent education, c) social media and musical parent education.

In a review of research on Facebook as an educative tool, Aydin (2012) found 27 studies that directly explored the educative potential of Facebook. According to the studies reviewed, Aydin found that Facebook contributes to an easier flow of communication between teachers and students. It allows for integration of physical

and virtual learning environments, offering opportunities for new models of teaching and learning. Ethical concerns and discussions of appropriate boundaries also emerged as regular issues in in use of Facebook. Aydin's review of Facebook research indicated that Facebook reaches all levels of academia, but did not discuss research on educating parents. This could point to an absence in the literature regarding parent education on Facebook.

Social media was used as an educative tool with 1,578 high-risk minority youth (Bull, Levine, Black, Schmiede, & Santelli, 2012). Facebook functioned as an interface for sexual health intervention over a 6-month period. Based on a survey of desired behaviors at two-months and at six-months, the researchers found that social networking sites could be an avenue for health interventions, but more research is necessary to understand the aspects that are valued in the process, the worth of membership in the network, and the possible need for combining in person and online interventions. The researchers' recruitment procedure is also worth noting. With each participant, he or she invited three more participants, each of whom then invited three more, thus extending the reach of the study.

Similarly, a group of researchers found that Facebook could be a useful tool for implementation of peer education curriculum in HIV awareness (Jaganath, Gill, Cohen, & Young, 2012). The researchers modified an existing curriculum to fit the social media forum. It was clear that knowledge of social media was already there- participants did not need training for the use of social media as an educative tool. Social media became a natural setting for education to occur.

Buzzetto-More (2012) specifically explored Facebook as a learning environment versus social environment. At a historically African-American university, Buzzetto-More used social networking as an educative tool with undergraduate management students. Students were required to participate in class Facebook groups, but they did not receive guidelines for participation. Buzzetto-More completed content analysis of posts in the groups. By the end of the classes, student posts were three to one original content versus commenting on teacher posts. Students were more likely to comment on each other's posts than that of the teacher. Buzzetto-More also conducted surveys of all students in the classes with 67% response rate (218 of 324 surveys) to better understand student perceptions of using Facebook in contrast to Blackboard, which was also used in the class. Perceptions of Facebook were mixed, but positive, with more than half agreeing or strongly agreeing that Facebook built relationships, strengthened community, and enhanced the learning process. Results were less conclusive, with one-third of the respondents indicating neutral when asked if there were specific benefits of Facebook for learning or if Facebook was an appropriate environment for learning.

In the same year, other researchers studied the appropriateness of Facebook versus other social networking sites as a learning environment (Wolf, Wolf, Frawley, & Torres, 2012). In an alpha test of a new social networking site called ValuePulse with N=355 undergraduate students, researchers surveyed student perceptions of different social networking platforms in the classroom. The researchers found that students preferred the class platform, ValuePulse for class, instead of the typical social

platform, Facebook. Researchers concluded that college students value a distinction between familiar social networking sites and those specifically made for the purpose of higher education.

In a study of non-profit organizations' use of social media, the researchers found that social media page moderators should create an environment that facilitates learning and engagement with content (Waters, Burnett, Lamm, & Lucas, 2009). Through a content analysis of 275 non-profit organizations' Facebook pages, the researchers found that simply having a profile does not increase awareness or facilitate engagement. It is necessary to participate in strategic planning regarding the use of social networking pages, for them to be educative.

In a cross-sectional survey of 539 participants at The Mayo Clinic in 2011, researchers surveyed continuing medical education (CME) course participants' use of social media and their attitudes about the value of social media for improving their education (Wang, Sandhu, Wittich, Mandrekar, & Beckman, 2012). The researchers also examined the relationship between participant demographics and attitudes toward social media. Based on the results, the researchers concluded that the respondents most commonly use YouTube and Facebook. Favorable attitudes toward social media were linked to younger age (20-29 years) and frequency of use. The researchers concluded that continuing medical education directed toward younger, tech-savvy learners would find social media worthwhile.

Summary

The use of Facebook facilitates easier communication between teachers and students (Aydin, 2012). Facebook has been used to educate at-risk youth, (Bull et al., 2012) for peer education (Jaganath et al., 2012), and as a classroom learning environment at all levels of academia (Aydin, 2012; Buzzetto-More, 2012; Wolf et al., 2012). Similarly, researchers explored the use of Facebook pages for public engagement (Snyder, 2013; Waters et al., 2009). But there is an absence of available research regarding the use of Facebook as an educative medium for parents. Learners held mixed opinions of Facebook an educative environment for college students (Buzzetto-More, 2012), but also points to possibilities that it offers as a convenient forum used by many (Aydin, 2012), particularly parents of young children (Bartholomew, 2012).

Social Media & Parent Education

Social media has potential as an educative forum for parents. In a content analysis of e-communication of mothers of infants and toddlers, Hall and Irvine (2009) found that mothers valued the online community as a source of support and parenting information. Although not specifically using social media, young mothers value online community and use it to enhance their knowledge as parents. Similarly, Hudson, Campbell-Grossman and Hertzog (2012) looked at the medical effects of an online intervention with at-risk young mothers (n=34). The trial group of mothers had access to online information about parenting, asynchronous dialogue with other participants,

and a nurse to answer questions at any point during the 6-month study period. Both the control and trial groups received four home visits to study psychological, parenting, and medical outcomes. The mothers in the support network indicated increased self-esteem and improved emotional well-being. The educative combination of receiving information, while also participating in a community of mothers going through similar experiences, is a possible model for the current study. Social media can impart information, while also facilitating communication between participants.

In a mixed methods study, Trevino (2012) studied the use of Facebook and Twitter to facilitate communication between parents and teachers. Trevino conducted a survey, as well as group (parent) and individual (teacher) interviews to gauge perceptions of social media use in parent-teacher communication. Teachers and parents acknowledged the need for effective communication and believed that social media could be helpful facilitating that process if used properly.

Mazza (2013) also studied the use of social media in facilitating communication between schools and parents. The researcher conducted a case study analysis of interviews with three principals, parents in the schools, and a content analysis of social media communications on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. “By making public what would otherwise be private, social media tools have knocked down previously existing walls between home and school, allowing the culture of the school to become transparent to anyone with an Internet connection” (p. 85). The use

of social media transformed communication between home and school, facilitating new parent involvement and awareness regarding their children's education.

Bright (2013) conducted a quantitative action research project with fourth graders in a Title I urban elementary school. Bright researched parent involvement needs through a 10-question 5-point Likert scale questionnaire given to all 4th grade parents (n=100) and teachers (n=20). As concluded by Bright, both parents and teachers felt a need for alternative means of communication. Based on parent responses, Bright strived to improve parent-teacher communication using Edmodo, an educational social networking site. The initial response to the use of Edmodo was positive, holding potential for alternative and improved communication.

In another action research study conducted in Cyprus, Ozcinar (2013) developed a parent involvement blog and studied parents' perceptions of the approach over an 8-week period with 20 families of five-year old students. The researcher developed a unit of study for the blog involving preparatory parent information, animations, activities, and follow-up questions. Ozcinar collected data through semi-structured interviews and parent observation forms. Parents reported an increased knowledge for both parent and child. They also mentioned a greater awareness of their children's strengths and weaknesses as learners, while their children seemed more motivated to learn. Use of the blog facilitated a better understanding for parents of how to support their children in their schoolwork. Both the parents and the children benefited from the increased involvement of parents in their children's education, which the blog facilitated.

At times, I asked for specific feedback from participants regarding lesson content and process (e.g., length of lesson, timing of posting material, and my style of interaction), which I then applied to how I approached the remainder of the study. For example, if participation in the group changed from my expectations as the researcher, I asked for insight from individual participants or the entire group. Those participants gave useful critical observations (Stake, 2010) with regard to possible adjustments of the curriculum. I used all participant feedback, individual, and group, to modify the curriculum, noting how and why I made any changes in my research journal.

Summary

Teachers and parents recognize social media as a viable means for communication (Trevino, 2012; Bright, 2013; Ozcinar, 2013). Social media can also be an effective tool for increasing parent involvement in their children's learning (Bright, 2013; Ozcinar, 2013) and holds potential as an instrument for parent education within various disciplines.

Social Media and Musical Parent Education

Paucity exists in the literature regarding the use of social media toward educating parents about children's musical development. Only three small-scale studies have been conducted to date. Kastner (2012) used a private Facebook group as a forum for a professional development community of four elementary music teachers. Koops (2012a) used a private blog and message board to educate parents about musical development in early childhood. Koops (2012b) used the same message board

with parents to explore the use of video in relationship to children's musical play at home.

Kastner (2012) explored informal music pedagogy and its application to the classroom within the professional development community. Although it was not the emphasis of the research, Facebook proved a useful tool in the educative process as teachers engaged in learning together while applying their new knowledge in their classrooms. Kastner's (2012) use of a private Facebook group for a professional development community of elementary music teachers, offers a potential model for format of this study. The use of a private Facebook group as the educative forum presents a viable learning environment in this research, where parents can learn together, while also applying their new knowledge to their musical interactions with their children.

Koops (2012) conducted a qualitative study of nine parents of children in an early childhood music class. They engaged in weekly blog posts and other interaction on a private message board for seven weeks. Koops used all participant posts on the site and transcripts from exit interviews as data. The researcher coded all data and analyzed it for emergent themes. Through the process, the teacher-researcher became more aware of children's music making at home. Parents held mixed perceptions regarding participation in the message board. They recognized the benefits such as increased awareness, education, and reflection on musical development. They also valued the enhanced connections with the teacher, with other parents, and with their

children. Two drawbacks mentioned by parents were lack of time and a preference for in-person interaction.

In the following study, Koops (2012b) used the same message board as a forum for sharing about music making at home documented by flip video cameras. Koops used videos from classes and family videos, exit interviews, and content analysis of group posts as data. The researcher then coded the data using HyperRESEARCH. Parents found the forum to be useful for learning more about children's musical play and their role in the musical interactions. However, they mentioned that there was less dialogue about musical development and more focus on making videos. This study confirms the opportunity social media creates for learning about musicking occurring at home, but consistent with other literature, without a specified educative focus, other priorities, such as video production, can supersede parent learning.

The Current Study

Social media plays an integral part in people's everyday lives (Nielsen, 2012) and holds the potential to educate users (Taylor et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2012; Wolf et al., 2012). A majority of young adults, the likely age group of parents with young children, use social media regularly (Nielsen, 2012), with most new parents using Facebook (Bartholomew et al., 2012). With such widespread use and integration into people's daily lives, Facebook offers unique educational opportunities. The use of Facebook facilitates easier communication between teachers and students (Aydin,

2012) and it has been used as a classroom learning environment for youth and at all levels of academia (Aydin, 2012; Bull et al., 2012; Buzzetto-More, 2012; Jaganath et al., 2012; Wolf et al., 2012). Facebook offers an accessible, affordable, and convenient tool for parent education in musical development.

Thus, Koops' (2012a) model for musical parent education with young children using social media served as a basis for this research. Koops conducted a seven week study with weekly lessons and prompts on a private message board to impart new information and encourage participation. I also posted weekly lessons for eight weeks to educate parents about musical development. I posted prompts to encourage discussion and included activities to try at home to encourage parent-child musical interaction.

In the same way, Kastner's (2012) paradigm for a private community of learners on Facebook also functions as a framework for this study. Because most parents of young children already use Facebook, I chose Facebook as an educative forum to eliminate the need for a separate dedicated site to conduct the research. A private Facebook group allowed for confidentiality and convenience on a familiar social media platform. Therefore, I explored the use of Facebook as a tool to educate parents about interacting musically with their young children.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Rationale for Design

The purpose of this research was to contribute to the body of literature regarding the use of social media as an educative tool for parents about musical development in early childhood. Because Facebook is a social media platform that has become a part of a most young parents' typical day (Bartholomew et al., 2012), I used a Facebook group as the platform to interact with parents of young children. Thus, the research questions framing this study were:

1. How do parents' describe their musical interactions with their children as a result of participation in the research group?
2. How does social media, particularly a private Facebook group, function as an educative tool for parents about musical development in early childhood?

By conducting this study in real time with parents of young children, using a private Facebook group, I sought to create a holistic and detailed picture of Facebook as a potential educative tool for parents in early childhood music (Creswell, 2009).

As evidenced by the lack of literature, exploring social media as an educative instrument in early childhood music education is a relatively new area of study. I chose a qualitative design for this exploratory work, as it allows for "exploration, discovery and inductive logic" (Patton, 2002, p. 55). In this research, I explored the

process of using social media to educate parents in early childhood music. Patton (2002) suggested that

[q]ualitative inquiry is highly appropriate for studying process because (1) depicting process requires detailed descriptions of how people engage with each other, (2) the experience of process typically varies for different people so their experiences need to be captured in their own words, (3) process is fluid and dynamic so it can't be fairly summarized on a single rating scale at one point in time, and (4) participants' perceptions are a key process consideration." (p. 159)

Additionally, qualitative research allows the researcher to be flexible and responsive as issues and ideas develop (Saldaña, 2011; Stake, 2010), which is appropriate for an exploratory study like this one. A qualitative design was a natural fit for this work.

Theoretical Lens

My approach to this study was founded on three theories: symbolic interactionism theory (Blumer, 1969), social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977) and scaffolding theory (Bruner, 1966).

Symbolic Interactionism

"Symbolic interactionism is the way we learn to interpret and give meaning to the world through our interactions with others" (Plunkett, 2013, "Theory," para. 2).

Value is not inherent in objects; rather meaning is formed through relationships. The family is central to this process as the most foundational social unit in any community

(UDHR, 2013). Meaning constantly evolves based on social interaction; it forms as one person interprets an action, reflects, and responds; the other individual similarly interprets, reflects, and responds, in an ongoing feedback loop. Thus, the context of symbolic interactionism was appropriate for this research. As an active participant in and facilitator of this research, I studied all behaviors as a series of action, reaction, and interaction. I sought to understand the dialogue between and among myself as teacher-researcher and participants (Blumer, 1969; Saldaña, 2011). I posted in the Facebook research group and sought the feedback and meaning of the participants, which then influenced my own response, resulting in a continual cycle of “action, reaction and interaction” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 47).

Social Cognitive Theory

A principal tenet of Bandura’s (1977) social cognitive theory is the reciprocal interaction of personal, social, and environmental factors on learning. While social cognitive theory is useful to interpret the interplay between and among people, Bandura added to it the role of cognition in action and motivation. Parents act as models for their children, giving implicit and explicit value to different actions, whether by omission or commission. Children, then, based on what they have seen, construct their own cognitive conception of the importance and consequences of those particular actions. This theory suggests the impact of observation and modeling on parents and children’s behavior; a parent models, the child observes, and then replicates the parent’s behavior. For this research, I viewed modeling as a primary

aspect of musical interaction between parents and their young children. By modeling musical behaviors, parents implicitly demonstrate that music making is a value and those behaviors will likely be imitated by the child.

Scaffolding Theory

Scaffolding theory reveals the active role that teachers and parents play in guiding children toward independent learning. Bruner (1966) stated that scaffolding is the process of giving support, which can be increased or decreased as children gain confidence and competence in a domain of learning. Scaffolding by a more knowledgeable other is exemplified by ongoing evaluation and guidance that is individualized and adaptive (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). This support process requires knowledge of the learner's capabilities and the task to be completed. Yet the process is dialogical in nature. There is communication between both persons, with the learner actively making decisions throughout the process, not passively following directions. Also significant is the transfer of responsibility from competent scaffold, such as a parent, to the child (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). The child should gain ownership of the concept, not just the capability to do the task, but also understanding the process. Similar to social cognitive theory, where parents are models for their children, parents are actively involved in scaffolding; their assistance is dynamic, changing over time based on their child's needs.

Fundamental to scaffolding theory is a competent adult who is knowledgeable about the task and the learner's capabilities. In the Facebook group, I sought to

provide parents with sufficient knowledge of musical development, so they could understand their children's musical undertakings and recognize their children's musical capabilities. Empowered with knowledge of the particular musical endeavor in which engaging their child and their children's musical capabilities, parents could be successful in scaffolding their children's musical learning.

Summary

Symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969), social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), and scaffolding (Bruner, 1966) theories served as the framework for this research. Viewed through the lens of symbolic interactionism, I approached this study as an ongoing series of “action, reaction, and interaction” (Saldaña, 2011, p.47). I usually started the action by posting in the research group, and then waited for the responses of participants, which, in turn influenced my own response. Musical modeling was fundamental to my teaching approach. By modeling appropriate musical interactions to parents through lessons, videos, and prompts, I aimed to facilitate similar learning through modeling at home. I hoped that parents would imitate the musical behaviors I modeled, so that their children might imitate their parents. Social cognitive theory was reflected in how (Bandura, 1977) parents demonstrated support for musical interaction by modeling musicking with their children. As teacher-researcher in a parent education study, I focused on scaffolding parents' musical learning, so that they could then scaffold their children's musical development. In the Facebook group, I sought to provide parents with sufficient knowledge of musical

development, so they could understand the musical behaviors their children experienced, recognize their children's musical capabilities, and scaffold their children's learning effectively.

Conceptual Lens

NAEYC Position Statement

My beliefs about early childhood education are similar to those espoused by National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC). In its most recent position statement (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009), NAEYC called for practices that involve relationship-based teaching and learning and collaborating with families. By building relationships with parents through the Facebook group, I partnered with families to support musical learning in the home. NAEYC also called for differentiated instruction. Children's musical development is unique, just as each family is unique. I endeavored to respond to the different backgrounds of each family through a flexible curriculum. The final priority of the NAEYC position statement focused on active, meaningful, and connected learning (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). I believe it is important to create active, meaningful, and connected learning for parents and guide them toward doing the same for their children. In this research group, I strived to guide a learning process that was relevant to the needs of the parents (connected and meaningful) and engaged them in musical interaction with their children (active).

Play

Also important in children's musical development is play. Play is critical to children's overall development (Hirsch-Pasek et al., 2009). Leading music educator-researchers acknowledge the importance of play in music development (Berger & Cooper, 2003; Burton, 2012; Custodero, 2006; Gordon, 2003; Valerio et al., 1998). Throughout the study, I emphasized musical play as the most appropriate approach to parent-child music making. Particularly with young children, nurturing their musical growth in a non-threatening, supportive environment empowers them to explore, create, and grow. By modeling musical play to parents, I strived to demonstrate meaningful and effective music education without expectation for correctness (Green, 2002; Gordon, 2003).

Musical Development

Undergirding music play is my knowledge of musical development. Music learning theory and music literacy research indicate that music and language learning follow similar recurrent progressions (Burton, 2012; Gordon, 2003; Pinzino, 2007; Reynolds, Valerio, & Long, 2007). Language begins with listening, followed by speaking through imitation, then conversation, and lastly reading and writing. Music also begins with listening, then dialogue-imitation, followed by dialogue-improvisation, and finally reading and writing. Musical learning is developmental; therefore, I approached my musical pedagogy with this in mind. When discussing children's musicality, I explained musical development based on current and rigorous

research regarding the musical development of young children (Burton, 2012; Gordon, 2003). Throughout the research, all lessons and suggested activities were constructed and verified to be developmentally appropriate for young children.

Participants

The participants in this study were parents of young children between the ages of 0-5 years. I recruited participants through paper advertisements distributed at local preschools and through daily posts on my Facebook profile and public Facebook page over a 10-day period. Some of my Facebook friends shared the research promotion with other possible participants. Participants clicked on the link on the public Facebook page to view the consent form (see Appendix A) and complete a pre-study survey (see Appendix B) to indicate their willingness to participate.

Forty-three people completed the pre-survey with 35 choosing to join the research group and one dropping out halfway through the study. Twenty-two participants were friends or acquaintances of mine, but most participants were unknown to each other before the study. Thirteen participants were unknown to the researcher before the study. One participant was a father and all others were mothers. The participants had a combined 59 children, with 55 between 0-5 years.

Table 1: Number of children between 0-5 years per participant

	1 child	2 children	3 children	4 children
# participants	19	13	2	1

N = 35

Table 2: Gender and ages of represented children

	0-6 months	6-12 months	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4-5 years
Male	6	3	9	6	4	2
Female	4	8	4	3	4	2
Total	10	11	13	9	8	4

N =55

The participants had a wide variety of musical backgrounds. Three parents were music teachers and one had training in early childhood music. One other participant had taken a course in college about teaching the arts for young children and one mentioned that her spouse is a professional musician. Eleven parents reported past or current participation in early childhood music classes with their children. Most participants characterized themselves as appreciators of music without any formal training in music (n=31) and without exposure to early childhood music classes (n=24).

Teacher –Researcher-Participant

As the teacher-researcher of this study, I was a second year graduate student at the University of Delaware. I earned an Honors Bachelors of Music Education: Degree with Distinction from the University of Delaware having completed a senior thesis

exploring music literacy development in kindergarteners. I had five years of classroom experience in elementary general and instrumental music as well as middle school general and choral music. In addition, I had taught early childhood music classes at the University of Delaware Community Music School. I participated in a Reggio Emilia study tour in Reggio Emilia Italy, which involved training in the Reggio Emilia philosophy of early childhood education and school visits. I also hold Early Childhood Music Level 1 and Elementary General Music Level 1 professional development certificates from the Gordon Institute of Music Learning. Both the Reggio Emilia approach and music learning theory shape my approach to early childhood education in music. In preparation for conducting research, I completed Human Subjects training online through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (see Appendix C).

As teacher, researcher, and participant, I viewed this study from my eight years of experience as a music teacher and as a parent of young children. My professional and personal experiences have influenced my philosophy about music education pedagogy. I believe in the importance of music for young children. Based on an in-depth understanding of children's musical development, I believe it is important for parents to interact musically with their children. As a friend or acquaintance of 22 of the participants, I had outside relationships with many of those involved in the research. Finally, as an active participant in the research, I was learning alongside the participants.

Setting of the Study

I conducted this study in a private Facebook group that I facilitated. Facebook is an internet-based Social Networking Site with more than 1 billion users around the world. People create their own accounts and can post pictures, articles, videos, and status updates. Users also create a network of friends whose posts they can view and upon which they can comment. Facebook allows users to create pages, often used by businesses or individuals seeking to promote themselves, or groups, generally formed around a common cause, preference, or topic. Private groups similar to the one used in this research allow group members to post content without it being seen by anyone other than those belonging to the group. Computer, phone, or other devices like tablets can be used to access Facebook; therefore, participants could be fully involved from the privacy of their own homes. Because there was no geographic limitation for involvement, there were participants from the mid-Atlantic, northeast, southeast, and west coast areas of the United States.

Data Collection

Recruitment

Before the study began, I obtained approval from the University of Delaware Internal Review Board (IRB) for research with human subjects (see Appendix D). I recruited participants on a voluntary basis through paper flyers at local preschools and Facebook promotions on my profile page and public Facebook page. Over a period of 10 days, I re-posted and re-shared the recruitment information inviting parents of

young children to participate in the research. Attached to the recruitment text was a promotional video that I created to encourage interest. Possible participants then clicked on the research link to view the consent form and pre-study survey (see Appendices A & B). By completing the survey, participants indicated their consent to participate in the study. I then invited all persons who completed the survey to a private Facebook group for participation in the research.

Research group

Between September 15, 2013 and November 10, 2013, 35 parents of young children participated in a private Facebook group in order to learn more about making music at home with their children. Over a period of eight weeks, I created and posted weekly lessons, and ideas for parents to implement with their children. I invited participants to respond to each lesson post with their observations and experiences of musically interacting with their children based on the lessons. Group members were also encouraged to respond to each other's posts and any questions posed by me throughout the week.

Because I was using a symbolic interactionist framework, throughout the study I initiated a sequence of action-reaction-interaction through my posts. As a catalyst, I started the action by posting weekly lessons. When participants posted a reply, I continued the interaction by responding to all participant posts, purposefully choosing the style in which I interacted (e.g., affirmation, extending conversation, asking follow-up questions). Based on participant responses, I would post additional

questions and brief posts throughout the week to extend conversation or as a prompt for new discussion.

Flexible Curriculum

I created and used a *flexible curriculum*: one that evolved over time. In order to be responsive to participants' needs and questions, I developed all lessons, excluding week one, during the course of the study (see Table 3). After seeing participant posts and responses, I chose lesson material that I felt was appropriate and relevant to participants' needs. I paid close attention to participants' interactions with me as well as their interactions with each other. If participants asked a question, commented on another group member's post, or initiated a conversation, I noted those interactions. If participants responded to a prompt I posted or did not respond to a prompt I posted, I documented that participation. I would then develop and modify future lessons to appropriately respond to and build upon the participation that occurred.

At times, I asked for specific feedback from participants regarding lesson content and process (e.g., length of lesson, timing of posting material, and my style of interaction), which I then applied to how I approached the remainder of the study. For example, if participation in the group changed from my expectations as the researcher, I asked for insight from individual participants or the entire group. Those participants gave useful critical observations (Stake, 2010) with regard to possible adjustments of the curriculum. I used all participant feedback, individual, and group, to modify the curriculum, noting how and why I made any changes in my research journal.

Table 3: Lesson Topics

	Lesson Topic	Additional Posts
Week 1	Basic overview of musical development & introductions	Musical fast facts
Week 2	More in-depth musical development: singing, chanting, moving & musical play ideas	
Week 3	Discovering our children's musicality	Stages of musical development
Week 4	Rhythm & chanting: whole-part-whole approach	2 rhythm videos
Week 5	Singing: whole-part-whole approach	1 singing video Feedback on group content
Week 6	Musical milestones	Feedback on functionality
Week 7	All about instruments: exploration, lesson readiness and age-appropriate activities	2 instrument activity videos
Week 8	Bringing it all together: idea sharing, resources, and research articles	Shared various articles, links to resources

Timeline

This study took place during the fall semester of 2013. Within the semester, the two-month period from September 5 – November 11, 2013, was devoted to the implementation of an early childhood music Facebook group. I collected data simultaneously with the study, and the data analysis took place in November and December 2013. Findings and conclusions were determined between January and March 2013.

Data Sources

Data from the study were all posts in the Facebook group, my research journal, the pre and post-study questionnaires, and records of conversations about the study with group participants.

Pre-Study Questionnaire

Based on an informal review of social media literature, the majority of researchers used questionnaires as a data source to illuminate participants' perceptions of social media (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012; Bull et al., 2012; Jaganath, 2012; Buzzeto-More, 2012; Wolf et al., 2012; Kayam & Hirsch, 2012). In this study, participants completed online pre- and post-study questionnaires before and after the 8-week Facebook group study. For content and construct validity I piloted both questionnaires with three individual adults and made some small adjustments in language for clarity and consistency. Based on responses from survey vetting, I modified option response descriptors on two questions to make them consistent, and changed wording on one question contained in both questionnaires for comprehension.

To tailor the Facebook group curriculum to participants' needs, all participants completed a pre-study survey. This survey involved basic demographic information about participants' children such as their ages, gender, and number of children represented by each participant. I also used this questionnaire as a baseline for the participants' knowledge about and experience with early childhood music. The questionnaire contained option response- and free response questions (see Appendix

B). I used the information from the pre-study questionnaire to inform my approach to the research group lessons.

Posts

Similar to Koops (2012), Callaghan and Bower (2012), Snyder (2013), and Buzzeto-More (2012) I collected all posts on the group page and in-group messages as data. By responding to researcher lesson posts, prompts and other group member posts participants were able to share their experiences with the researcher and the group. Group posts served as one of the main sources of data for understanding participant experiences and how social media functions as an educative tool in music.

Research Journal

Throughout the course of the study, I kept a journal of my questions, impressions, and ideas for next steps—particularly with regard to lessons and discussion prompts. Like field notes, this journal served as a reference for my perceptions of what occurred, as well as a record of the choices that I made and reasoning for each action during the study (Patton, 2002). On a regular basis, I discussed study progress with two critical friends, an early childhood music expert, and a parent of young children. Both persons acted as a sounding board and gave me insight into research decisions. My notes from these discussions are included in my research journal. Because I studied the interaction between the participants and myself, this journal also contains working hypotheses and beginning analyses, giving my impressions of the research throughout the process (Stake, 2010).

Conversations with Participants

During most weeks, I interacted with multiple participants in social settings and discussions about the study occurred naturally. I recorded the content of the discussion at the first opportunity on the same day. Stake (2010) recommended that, “the researcher should get critical friends to review the progress at various times during the study” (p. 126). Because some of the participants were my friends, I sometimes sought out their individual feedback on the group through private Facebook messages, which are not viewable by other participants. All of these conversations were collected as data, to inform the procedure of my inquiry and research decisions.

Occasionally, participants initiated private Facebook conversations with me. I treated these as participant conversations, not group posts, because the whole group did not see them. For example, in Week 6 a participant requested a phone conversation with me. This participant had extensive research experience and gave relevant feedback toward improving the research process. I took thorough notes throughout the dialogue. Conversations with participants were a valuable source of data that served to support teacher-researcher decision making.

Post-Study Survey

At the completion of the 8-week research, 24 of the 35 participants voluntarily completed an anonymous post-study questionnaire. Through the post-study questionnaire, I examined participants’ experiences in the research group related to the

research questions: a) their perceptions of the change in their musical interactions with their children; and b) using social media as an educative tool.

I had vetted the post-survey before the research began; however, before completion of the 8-week research group, I chose to change some of the questions to more specifically address questions that had arisen during data collection. I added three close response questions, with an optional space for comments that addressed specific facets of the research group itself, particularly the use of Facebook as an educative instrument. I vetted the survey with two individual adults. I made some significant adjustments for clarity, re-vetted the survey with two additional individuals, and then made minor adjustments in wording and formatting for clarity of meaning on one question. The post-survey had a total of seven questions: three Likert scale close-response questions with optional comments section, three close-response matrices with optional comments section, and one free response question (see Appendix E). This questionnaire gave insight into participant perceptions and experiences.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was an ongoing and emergent. In order to interpret what was occurring within the group as a whole and respond appropriately, I conducted cross-group analysis during the entire study. After the research ended, I studied individual responses, as well as cross-sections of the entire group, with a particular emphasis on action-reaction-interaction sequences that occurred. Primary data sources included

group posts, my research journal, and conversations with participants. Secondary sources of data were pre and post-study questionnaires, which I used to confirm, illuminate, or contradict my analysis.

Data Organization

To organize the data, on a weekly basis I downloaded all the previous week's posts from the Facebook group page into a Microsoft Word document. I organized the data by date, replaced all participant names with pseudonyms, and removed all identifying information (such as profile pictures or children's names). I assigned a color to each week of data, for ease of organization and analysis, and printed them for coding by hand. Before coding, I arranged the data chronologically (within data type) and numbered all of the pages so that Week 1 Page 5 became W1P5.

I followed the same data organization process for my research journal and participant conversations (private messages and in-person). I organized the data in Microsoft Word documents and replaced participant names with pseudonyms. Then I printed the data on colored paper, one color per data source, for data coding by hand.

Similarly, I downloaded all questionnaire data into Excel files, placed it into tables, and arranged it by survey question. I organized all close-ended responses into tables and formatted them for clarity. I then transferred the tables and open-ended question responses for each survey question to a Microsoft Word document for ease of printing. I removed any identifying information about participants before printing. Once printed, I coded all open-ended responses by hand.

Data Coding

I analyzed the data throughout the eight-week study and after its completion. By coding on a weekly basis, the ongoing analysis enabled me to effectively enact my flexible curriculum. As suggested by Patton (2002), “data gathering and analysis flow together in field work, for there is usually no definite, fully anticipated point at which data collection stops and analysis begins” (p. 323). On a weekly basis, I carried out data coding. First, I would scroll repeatedly through all the most recent data, to get a sense of any patterns or emergent categories. I then downloaded all of the week’s conversations with participants and posts from the site and put them in a Microsoft Word file (as discussed earlier). I used all site posts, but waited until a conversation was *complete* (participants had stopped posting on it) before beginning the coding process. After replacing all identifying information with pseudonyms, I printed the data for coding by hand.

During the study, I did not code my research journal. Because it was a record of my thoughts, impressions, and ideas of what was occurring, I used it as a reference for my flexible curriculum and data analysis, but waited until study completion to code for themes.

A code is a “word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 95). Descriptive coding formed the majority of the analysis process as I sought to capture a picture of participants’ musical interactions with their children and their experience of being in the research group. I also used *in*

vivo coding when appropriate by using the participants' exact word choice as codes. I followed this coding process for all eight weeks of the study.

During-Study Analysis

While the research was taking place, I conducted ongoing *whole group* analysis, without studying individual involvement. I carefully studied all group post data, writing key words in the margins of the pages. These key words and themes became initial codes for that data. After initial coding, I would review my research journal and conversations with participants for confirmation or contradiction of emergent themes and codes. Through repeated review of the three ongoing data sources (group posts, journal, conversations), I identified patterns and emergent themes. According to Saldaña (2011), “the discernment of patterns is one of the first steps of the data analytic process” (p. 91).

By identifying emergent patterns, I used progressive focusing (Stake, 2010), to “gradual[ly] redesign the study” (p. 129) as it progressed. I responded to parent participation and documented the interactions that occurred. Continuing in a progressive focusing mindset (Stake, 2010) and symbolic interactionist framework (Blumer, 1969; Saldaña, 2011), I could confidently make curriculum adjustments based on participant responses, which in turn corresponded to patterns and themes that were emerging from the *during-study* data sources (journal, participant posts, and conversations).

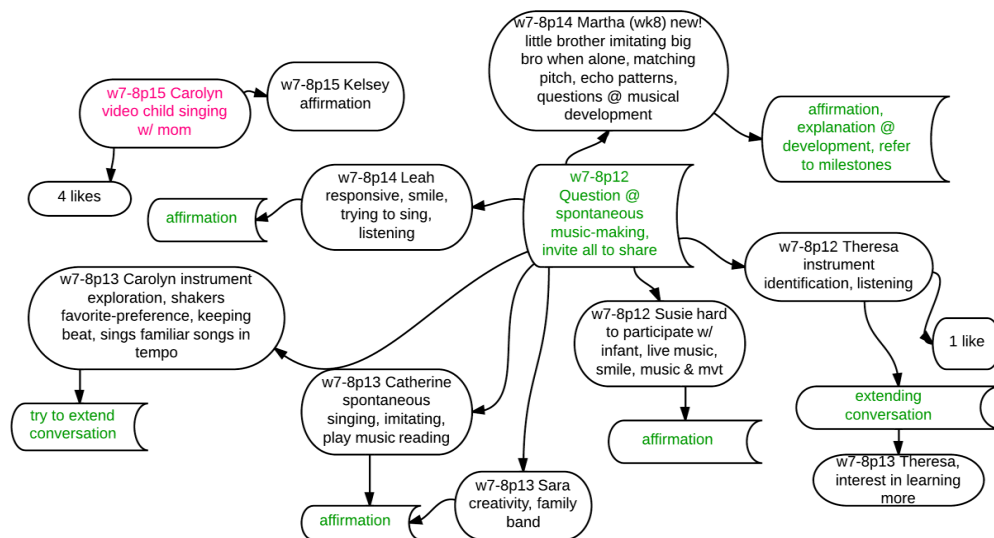
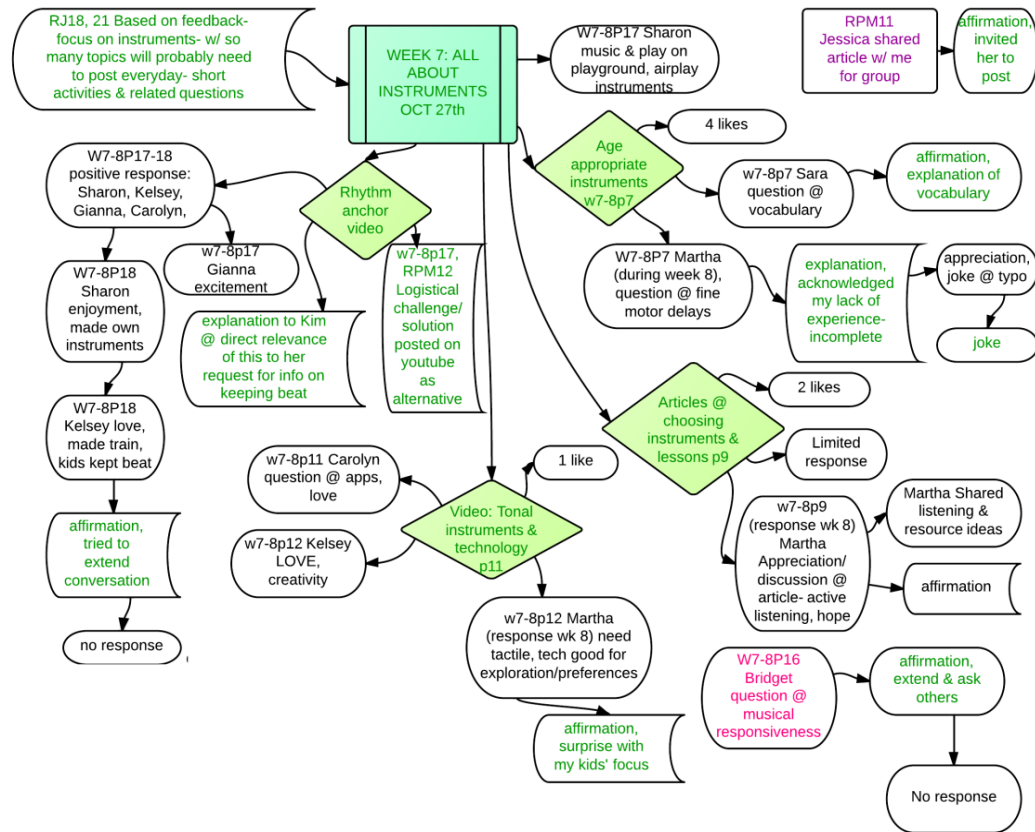
Patterns, Categories, and Themes within the Data

To identify patterns, categories, and themes within the data, I kept an Excel spreadsheet during the coding process. I recorded every occurrence of each code in the spreadsheet. As codes recurred these became patterns. As groupings of patterns became apparent, these became categories, which I placed into distinct columns within the spreadsheet. Over-arching big ideas that existed across multiple categories emerged as primary themes.

Data Diagramming

To more directly track the action-reaction-interaction nature of the data, I diagrammed all *during-study* data in flow charts, one per week, for a total of eight (see Figure 1) (Appendices F-M). This enabled me to understand further the interaction between myself as researcher, and the participants, as well as participant-participant interaction. Additionally, this visual representation gave me new insight into the relationship *between* and *within* codes, categories, and themes. New patterns and categories emerged; I revised codes, patterns, categories, and themes accordingly.

Figure 1: Sample Weekly Data Diagram

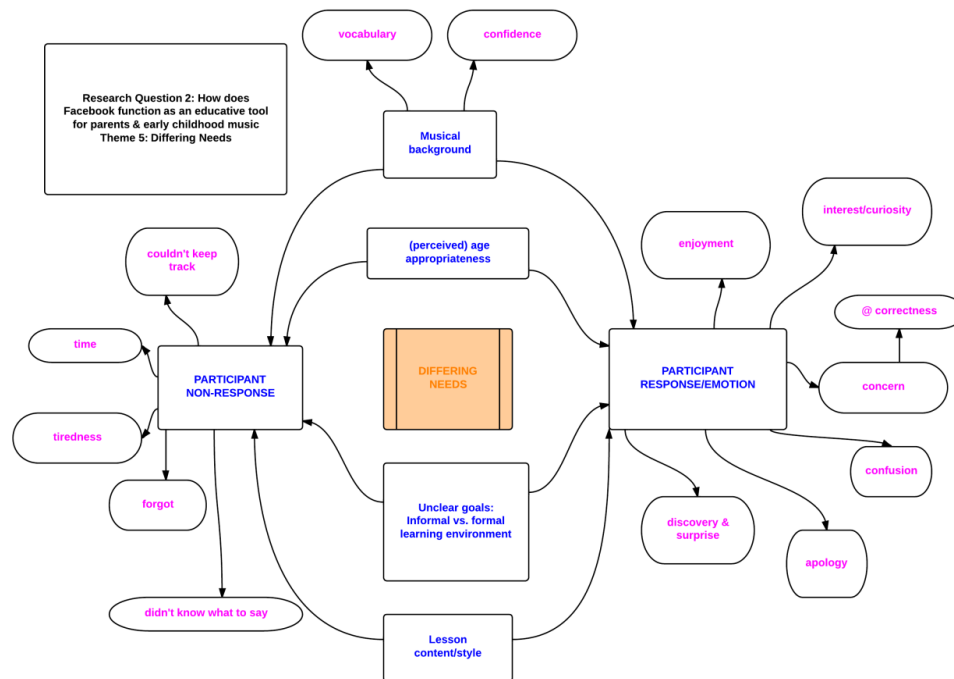


Post-Study Analysis

At the end of the eight weeks, participants completed a post-study questionnaire. However, I did not review this survey until I had further familiarized myself with all of the Facebook group data, gaining cognitive ownership of the data (Saldaña, 2011). After I felt I had full cognitive ownership of the *during-study* data, I compiled post-survey results for analysis. I put all numerical results in tables for ease of viewing and then organized all open-ended responses by question. All survey open-response results were printed and coded by hand.

Through constant comparison, I began to group emergent patterns, categories, and themes into preliminary tables to visualize relationships between and within the data from all sources (group posts, conversations, journal, post-survey). By focusing on the strongest data and weeding out the weakest points, I honed in on the key themes and categories that were most representative of the entirety of the data. As themes became more apparent, I created flow charts that demonstrated the relationships between codes, patterns, categories, and themes (see Figure 2) (Appendices O-T). The flow charts also allowed for representation of silences in the data. Saldaña (2011) suggested that categories are “our best attempt to group the most seemingly like things into the most seemingly appropriate groups” (p. 91).

Figure 2: Sample Data Diagram of Themes and Categories



Diagramming led to further revisions, clarifications, and streamlining of categories and themes. I designed and re-designed a diagram for each emergent theme exhausting the data from all sources. An external auditor then checked the data and data analysis to confirm the integrity of the data analysis (see Appendix F).

Trustworthiness

Triangulation

“Triangulation is similar to the modus operandi approach used by detectives, mechanics, and primary care physicians. When the detective amasses fingerprints, hair samples, alibis, and eyewitness accounts, a case is being made that presumably fits

one suspect far better than the others; the strategy is pattern matching, using several different sources” (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014, p. 299). In the same way, to reduce the chance of researcher bias and provide triangulation, I analyzed data from multiple sources and methods. Primary data sources were group posts, my research journal, and records of conversations with participants. Secondary sources of data were the pre and post-study questionnaires, which I used to confirm, illuminate, or contradict my analysis.

Member Checking

To ensure that the findings accurately reflected participants’ experiences, data analysis, and conclusions were verified for integrity by a sampling (n=14) of participants.

External Audit

After I collected, coded, and analyzed the data, an external auditor reviewed my data analysis and confirmed its integrity. An external audit form is included in the appendices. (see Appendix N).

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

In this research, I explored the use of Facebook as an educative tool for parents of young children about musical development in early childhood during fall 2013. As teacher-researcher and participant, I facilitated a private Facebook group with 35 parents of young children over a period of 8 weeks. The data I collected were my research journal, pre and post-study questionnaires, all posts on the group, and conversations with participants about the research. My analysis process included coding all data sources by hand to find patterns, categories, and themes that were relevant to my research questions:

1. How do parents' describe their musical interactions with their children as a result of participation in the research group? And,
2. How does social media, particularly a private Facebook group, function as an educative tool for parents about musical development in early childhood?

Through constant comparison of all data sources, the themes that emerged for research question #1, how participants described their musical interactions with their children, were *The Musical Child*, *Parent-Child Musical Interaction*, *Intentionality*, and *Awareness*. The themes that emerged for research question #2, how does

Facebook function as an educative tool for parents in early childhood music, were *Differing Needs, Social Interaction, and Facebook Functionality*. Table 4 below illustrates the key themes, and related sub-themes.

Table 4: Themes and Sub-Themes

Themes	Sub-Themes	Research Question
The Musical Child	Imitation Creativity Child emotion & musical response	1
Parent-Child Musical Interaction	Helps day-to-day Experimentation	1
Intentionality	Application of specific ideas from group	1
Awareness	Observe musical development in children	1
Differing Needs	Musical background Perceived age appropriateness Informal vs. formal learning environment Participant response/emotion Participant non-response	2
Social Interaction	Researcher as instigator and facilitator Conversation Silence Observer versus commenter Stranger versus friend	2
Facebook Functionality	What worked What didn't work	2

In this chapter I discuss all key themes and sub-themes of this study for each research question. I have confirmed the analysis through multiple sources, while also identifying divergent interpretations that further illuminate the analysis (Stake, 2010). With this diverse set of data sources and collection methods, I am confident that I have accurately interpreted the multiple meanings of the participants.

Research Question 1: Key Themes

In this study, I explored how parents describe their musical interactions with their young children and how these interactions changed or did not change, after participation in the 8-week research group. Four key themes emerged as significant: *The Musical Child*, *Parent-Child Musical Interaction*, *Intentionality*, and *Awareness*. The *Musical Child* and *Parent-Child Musical Interaction* depict how parents described their musical interactions with their children. *Intentionality* and *Awareness* refer to the changes in musical interaction that parents identified resulting from involvement in the research group.

Theme 1: The Musical Child

Throughout the course of this study, parents described the musicality of their children. *The Musical Child* refers to any description of music occurring in which the child (or children) was the initiator or main music-maker (see Appendix O). *Imitation*, *Creativity*, and *Child Emotion and Musical Response* emerged as sub-themes in depicting children's musicality. Other stand-alone patterns in children's musicality included *music through the day*, *singing*, *music and movement*, *instrument exploration*, and *spontaneity of older child*.

Table 5: Theme 1 *The Musical Child* Sub-Themes and Data Sources

Sub-Themes	Patterns	Data Sources
Imitation	Imitate with new things, young child imitative of others, imitate parent's music-making, lack of interest in imitation	Group Posts, Researcher Journal
Creativity	Make-up words to song, make-up new songs/chants, make instruments, anything as instrument, playground and musical play	Group Posts, Participant Conversations, Researcher Journal
Child Emotion & Musical Response	Preference, soothes, enjoyment/likes, loves/obsessed, emotional attachment, smile, interest/responsive, distracts, stare/focus, personality	Group Posts, Participant Conversations
Stand-alone:	Singing, Music through the day, Music and movement, Instrument exploration, Spontaneity of older child	Group posts

At the beginning of the group, I invited participants to introduce themselves and describe their music making at home. Participants shared openly, with *singing*, *instrument* (or sound-object) *exploration*, *music through the day*, and *music and movement*, being common responses. Kim captured music through the day, posting a picture of her son saying “a little morning half-naked piano action,” describing “marching band” with her “kiddos” when they “[make] me sing all the marching songs I know” and singing “family good night songs.” Chris mentioned how his 20 month old son’s “newest thing is drumming a beat on his legs,” and Paula described how her daughter will “laugh and bounce up and down to various songs.” Patricia posted a video of her son saying, “we have a bit of humming, dancing and singing” to one of his “favorite songs.” These descriptors continued to be common elements of children’s

music making throughout the study. However, these patterns emerged as distinct from all key themes and sub-themes.

Imitation emerged as a sub-theme in describing children's musicality, particularly during weeks 3-4, when we focused on discovering the musicality of our children. Children imitated their parent's music making and imitated with new songs or activities. Tara mentioned how she had a "jam session" with her kids. "My 3-year old 'played' his guitar that he sleeps with every night and I started playing drums on the floor with my hands and my 2 years and surprisingly my 9 ½ month old did the same!" Parents mentioned that their younger children were more imitative of others, especially their older siblings. We also observed as a group that younger children (even without siblings), were more imitative, while older children were more likely to initiate their own musicking. Kim described how her oldest son often initiated various musical activities, *spontaneity of older child*, while his younger siblings would do what he did. "[He] is definitely my oldest's shadow right now, though, so anything he does, his younger brother will mimic." Yet, when learning a new song or exploring something different, he would wait and imitate his mom. Other parents described similar interactions. Martha mentioned how her oldest son would usually listen and observe for a long time before participating musically. His younger brother does the same. "I've noticed with both kids that they do a lot of observing early on and little participation. But my younger one is starting to dance to music more and hum because of the example of his big brother." Later on during the study Martha described how

the younger brother tried some of the same musical activities he had seen his brother do the day before, when the older brother was not around.

Creativity was also a sub-theme for depicting children's musicality. Parents regularly described how their children would make-up words to songs and make-up new songs and chants. Gianna shared a video of her daughter singing her own made-up song, and Theresa shared about her son making up his own song saying, "We were making a pizza as a family and he started singing, 'we are making, we are making a pizza.'" Kelsey described chanting with her kids, and how when she let them be the leader, they really got creative with the rhythms they would chant. Children used anything as instruments, household objects, their bodies, even the playground. Patricia's child drummed on pots and Jenny's child explored the sound of walls and various objects hanging on a fence. Making instruments, particularly once discussed in Week 7, was also a popular expression of musicality for children. Theresa and Sharon were among those whose children made instruments. Theresa posted a picture of her son with the drum set he had made from wands, and four pieces of foam arranged by size on their sheepskin rug in the living room. Parents mentioned how their children were musical in creative ways, such as combining time at the playground and musical play.

The most common sub-theme relating to children's musicality was *Child Emotion and Musical Response*. It was clear that parents saw how music affected their children. Enjoyment was the most regular reaction to music. Children smiled, loved, or were obsessed with music, demonstrating clear preferences early on. Theresa and

Bridget described the strong emotional attachment their 2-3 year olds had for particular music. Theresa's child "broke down" when she switched from his favorite "muppets Christmas cd" to another radio station. Bridget described how her son similarly requests particular music, especially Punjabi music with lots of drumming. Susie noticed that her one-month-old child already preferred rhythmic music during play and slower, softer music at bedtime. Catherine mentioned similarly strong preferences for her almost 2-year old. Christina and Susie mentioned that their babies had clear interest and responsiveness to music, particularly singing. Children of all ages would often stare, focus, or "zone-in" when listening to music whereas, some children chose to "observe," while others would "jump-in and try." Music also calmed or soothed children, particularly infants. This was a characteristic of Themes 1 and 2; however, participants typically described the soothing role of music in terms of parent-child musical interaction in contrast to sole child musicality, so I will discuss it further with Theme 2.

An absence in the data related to rhythmic chanting. Parents only described their children chanting rhythmically after prompting from my lessons in Weeks 2 and 4. Parents mentioned discomfort or unfamiliarity with chanting. They might not have noticed their children creating rhythmic patterns or their children may not have had a parental model for chanting.

Theme 2: Parent-Child Musical Interaction

Distinct from the first theme, *Parent-Child Musical Interaction*, refers to parents' descriptions of musicking where they were involved in the process. It is possible that parents were engaged in children's musicking depicted in Theme 1. However, if a parent's descriptions included him or herself as musical participant, those actions are included as *Parent-Child Musical Interaction*. Stand-alone patterns in music making between parent and child included *diverse listening, singing, family band, music and play, routine and repetition*, and *dance parties*. Chris shared how he tries "to play a wide variety of music as often as I remember during our normal day-to-day, and its not uncommon for him to be walking or playing and just stop, dance for a minute, and go right back to what he's doing!" Kelsey described how "one of our favorite things to do at home is to turn the music up very loud on the stereo (I often wonder if the neighbors can hear) and dance around."

Parents also described *live music, drumming, relevance to child's interests, rhythm conversations*, and using *familiar music* as aspects of musicking at home, but these were less prominent than the aforementioned patterns. Two sub-themes were most significant in parents' music making: *Helps Day-to-day* and *Experimentation*.

Table 6: Theme 2 *Parent-Child Musical Interaction* Sub-Themes and Data Sources

Sub-Themes	Patterns	Data Sources
Helps day-to-day	Music soothes, keep awake in car, music and potty training/diapering, music changes child's mood, extra-musical benefits, routines/traditions	Group Posts
Experimentation	Creativity, trying ideas from group	Group Posts, Participant Conversations, Post-study Surveys
Stand-alone:	Routine and repetition, familiar music, sing less as kids get older, music and play, relevance to child's interests, drumming, singing to child, live music, dance party, rhythm conversations, family band/orchestra, child wants to sing with mom, diverse listening, turn off music and sing what was heard	

The first sub-theme for *Parent-Child Musical Interaction* was *Helps Day-to-day*. For all parents in the group, music was important in the everyday work of parenting. Parents like Chris, shared stories of singing to help during diaper changes or having special potty training songs. Andrea and Kara described using music to keep their children awake in the car. Music was a part of daily routines and family traditions. It was also helpful for changing children's moods. Becky mentioned how her daughter is "only 14 ½ weeks and its amazing how singing to her can totally change her mood." Many moms acknowledged the value of music for soothing a child, particularly when the child was sick. Andrea mentioned, "being fall and cold season, I unfortunately had to get out the dreaded aspirator this morning. My daughter was

shrieking and thrashing around...I thought I'd try singing. She immediately relaxed a bit...and gradually got calmer as I sang. Music for the win!"

Perhaps related to their willingness to participate in the research group, parents expressed a readiness to experiment musically with their children. *Experimentation* became the second sub-theme in *Parent-Child Musical Interaction*. Parents described actively participating with their children in creating songs, making up new words to songs or building instruments out of household objects. Catherine shared about a game she played with her daughter at the playground. They created new verses to *The Wheels on the Bus* that involved different activities at the playground, such as, "the people on the bus climb up the slide," etc. Sharon described making shakers out of plastic eggs and dried beans saying, "We had fun playing for the rest of the day." Sara reported how she and her kids "started pretending to play all kinds of instruments with their bodies (i.e., horn with mouth, drumming on legs, creating sounds with their mouths, adding cymbals, etc.)." Martha described how she and her son would sing along to music, but then stop the music and keep singing it together or make up their own new parts to the song. Parents' willingness to experiment with their children was evident and positive. Whenever parents tried something new, their children responded with enjoyment.

Parents also demonstrated a readiness to experiment musically in ways they had not experienced in the past, such as using continuous fluid movement (CFM), engaging in rhythmic chanting or singing without words. They would specifically mention that they tried an idea from a group post. Often parents said that they found

trying something new more challenging, but they also expressed excitement when their children responded musically. Susie described moving with CFM with her infant and his happy response. Patricia tried a rhythmic chant with her son and after multiple tries without him seeming to be interested, he chanted the whole chant back to her. Carolyn experimented by singing without words and was surprised that her son recognized the song without the words. “He keeps asking for this song at bed time that he says is called ‘bee boo bee’. I thought he meant ‘twinkle, twinkle’ so I started singing it with bees and boos for words. He said ‘no mama. No twinkle twinkle. Bee boo bee.’ I was amazed at how he recognized the tune without the words.” In each of these instances and many more, the musical activities were new to the parents, but the parents were willing to try new ideas. Their *Experimentation* had positive results. Experimentation relates to the final two themes *Intentionality* and *Awareness*.

Theme 3: Intentionality

In this research, I was interested in how parents described their musical interactions with their children (see Themes 1 & 2) as an insight into music making that might be occurring in the home. Parents’ descriptions of their musical interactions with their children could relate to their participation in the group, but could also have happened independently. Themes 3 and 4, *Intentionality* and *Awareness*, illustrate the specific impact of the group as described by participants on their musicking at home with their children.

Table 7: Theme 3 *Intentionality* Sub-Themes and Data Sources

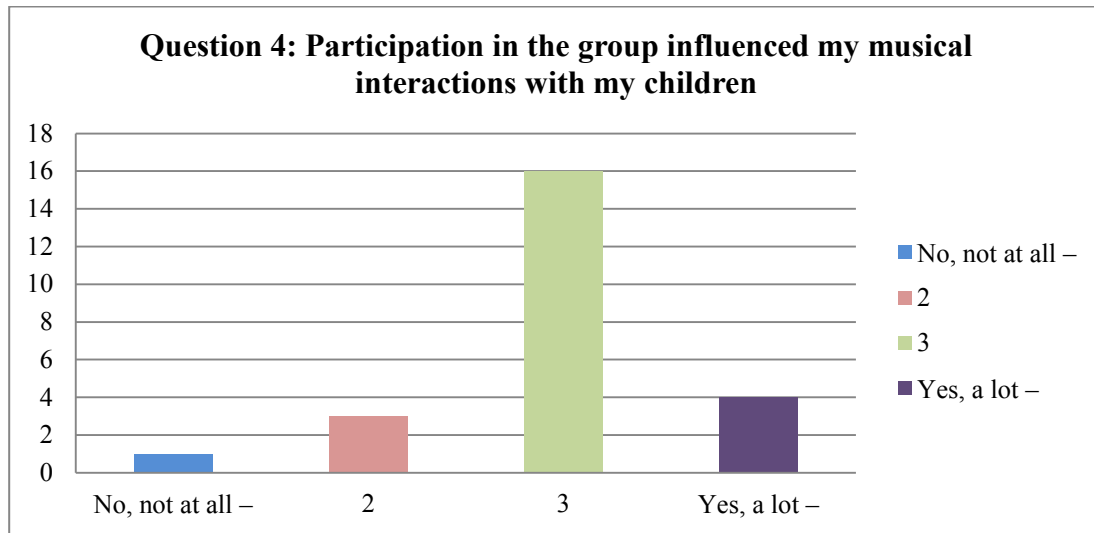
Sub-Themes	Patterns	Data Sources
Application of specific ideas from group	Continuous Fluid Movement, Instrument activities, Chanting, Rhythm conversations, Whole-Part-Whole, Sing without words	Group posts, Post-Survey, Researcher journal
Stand-alone:	Mindful/attentive, Remember to be musical, Purposeful musical engagement, Increased frequency of music-making	Group posts, Post-Survey, Participant Conversations

Intentionality emerged as a key theme due to involvement in the research group. In post surveys, parents mentioned how the group helped them “remember to be musical,” or “think more musically.” They valued how it encouraged them to be mindful and attentive in their musicality throughout the day. Mid-way through the study, I asked group members, “are you noticing anything different in your children’s music-making that maybe you didn’t before joining this group?” Lindsey immediately replied, “Me being intentional and not careless about music!!” Participants even mentioned that it helped them have “purposeful musical engagement” with their children. One respondent reported in the post-survey that participation in the group led to an increased frequency of music making. As referenced earlier (see *Experimentation* under Theme 2), *Intentionality* most often emerged in Facebook group posts as participant application of specifics from lessons. Throughout all eight weeks of the study, mothers mentioned that they tried a particular activity or idea because of participating in the group. Many parents tried developmentally appropriate

musical activities such as moving with CFM, chanting, rhythm conversations, whole-part-whole music making, and singing without words.

During most weeks, participants reported musical interactions that directly resulted from a lesson that I created and posted (see Table 3: Lesson Topics). In Week 1, participants described a variety of musical play. In Week 2, some parents tried moving with CFM, chanting or singing without words. In Week 4, I introduced the whole-part-whole approach to musical interaction. I introduced it this way “Children learn best when given a context (whole, like a song or chant) to learn from, then you break it down into the content (musical patterns), then put it back into the whole again (singing the song or chant again). I invite you to follow that pattern: whole-part-whole as we explore being rhythmic with our kids this week.” Lindsey and Carolyn both engaged in whole-part-whole musicking with their children and were surprised how natural it was. Kelsey even found that her older child would initiate rhythm conversations, which made musicking that much more meaningful for parent and child. In Week 5, Gianna captured a video of her daughter creating her own songs and Sharon explored whole-part-whole musicking with songs. In Week 7, multiple participants reported trying simple activities with instruments on rhythm anchors. A few people even tried the specific chant and iPad apps I demonstrated on the instrument activity videos (see Table 3: Lesson Topics). Others made their own instruments or created family bands with whatever instruments they had around the house.

Figure 3: Post-Survey Question 4 Results



Most parents reported in the post-survey (see Figure 3) that participation in the group influenced their musical interactions with their children ($M = 2.96$, on scale of 1 to 4). Eighty percent of survey respondents ($n=20$), reported the group's influence on their at home musicality as "somewhat" or "a lot." Four participants reported, not much impact on their at home music making. I will explore potential explanations for these responses in discussion of themes for research question 2.

Based on responses from two-thirds of participants on the post-survey, from private messages and posts on group page, the Facebook group encouraged *Intentionality* in music making at home. In the words of a post-survey respondent, participation in the group "helped me remember to incorporate more musical activities into our day and to encourage my children more in their musical development."

Theme 4: Awareness

The final theme for my first research question was *Awareness*. In a private message to me, Sharon told me how “I have music on my mind all the time now,” and a month after the group ended sent me another unprompted message saying, “Your group was effective in helping me use music in our home. Now that is has been over for a few weeks I have seen my focus on music be less. Since I am aware now I hope to keep music more in focus.”

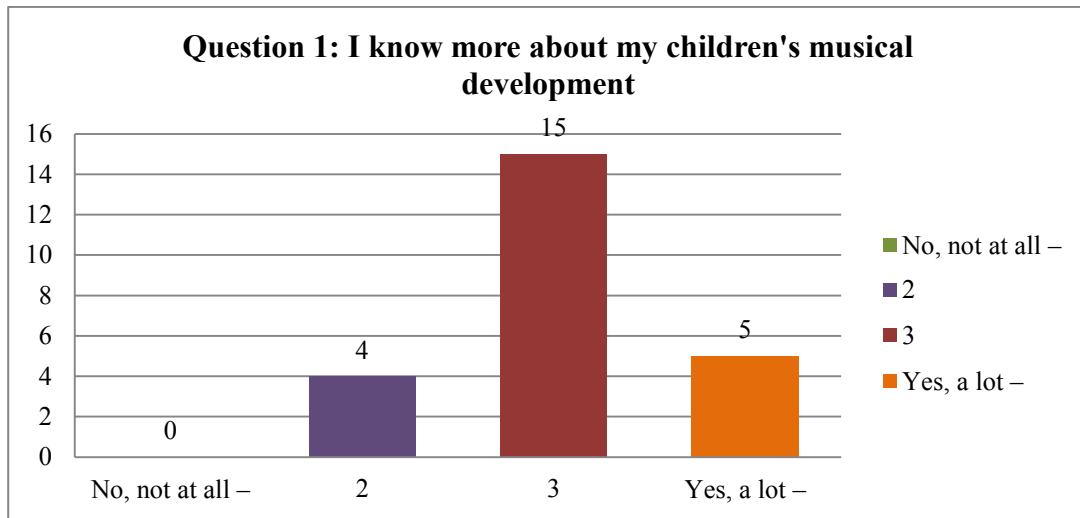
Table 8: Theme 4 *Awareness* Sub-Themes and Data Sources

Sub-Themes	Patterns	Data Sources
Observe Musical Development in Children	Move to beat, musical milestones, sing in tempo when know song, instrument identification, singing in tune, movement	Group Posts, Post-Survey, Researcher Journal, Participant Conversations
Stand-alone:	Know more about musical development, understanding of age appropriateness, reminder musicking is unstructured, whole-part-whole happens naturally, making connections with child's development	

Not only did participants begin to do more musically, they had a better understanding of music in early childhood. Parents appreciated knowing more about musical development. Catherine, Kim, Gianna, Patricia, and Martha asked me specific questions about the musical development of their children and I was able to provide answers. For example, Gianna asked, “I love the My mother, your mother chant video

Kelsey posted. But I think I'd need a little guidance on coming up with rhythm possibilities and then what to notice in our child. Should we repeat exactly, or are we just looking for her feeling the beat, and how can we extend it?"

Figure 4: Post-Survey Question 1 Results



As shown in Figure 4 above, participants reported an increase in their knowledge about their children's musical development ($M=3.04$). Twenty respondents answered "Yes, somewhat" or "Yes, A lot" in response to "I know more about my children's musical development than I did before joining the group." Group involvement increased participants' knowledge about and awareness of musical development.

Jenny, Bridget, Kelsey, and Debbie posed questions about musical development to the group that encouraged further understanding. In Weeks 3, 6, and 8, I posted various resources that illuminated different aspects of musical development in

early childhood. In week 3, I posted a descriptive overview of musical development, and then shared links to websites for more detailed information. After participants requested information about musical milestones, in Week 6 I created a document depicting detailed musical milestones and shared PBS Parents webpages that discussed general musical developmental milestones. In the final week of the study, I shared links to websites with various musical resources including recordings, books, activity ideas, and research articles. In post-surveys, respondents mentioned a better understanding of age appropriate activities for their children. Participants also had a clearer understanding of music pedagogy in early childhood, particularly the whole-part-whole approach and informal learning.

One sub-theme that also emerged within the theme of *Awareness*, involved *observing musical development*. With an increased understanding of musical development, parents made connections with their own children. Throughout the study, but particularly during Week 3, when I emphasized discovering our children's musicality and Week 6, when we explored musical milestones, multiple moms shared new observations about their children's musicality and development. Carolyn observed distinct stages of movement development in her son, and observed that her child sang in tempo when he really knew the song. Ellen noticed that her child had not been singing, but with increased musical interaction, he began to sing. Jenny discovered that she started singing less to her child as he got older, but the group reminded her to keep singing. Gianna was curious why her daughter who can clap on beat was having trouble imitating her parents when they clapped on off-beats. By

explaining rhythmic and movement development, the participants gained more *Awareness* of music in early childhood.

Summary

Parents described their musical interactions with their children in myriad ways, and patterns emerged across participants. Because of participation in this Facebook group for parents of young children, *The Musical Child*, *Parent-Child Musical Interaction*, *Intentionality*, and *Awareness* emerged as key themes for describing parent-child musical interaction at home. One participant summarized the themes of *Awareness* and *Intentionality* when she said in the post-survey, “I became more intentional about my music making and realized just how much musical activity we do during the day, which was a lot more than I realized.” She became more aware of musicking in her home and more deliberate in encouraging its occurrence.

Research Question 2: Key Themes

A second area of focus in my research was the role of Facebook as an educative tool for early childhood music (Research Question #2). Three key themes emerged as significant: *Differing Needs*, *Social Interaction*, and *Facebook Functionality*. All three relate to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of Facebook as an instrument for parent education in early childhood music.

Theme 5: Differing Needs

Throughout study implementation, *Differing Needs* became a clear theme. Five underlying categories contributed to this aspect of using Facebook as an educative resource. The five sub-themes were *Participant Response/Emotion*, *Participant Non-Response*, *Musical Background*, *Age Appropriateness*, and *Informal vs. Formal Learning Environment*. The latter three all related to and affected *Participant Response/Emotion* and *Participant Non-Response*.

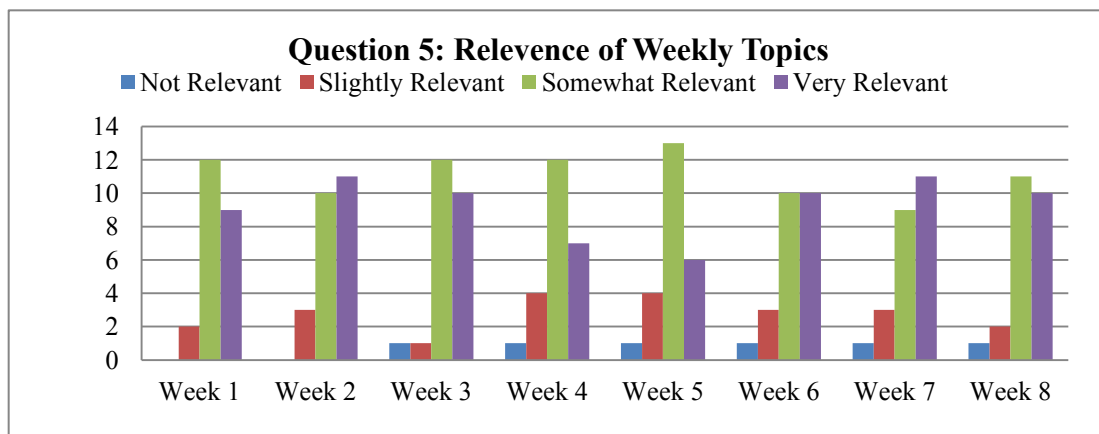
Table 9: Theme 5 *Differing Needs* Sub-themes and Data Sources

Sub-Theme	Patterns	Data Sources
Musical Background	Vocabulary	Post-Survey, Group Posts, Researcher Journal
Perceived Age Appropriateness		Post-Survey, Group Posts
Informal vs. Formal Learning Environment		Post-Survey, Group Posts, Participant Conversations
Participant Response/Emotion	Enjoyment, interest/curiosity, concern about correctness, confusion, apology, discovery/surprise	Post-Survey, Group Posts, Participant Conversations, Researcher Journal
Participant Non-Response	Couldn't keep track, time, tiredness, forgot, didn't know what to say	Post-Survey, Group Posts, Participant Conversations, Researcher Journal

In post-survey open-ended responses, participants mentioned the variety of backgrounds of participants from “expert” to “average” as a benefit of the group. Parents enjoyed learning from those with different experiences. However, with such a range of *Musical Backgrounds* it proved difficult to differentiate instruction to

accommodate the needs of all participants. Those with musical backgrounds often used technical musical vocabulary, such as rhythm syllables or describing their children’s music making as “more often rhythmic than melodic.” They were often interested in more in-depth discussions about musical development. In contrast, this vocabulary intimidated those who consider themselves non-musicians, even when I gave an explanation. The self-described “average” participants expressed a lack of confidence. For example, Lindsey commented, “if only I could sing better,” while discussing musical dialogue she had with her son. Two participants explicitly expressed their confusion with some of the musical ideas. One participant in the post-survey captured it well saying, “I couldn’t tell if [the group] was geared toward moms who have prior training in music, or moms like me who enjoy music, but have little training in it. I’d want simple and practical ideas, but maybe some moms want more depth. I think it’s hard to meet the needs of both.” The *Differing Needs* of musicians and non-musicians alike played a role in parents’ involvement in the Facebook group.

Figure 5: Post-Survey Question 5 Results



As evidenced by post-survey results, all lesson topics were somewhat relevant to participants, but there were no topics that were clearly “not relevant” or “very relevant” to the majority of participants. Again, participants had varying needs and interests, as evidenced by all topics being somewhat relevant, but none clearly relevant to most.

Similarly, parents of children anywhere from infant to 5 years participated in the research group. Although many of the musical needs of children in this entire age range are the same, often participants, particularly parents of infants, felt that the activities were not age appropriate. There was a mismatch in expectations of the participants and that of the researcher. Mid-way through the study I asked for feedback from participants and a few requested more activities for children who are not yet verbal. For example, Susie requested “more information about musical development in infants” and wanted to “learn how to better introduce instruments to [her] infant.” Participants gave similar comments in the post-survey. Thus, there was a differing need regarding *Age Appropriateness*, where parents wanted to have more age specific applications to their child. Due to the nature of social media, particularly Facebook, posting specifics for each age group proved difficult (see Theme 7 *Facebook Functionality*). One participant suggested future groups could include cohorts for “parents of infants” and “parents of toddlers,” etc.

Informal vs. Formal Learning Environment emerged as a third sub-theme. One participant captured this well saying, “I didn’t get a sense beforehand that the group would be ran like a class with assignments. I was under the impression that it will be

more about connecting people with similar interests and kids of similar age.”

Likewise, during the study itself various participants asked if they were supposed to respond only to the week’s topic or if they could share about any music making that was occurring at home. Akin to *Age Appropriateness*, a mismatch existed between my expectations as the researcher-facilitator and participant expectations. I had intended to use the “formal” lessons to spur “informal” conversation, but had not intended to limit conversation. In contrast, participants interpreted lessons as their job, some of whom liked the specific assignments and requested more; while others, like the participant above, found the formality in format to be less beneficial. Differing expectations as far as *Formal vs. Informal Learning Environment* again point to *Differing Needs* of participants.

Participants’ *Differing Needs* as demonstrated through *Musical Background*, *Age Appropriateness*, and *Formal vs. Informal Learning Environment* directly influenced the other two categories *Participant Response/Emotion* and *Participant Non-Response*. Parents expressed a range of emotions related to participation in the research group. Participants expressed enjoyment, as well as interest and curiosity. Sharon commented how much she enjoyed the group, and Gianna stated her interest in learning more, while also showing it by asking questions and trying new ideas. Some participants also felt surprised as they discovered new aspects of their children’s musicality or gained new knowledge. Participants also experienced confusion. As described earlier there was some lack of understanding for non-musicians regarding musical vocabulary. However, multiple participants also had confusion regarding their

role in the group. People were unsure what they were “supposed to do,” as discussed earlier pertaining to learning environment. Kelsey and Andrea were particularly concerned about correctness, commenting, “I don’t know if this is what you are looking for...” Some participants also responded with apologies. Patricia and Tara phased out toward the end of the study, and they apologized for not keeping up with the group. Other participants like Leah and Sharon apologized for not posting more. They mentioned that they were unsure of what to say, but they were still reading and paying attention to everything I posted in the group.

This leads to the final sub-theme, *Participant Non-Response*. In post-surveys, parents cited time, forgetting, and tiredness as factors in not participating. Being unable to keep track of information was also mentioned in post-surveys as a significant factor in not responding to lessons or prompts. I will discuss this further in Theme 7 *Facebook Functionality*. Similar to *Participant Response/Emotion*, when participants perceived lesson content or style as not age appropriate, and the task or vocabulary was not relatable to a participant, parents were usually non-responsive. Some participants would ask questions when confused. Sara was especially willing to ask questions, but most would simply not respond.

Theme 6: Social Interaction

As a form of social media, *Social Interaction* emerged as the second key theme in the functionality of Facebook as educative instrument. Three major sub-themes, *Researcher as Instigator and Facilitator*, *Conversation*, *Silence*, and two minor sub-

themes, *Stranger vs. Friend*, and *Observer vs. Commenter* contributed to *Social Interaction*.

Table 10: Theme 6 *Social Interaction* Sub-Themes and Data Sources

Sub-Theme	Patterns	Data Sources
Researcher as Instigator and Facilitator	Participants not knowing role, responsiveness, post lessons/videos/prompts, affirmation, extend conversation	Researcher Journal, Group Posts, Participant Conversations, Post-Survey
Conversation	Sharing ideas/learning from others, shared experience, describe children's music making, specifically try musical activities from posted content	Researcher Journal, Group Posts, Participant Conversations, Post-Survey
Silence	Type of prompt, limited viewing of other participants' posts	Researcher Journal, Group Posts, Post-Survey
Observer versus Commenter		Researcher Journal, Group Posts, Participant Conversations, Post-Survey
Stranger vs. Friend		Researcher Journal, Group Posts, Post-Survey

The first, *Researcher as Instigator and Facilitator* functioned just as the sub-theme suggests. I posted lessons, videos and question prompts in order to start conversation. As participants responded, I would seek to encourage them through affirmation or extend the conversation through explanations or questions. For example, in week 2, Christina and Susie shared about singing to their infants in the middle of the night and I affirmed them with “Yay mommies! Thanks for being so creative musically at all hours of the night.” To extend conversation I often asked

follow-up questions, such as “have you ever tried.... (insert musical extension activity that relates to their post) or “I wonder...” or “do you think...?” Any time a participant had a question, I answered her question.

This sub-theme directly connected to the others as participants rarely started conversations on their own. I was the impetus for the interactions or lack of interactions that occurred within the group (see Appendices F-M). As group facilitator, I attempted to be responsive to all participants. Whenever participants posted, I would comment or share something relevant to that person’s action. From week- to-week, I modified my lessons based on my interpretation of what was occurring in the group. For example, during the third week, multiple participants expressed difficulty with rhythmic chanting. For Week 4, I made a lesson video modeling rhythmic chanting and conversations. In this way, I sought to foster participant learning, while also encouraging what was already occurring at home. I attempted to facilitate conversation, but sometimes unintentionally created silence among the group.

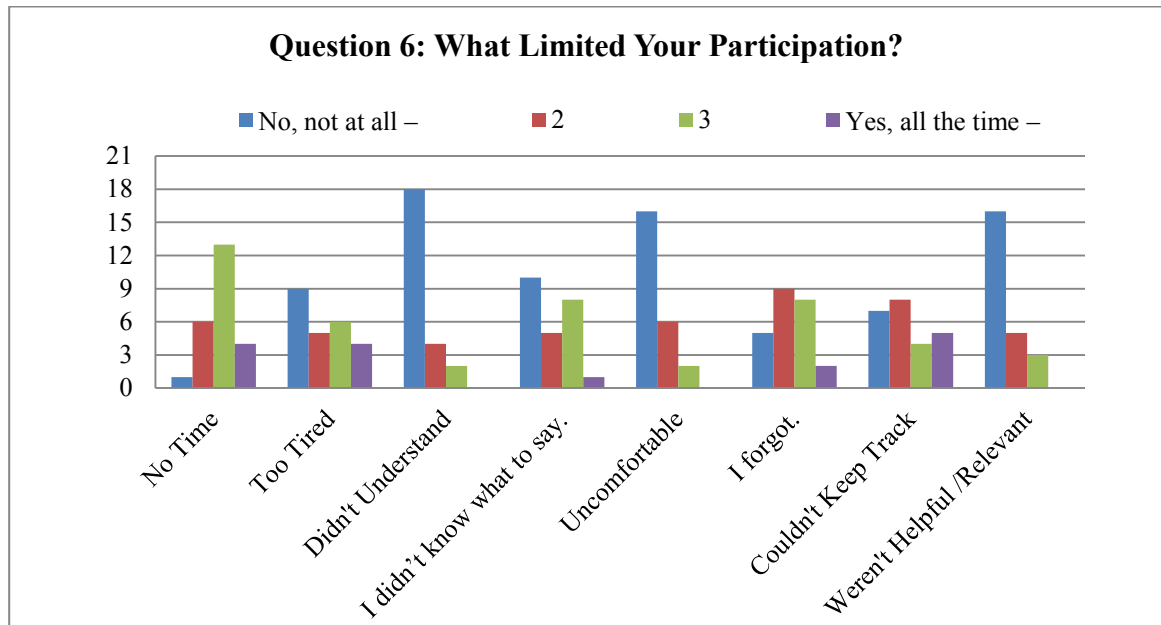
Conversation, a second major sub-theme, emerged through six avenues. *Sharing ideas* and *Interest in learning from others* spurred conversation, both with the researcher and among participants. *Descriptions of children’s music making* (Theme 1) and *Descriptions of parent-child musical interactions* (Theme 2) were also sources of conversation. Participants addressed these descriptions toward me in response to lessons or question prompts. The *Type of prompt* that I used directly influenced whether participants joined in conversation. When I used specific or child-focused prompts, such as “When is your child most musical?” or “What questions do you have

about rhythmic development” those prompts encouraged conversation. In contrast, parents responded less to general prompts like, “I’d love to hear about your musicking this week.”

When participants *Tried musical activities from posted content* (Themes 3-4) more conversation occurred. Participants described their at home musical interactions with me and other participants. The posted content acted as a common connection between moms, as they related their similar or contrasting experiences. This commonality, *shared experience*, was foundational to group conversation. Whenever participants could relate to each other, whether over the crazy hours of being awake with infants like Christina and Susie, or potty training like Chris and Carolyn, or children’s musical imitation or spontaneity like Kim, Catherine, Gianna, and Kelsey, conversation took place. *Shared experience* provided a conversational forum for all group members.

This was particularly relevant because many of the participants did not know each other outside of the group. Two-thirds of participants were friends or acquaintances of mine, but most only knew a few other participants, if any, in the group. This relates to one of the minor categories, stranger vs. friend. Participants who knew each other outside of the group were more likely to comment on a friend’s posts. One participant suggested allowing more time for introductions at the beginning of the study “to help people feel comfortable sharing with ‘strangers’ online.” Because most people did not know each other in person, there was more reluctance to participate, which led to the third major sub-theme, *Silence*.

Figure 6: Post-Survey Question 6 Results



Silence played a substantial role within the research. Not only familiarity affected the silences in the group. Just as specific and child-focused prompts encouraged conversation, general and parent-focused prompts tended to discourage conversation. Thus, silence. As shown by post-survey results (see Figure 5), a variety of factors of limited participants involvement. Likewise, limited viewing of participants' posts led to silence. Multiple participants mentioned that they did not receive notifications regarding other participants' posts. Others mentioned not having time to view all that I posted or that they had trouble keeping track of everything occurring on the group page. In essence, Facebook formatting and logistics negatively impacted participants' ability to converse with other group members. My approach as researcher also led to silence. Because of the confusion discussed in Theme 4

regarding *Formal vs. Informal learning environment*, group members were uncertain of their role. When they were uncertain of their role, they were reluctant to post. Hence, silence.

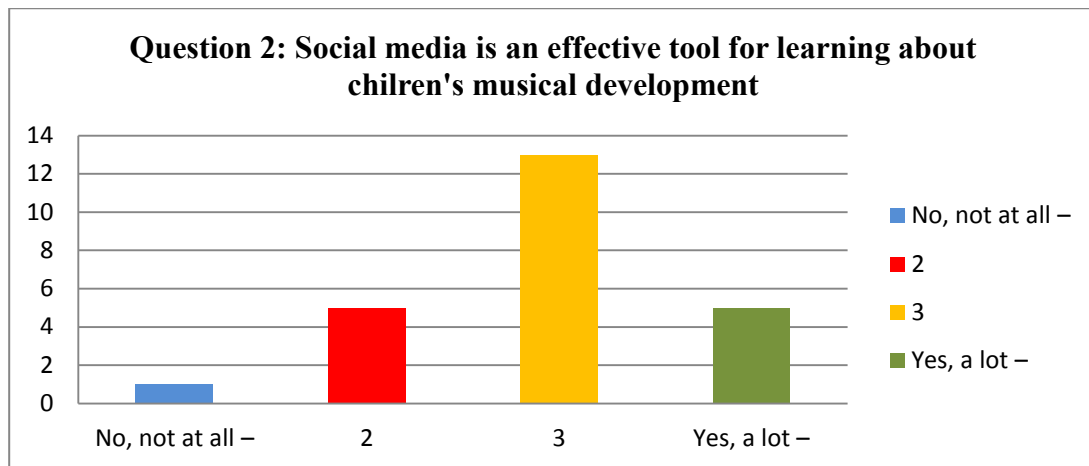
The final contributing factor to silence is the minor category, *Observer vs. Commenter*. A regular part of social media use is observation, lurking or as mentioned by Crawford (2009), listening. Crawford says that up to 90% of social media use is listening. We read and observe without actively commenting. A few participants, such as Leah and Sharon, self-identified as ‘lurkers’ or ‘observers.’ They were actively paying attention, but they were not speaking. Until these participants sent private messages to me, I was unaware of their participation. I saw that the majority of posts had 20-25 views throughout study implementation, meaning that the majority of involved participants saw what was on the page, but I did not know what participants were doing with the group. Did they just glance at the post or did they read it and actually try interacting musically in that way with their children? This facet of social media makes it difficult as a researcher to respond to participants when there is ‘nothing’ with which to respond.

Theme 7: Facebook Functionality

Ultimately, this research served a practical purpose. As an exploratory study, I hoped to observe the functionality of social media as an educative instrument. The final theme that emerged from the data involves the *Functionality* of using Facebook;

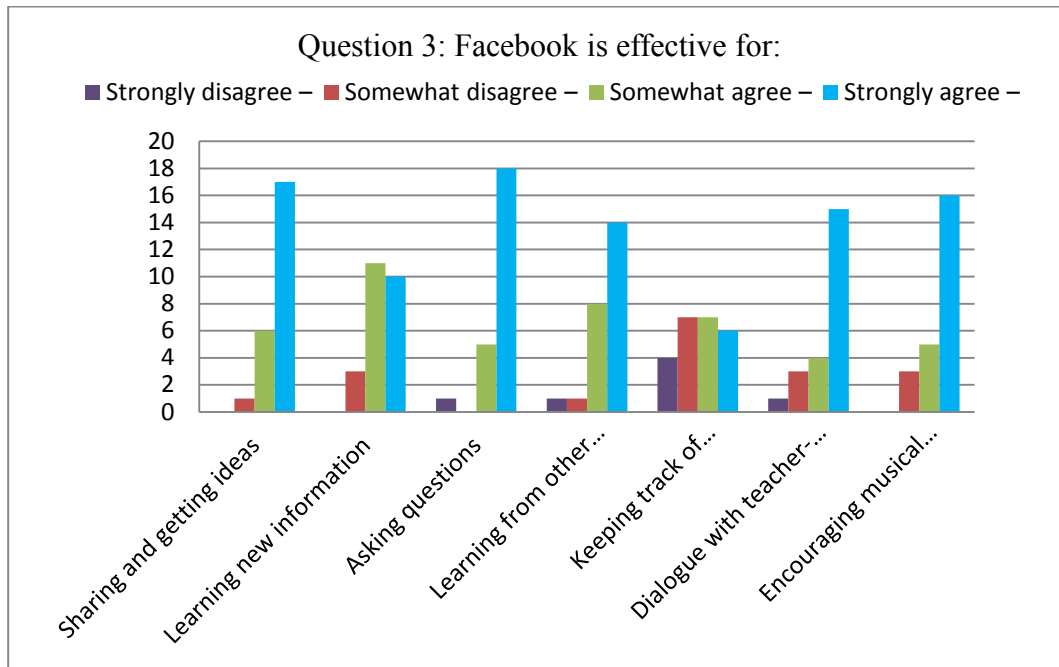
both the aspects that worked and those that did not work in educating parents about early childhood music.

Figure 7: Post-Survey Question 2 Results



Post-survey responses indicated that participants viewed social media in general as an effective tool for learning about children's musical development ($M=2.92$). Three-fourths of respondents felt that social media is effective, either "Yes, somewhat" or "Yes, a lot." However, most participants expressed some concerns regarding the use of social media, particularly as a musical model. Participants felt it was difficult to explain some musical concepts on social media, though video helped, and that often musical explanations needed to be longer than is most effective on social media forums. Participants also pointed out that their experience in the group could only point to the effectiveness or not, of Facebook. Thus, below, I discuss the specific strengths and weaknesses of Facebook as an educative forum.

Figure 8: Post-Survey Question 3 Results



Post-survey responses indicated that the majority of respondents felt that Facebook was effective for sharing and getting ideas, asking questions, learning from others, dialogue with teacher, and encouraging musical interactions at home. Participants most strongly disagreed with Facebook being an effective environment for keeping track of information, which also came through in group posts, conversations, and my research journal. There was some agreement that Facebook allowed for learning of new information, but responses were less strongly in support, with most being moderately in agreement instead of strongly agreeing.

Table 11: *Facebook Functionality*

What worked	What didn't work
Video best model	Difficult learning environment
Short, simple posts	Formatting
Quick, specific questions (esp. child-oriented)	Logistics
Flexible curriculum	Verbal explanation of musical ideas
Specific activities	Complex, technical prompts
Asynchronous- allows timing flexibility	
Reaches a different audience	
Convenient- no dedicated site	

Facebook as an educative medium in early childhood music proved challenging, but still beneficial to most participants. As discussed earlier, participants saw an increase in their *Intentionality* (Theme 3) and *Awareness* (Theme 4) in musical interaction at home as a result of the group. Participants mentioned that there was “good information in the group,” but had preferences as far as presentation. Social media generally functions best with short posts and catchy visuals. Parents preferred short lessons, quick and easy prompts; content they could read and apply in a short time frame. When I began the group, I attempted to write relatively short lessons, but found it difficult to explain musical concepts in a concise way. Modeling is an appropriate means for demonstrating music learning and pedagogy (Bandura, 1977; Gordon, 2003; Park, 2012). Consequently, it was no surprise to me when participants expressed appreciation for my teaching videos. Multiple people felt that the videos

were the best model for presenting musical content. They were short (under 3 minutes) and understandable. Thus, a combination of short posts, specific questions, and video demonstrations seemed to be the most effective in presenting content about early childhood music.

With regard to curriculum and content in the group, post-survey responses indicated that participants considered all the topics relevant with a relatively even spread between “somewhat relevant” and “very relevant” responses.” Participants said that they understood the lessons, that they felt comfortable participating, and that the lessons were helpful. Some lessons had much greater response rates, but it is unclear whether the content, timing, or presentation was indicative of participants’ responsiveness. The flexible curriculum did seem to be beneficial. As I adjusted my lessons from week-to-week, participants appreciated my responsiveness to their interests, questions, and needs. Participants did express that a more informal, flexible learning environment made the most sense in a social media environment. Thus adjusting curriculum based on group member participation would make sense in the future.

Group members also appreciated facets of the group particularly related to Facebook. Participants valued being a part of a group on a website they already visit regularly (which was the reason I had originally chosen Facebook). This was convenient. It also reached a different audience of people who are unable to attend early childhood music classes. Martha mentioned her appreciation for the group because she was currently unable to participate in music classes with her children.

Participants also valued the flexibility in timing that group allowed. Because social media is asynchronous, meaning you do not respond in real time, group members could read and respond when it worked best for them.

While Facebook has its benefits, there were also some drawbacks to using Facebook. A few participants effectively capture the challenges of Facebook as a learning environment. One commented, “I find Facebook as medium to facilitate learning and interaction hard to use.” Another mentioned “so really fb needs to improve, not you.” While a third pointed out that, “a format that could let people easily find the lessons and discussions that pertained to them [would be helpful.] Although Facebook is great because we are so attached to it throughout the day, a yahoo group may organizationally be better in the long run.”

Formatting and organization in Facebook groups is difficult. As I conducted this research, I chose to focus on the aspects of Facebook itself, instead of using a variety of other social media applications to supplement the group. This had its drawbacks. There is no way to format any of the text that you write and all posts appear on the page based on most recent use. I could “pin” a single post to the top, but pinned posts are difficult to find on mobile Facebook, which many group members used to access the group. Because I was unable to place posts in a particular position, it made it confusing for group members to find the posts that were relevant to them. Participants regularly mentioned not being able to find a particular post. This makes for a difficult learning environment. As a learner it becomes challenging to reference previous information, because of the scrolling required just to find the information.

Similarly, the logistics of Facebook proved complicated. At the outset of the study, I explained the set-up of notifications so that participants would receive all necessary updates about the group. Either participants missed this explanation, which is possible considering the formatting challenges mentioned above, or my explanation of notifications did not correctly assist participants, particularly those with mobile Facebook, which I was not using, in setting up their accounts. Multiple group members mentioned not receiving notifications about participation from other parents in the group. Additionally, there was some confusion with posting video and articles to the group. I had used a public Facebook page for study recruitment and at the beginning of the research some participants confused the public page with the private group. Over time, this issue was resolved.

Two aspects of the group that needed improvement were researcher related and less directly based on Facebook itself. These included verbal explanations of musical concepts, and technical prompts, viewed as too complex by some participants. Both have clear solutions that I applied by the end of the study. As discussed earlier, short posts are best when using social media. Explaining musical ideas, which requires many words is less effective on Facebook. Demonstration videos offered an effective solution to the lengthiness and confusion of verbal explanations. Mid-way through the research I had asked participants for feedback regarding group process. Based on participant feedback, I adjusted my teaching style, posted almost daily, instead of twice weekly, and used shorter posts, more videos, and simpler questions. Simpler vocabulary and concise questions, allowed for greater understanding by all

participants. Because I changed style with only a couple weeks left, I found myself posting constantly in order to cover all the information participants wanted to learn. One participant in particular liked the regular posts as a reminder, “to keep the group at the front of the mind.” However, a few participants felt that such constant posts made it more difficult to keep up with the group. While short posts are most suited to social media, finding a balance of the volume of information would be valuable in the future.

Summary

The themes of *Differing Needs*, *Social Interaction*, and *Facebook Functionality* capture the data in response to my second research question, how Facebook functions as an educative tool in early childhood music. There are challenges and benefits to using Facebook as a musical learning environment. The data indicates that participants have differing needs, an awareness of extinguishing and encouraging strategies for encouraging conversation is necessary, and logistical components of Facebook, all influence the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of Facebook as an educative environment for parents.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Summary

The purpose of this study was to use social media to educate parents about ways to interact musically with their children. Using a qualitative design, I acted as teacher-researcher-facilitator of a private Facebook group for parents (N=35) of young children over a period of 8 weeks. I collected all posts on the group, recorded all conversations with participants, created and conducted pre and post-study questionnaires, and kept a research journal as data. I analyzed these data sources by hand searching for patterns, categories, and themes that were relevant to my research questions:

3. How do parents describe their musical interactions with their children as a result of participation in the research group?
4. How does social media, particularly Facebook, function as an educative tool in early childhood music?

Findings

Through constant comparison of all data sources, seven themes emerged. For research question #1, participants' descriptions of their musical interactions with their children, there were four themes: *The Musical Child*, *Parent-Child Musical Interaction*, *Intentionality*, and *Awareness*. Three themes emerged for research

question #2, how Facebook functions as an educative tool for parents in early childhood music: *Differing Needs, Social Interaction, and Facebook Functionality*. These findings pertain to the study at hand and are not generalizable to a larger population due to small sample size. There is a possibility of transferability to other settings similar to the one used in this research.

Conclusions

Music at Home

Among participants in this study, playful and relevant musicking occurred regularly at home. Consistent with Custodero, Britto, and Brooks-Gunn (2003) and Ilari (2004), most of the participants in my group were mothers and they all reported that they sang for their children, particularly their infants. Mothers sang with their infants as a form of communication and bonding, which is in accordance with the findings of Papousek (1996), Trehub (1999), and Trevarthen (1999).

Musicality was often a shared endeavor between parent, child, and other siblings; it was an enjoyable and social experience, which is consistent with the work of Moorhead and Pond (1941). Not only was it a pleasurable undertaking, parents used music to assist with daily parenting tasks, like changing diapers, soothing or changing children's moods, and establishing family routines or traditions (Custodero, 2006; Trehub, 1999). Music helps the day-to-day of parenting.

In addition to singing regularly, singing and play often occurred together. Participants described how their children were musically expressive throughout their

day, which is congruous with the findings of Moorhead and Pond (1941), Custodero (2006), and Custodero and Johnson-Green (2007). Like Burton (2002), children of group participants in this research spontaneously sang while playing. Similar to the work of Trehub (1999), some participants even expressed surprise at how often they sang and made music during a typical day. Parents reported musicking consistently with their children.

Musical Background

Parents' self-identification as "non-musical" affected their comfort with musical vocabulary and music making negatively. However, all parents reported musically interacting with their children at home, regardless of musical background. This finding runs counter to DeVries' (2009) who concluded that when parents view themselves as not musical, they believe someone else should teach music to their child and Park (2012) who found conversely that parents with a musical background are more likely to engage musically with their children.

Previous researchers reported that many parents appreciated music, but were uncomfortable singing or making music with their children, thus labeling themselves as non-musical (Ilari, 2006; deVries, 2009). Similarly, participants who self-identified as non-musical often lacked confidence and felt intimidated by "fancy" musical terminology. However, self-identified musician and non-musician parents alike interacted musically with their children. Even self-designated non-musicians engaged in developmentally appropriate musical behaviors with their children once they were

aware of what they could do musically. Through their participation in the research group, parents reported singing with and without words, keeping beat, moving with continuous fluid movement, engaging in rhythm dialogue, choosing and listening to diverse genres of music, playing simple instruments, creating music, and responding to music in meaningful ways with their children. This research confirmed and elaborated on the work of Custodero (2006) and Trehub (1999) that parents have more capacity for musical interaction than they might realize.

Musical Parent Education

Parents are willing to learn new musical information and behaviors, and that cognizance helps them recognize musicality in their own children. Commensurate with extant literature (DeGrätzer, 1997; Cooper & Cardany, 2012; Koops, 2012a; Park, 2012; Valerio et al., 2012), participants desired to know more about their children's musical development; education changed how they interacted musically with their children (DeGrätzer, 1997; Park, 2012). Additionally, parents demonstrated a readiness to learn how to foster their children's innate musicality. They joined the research group voluntarily, asked questions while in the group, and tried new musical activities learned from the group with their children. With knowledge of musical development, parents recognized musical behaviors in their children, which is congruent with Valerio et al. (2012). When parents gained knowledge about musical development, they were able to observe developmental milestones in their own

children's musical learning. Furthermore, group members changed their musical behaviors in ways that are appropriate for their young children's musical growth.

Facebook as Educative Forum

There are challenges and benefits to using Facebook as a musical learning environment. As an asynchronous medium, Facebook was a convenient and flexible learning environment as suggested by Hughes, Bower, Mitchell, Curtiss, and Ebata (2012). Group members valued the ability to visit the group at times and places that were suitable for them. Aydin's (2012) review of educational research on Facebook pointed to the usefulness of Facebook in encouraging communication between students and teacher. Similarly in this research, parents valued communication with and learning alongside other group members. Participants felt they could share and get ideas, ask questions, learn from others, and dialogue with the teacher, all of which encouraged musical interactions at home. Post-surveys from this research indicated that participants felt the group helped facilitate communication between teacher and students, but in contrast to Aydin (2012), silences during the study indicated that Facebook did not always support dialogue.

Facebook had drawbacks as an educational environment. As a forum where most users spend time observing content not posting (Aydin, 2012), social interaction and user dialogue, through posts, comments or likes, is minimal in comparison to in-person interaction. Likewise, participants have differing needs that can be difficult to accommodate in a single group page that has limited formatting and organizational

capabilities. Finally, learning new musical information can present a challenge on Facebook. Succinctly describing musical interactions in written posts can be difficult for the facilitator and confusing for students to understand. However, participants found short videos which modeled musical interactions and included explanations of the behaviors to be helpful; videos were an effective educational tool in a Facebook group.

Parental Changes in Musicking: A Gestalt

Musical parent education through a private group on Facebook, led to increased intentionality, awareness, and music making for participants and their young children.

Implications for Practice

Parent Education

This research serves as a reminder to music educators about the importance of educating parents toward musical interactions with their children at home. In today's American society, most parents are not cognizant of musical development in young children; but as shown in this research, when parents are aware, they report increased intentionality for being musical in their homes with their families. Through parent education, music teachers can provide parents with the information and guidance they need to support their children's developing musicality. Educating parents of young

children about musical development through social media is an avenue to improve the quality of musicking occurring at home.

Encouragement of Parents' Musicality

By approaching musical learning in a relatable and concise way, music educators can encourage parents' self-perceptions of their musicality. Self-appropriated "non-musician" parents often lacked confidence and were sometimes intimidated by making music with their children. Parents were afraid to do something wrong. However, this research demonstrated that parents, regardless of musical background, were willing and capable of being musical with their children. Music teachers need to create a safe and supportive learning environment, where mistakes are okay, questions are encouraged, and parents' musicking is valued. Then, music educators can act as knowledgeable others (Bruner, 1966), scaffolding parents toward developmentally appropriate musical interactions, introducing new ways of making music in the home, and guiding parents' learning. This in turn facilitates their children's musical learning through social modeling (Bandura, 1977).

Sensitivity to Parent Needs

Researchers in family life programs (Hughes et al., 2012) emphasize the importance of educator responsiveness when using social media as a platform for education. Each parent is unique, with distinct musical backgrounds, experiences, and concerns. Because of this, music educators have a responsibility to be aware of

parents' priorities and to be flexible to accommodate those needs. In this research, musical background, ages of children, and the style of the learning environment all impacted participants' involvement in musical activities posted in the group. A flexible curriculum allowed for adjustment to participants' differing needs. By posting content, then responding to participants and modifying curriculum based on their responses, a symbolic-interactionist framework supported parents' learning (Blumer, 1969); this responsiveness was critical to facilitating effective parent education. Adult learners have valuable knowledge and experience (Freire, 1970) that music educators need to acknowledge throughout the educative process. When music educators value parents' perspectives, parents gain ownership of their own musical learning, empowering them to be more musical at home.

Musical Modeling through Video

As an aural art form on the majority visual platform of Facebook, social media presents a challenge and an opportunity for music education. Description of music making in words and pictures does not effectively capture music play, musicking, or musical dialogue. Music needs to be experienced. Modeling is an appropriate means for demonstrating music learning and pedagogy (Bandura, 1977; Gordon, 2003; Park, 2012). Based on this research, developmentally appropriate musical interactions can be modeled for parents through video, and copied by parents at home with their children. Thus, video offers a solution: succinct representation of musical modeling.

Video is essential for online music education to model appropriate musical interactions in early childhood. The music teacher can “do” the musical behavior, with a brief explanation. Parents then experience a specific musical interaction aurally and visually. By combining musical modeling with description, parents can understand the why and how of what was occurring musically. Then as suggested by social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), parents can then mimic the same musical behavior (Bruner, 1966) modeling musicality with their own children.

Using Social Media for Parent Education

Facebook could be useful for music teachers to educate parents about musical development, because of its simplicity. It does not require parents to visit an alternative site and Facebook groups allow for sharing brief information to an unlimited number of people at convenient times for all participants. However, the formatting and narrow options for visual presentation limit the effectiveness of Facebook as an educative forum on its own. Educators could consider using a Facebook group in combination with a variety of other applications like Instagram, voice memos, and YouTube, that would facilitate presentation of educational information.

However, a more viable option could be using Facebook as a launching point for a different educative online platform. Based on this researcher’s informal review of public Facebook pages, most pages include information that encourages the reader to visit another site, such as a mom blog, non-profit organization’s website, or a web

page for a particular product or company. This same concept could be effective for music education. Music educators could take advantage of Facebook's ubiquity, and use Facebook as a connector to another educational site or social media forum that could more effectively accommodate both educator and learner needs.

Efficacy of Social Media

Music educators acknowledge the importance of parent education. Whether they create Facebook pages or other social media forums, music educators should seriously consider the efficacy of social media for practice. In a period of 8 weeks, 35 parents' musical interactions with their children increased in number and quality. Parents were more aware of the musical development of children, and more intentional about their own musicality within their homes. The majority of participants in the group were parents who would otherwise not have participated in any form of early childhood music with their children. Social media offers a viable tool for educating parents about musical development, regardless of musical background.

Suggestions for Future Research

The focus of this research was the effectiveness of using Facebook to educate a group of 35 parents of young children about musical development. Yet, the use of social media as a teaching environment is largely unexplored in the realm of early childhood music. Further study into the use of Facebook as an educative forum would give insight for the music education profession. It would be valuable to music

educators and thus, parents and their children, to study Facebook as an educative platform in combination with other social media applications, to see if those other applications could overcome some of the challenges presented by Facebook.

Exploring other social media applications as educational platforms for parents in early childhood music is recommended. By conducting further research into the use of various social media forums as tools for learning, the music education profession would gain greater understanding into how to best educate parents through social media. In particular, studying how music educators can use social media to reach parents of young children will enable parents to better support their children's innate musicality. Because young children are in a critical period of musical development (0-8 years), it is imperative that music educators research how to assist parents in musically interacting with their children at home.

Summary

In this research, I studied how parents' musical interactions with their young children changed through participation in a musical parent education group through Facebook. Participants in this study reported musicking regularly at home. All parents were capable of being musical at home, regardless of their musical background and they had more capacity for musical interaction than they first realized. Parents were willing to learn new musical information and behaviors, and that cognizance helped them recognize musicality in their own children. Furthermore, group members

changed their musical behaviors in ways that were appropriate for their young children's musical growth.

I also explored the effectiveness of Facebook as an educative forum for parent education in early childhood music. Though Facebook presented challenges and opportunities as a learning environment, the parents in this study valued social media for supporting musical learning. Musical parent education through a private group on Facebook, led to increased intentionality, awareness, and music making for participants and their young children.

To reach a new generation of children and their parents, music educators must adapt to technology-based approaches. With the use of social media, music educators can reach parents and their children who might otherwise not be participating in early childhood music. This study has revealed possibilities that social media presents for educating parents about musical development.

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Appendix A

CONSENT FORM

This research study relates to young children's musical development and parent/caregiver musical interactions with their children. This research is being conducted by Stephanie Kistler, a graduate student at the University of Delaware.

You are eligible to participate in this study if you are a parent or caregiver of children 0-5 years of age. If you have a Facebook account and can contribute to weekly discussions over a period of 8 weeks, you are invited to join this research project. Your participation is entirely voluntary.

By completing this introductory survey and submitting it, you are giving your consent to participate in this research study. Upon completion of the survey, you will be invited to a private Facebook group to continue participating in the 8-week long study. As a participant in the study you will be asked to:

1. Visit the group at least once weekly to read the short lessons on children's musical development and interacting musically with your child(ren).
2. Participate in discussions with the Facebook group by posting responses to prompts or posts by other group members, and by sharing your thoughts, questions, ideas, and observations regarding young children's musical development.
3. Try some of the ideas presented in the music lessons with your child(ren).
4. Give feedback about your participation in the group by completing a short post-survey.

The researcher will keep all information shared in the Facebook group confidential. No personally identifiable information will be used for research or public presentations or in any publication involving this research. Should you wish to leave the study at any time, you may remove yourself from the Facebook group without penalty.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact the researcher, Stephanie Kistler, at kistlers@udel.edu. For questions about your rights as a subject or about any issues concerning the use of human subjects in research, please contact the University of Delaware Research Office at 302-831-2137 or udresearch@udel.edu. Thank you for participating.

Please press the "Next" Button to continue.

Appendix B

PRE- SURVEY

Pre-Survey Questions were administered through SurveyMonkey.

After clicking “Next” at the bottom of the consent form to indicate consent, potential participants completed the following survey:

1. Please indicate the age and gender of each of your children.
(Drop down boxes with options for age & gender for up to 6 children)
2. Do you participate (or have you participated) in early childhood music classes with your children? If yes, for how long have you been participating in them?
3. In the space below, describe how you typically interact musically with your children.
4. How much do you know about your child (ren)’s musical development?
(4-pt Likert scale, 1- nothing to 4- a lot)
5. Do you think social media could be an effective means for learning about children’s musical development?
(3-pt scale, 1-No, 2-I don’t know, 3- Yes)

Thank you!

Appendix C

CITI Human Subjects Training Certificate

**COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI)
COURSE IN THE PROTECTION HUMAN SUBJECTS CURRICULUM COMPLETION REPORT**
Printed on 02/08/2014

LEARNER Stephanie Kistler (ID: 3221726)
DEPARTMENT music
PHONE 814-360-0773
EMAIL kistlers@udel.edu
INSTITUTION University of Delaware
EXPIRATION DATE 04/01/2016

HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTIONS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

COURSE/STAGE: Basic Course/1
PASSED ON: 04/01/2013
REFERENCE ID: 9240202

REQUIRED MODULES	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Belmont Report and CITI Course Introduction	03/28/13	3/3 (100%)
Students in Research	03/28/13	9/10 (90%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE	04/01/13	5/5 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE	04/01/13	5/5 (100%)
The Regulations - SBE	04/01/13	5/5 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE	04/01/13	5/5 (100%)
Informed Consent - SBE	04/01/13	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE	04/01/13	5/5 (100%)
Internet Research - SBE	04/01/13	5/5 (100%)
University of Delaware	04/01/13	5/5 (100%)
ELECTIVE MODULES	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Research with Children - SBE	04/01/13	3/4 (75%)

For this Completion Report to be valid, the learner listed above must be affiliated with a CITI Program participating institution or be a paid Independent Learner. Falsified information and unauthorized use of the CITI Program course site is unethical, and may be considered research misconduct by your institution.

Paul Braunschweiger Ph.D.
Professor, University of Miami
Director Office of Research Education
CITI Program Course Coordinator

Appendix D

IRB LETTER OF APPROVAL



RESEARCH OFFICE

210 Halligan Hall
University of Delaware
Newark, Delaware 19716-1551
PA: 302/831-2336
Fax: 302/831-2428

DATE: July 24, 2013

TO: Stephanie Kistler
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [476159-1] Exploring social media as a means to educate parents about musical development in early childhood

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: July 24, 2013
EXPIRATION DATE: July 23, 2014
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # 7

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Jody-Lynn Berg at (302) 831-1119 or jberg@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

Appendix E

POST-SURVEY

This post-survey was administered through Survey Monkey.

The following is a short questionnaire about your experience participating in Making Music at Home research group.

1. I know more about my children's musical development than I did before joining this group. (4-point Likert scale: 1-No, not at all, 4- Yes, a lot, comment box)
2. Social media is an effective tool for learning about children's musical development. (4-point Likert scale 1- No, not at all, 4-Yes, a lot, comment box- How is it effective or ineffective?)
3. This Facebook group was effective for:
(Matrix, 4-point Likert scale for each choice: 1- Strongly disagree, 4-Strongly agree)
Sharing and getting ideas
Learning new information
Asking questions
Learning from other participants
Dialogue with teacher-researcher
Encouraging musical activity at home
Other (please specify) _____

4. Participation in the group influenced my musical interactions with my children.
(4 point Likert scale: 1-No, not at all, 4-Yes, a lot, Comment box: How?)
5. Please indicate the relevance and applicability to you of each weekly topic.
(Matrix, 4 point Likert scale for each choice: 1-not relevant or applicable, 2- slightly relevant or applicable, 3- somewhat relevant or applicable, 4- very relevant & applicable)

Week 1: Introductions and sharing

Week 2: Magically Musical Moments (movement, singing & chanting ideas)

Week 3: Dialogue and Discovery (learning @ our children's musicality, musical development)

Week 4: Extending the life of a nursery rhyme (videos, whole-part-whole activities for rhythm)

Week 5: Extending the life of a folk song (videos, whole-part-whole activity for singing/tonal growth)

Week 6: Musical milestones (specific musical skills, more general descriptions)

Week 7: All about instruments (age appropriateness, lessons, videos, rhythm and tonal anchors)

Week 8: Idea Share (benefits of music, listening, music reading, ideas, resources)

6. Were there factors that limited your participation in the group?
(Matrix, 4 point Likert scale for each choice: 1-No, not at all, 4-Yes, a lot)

I didn't have time to visit the group.

When I had time, I was too tired to participate.

I didn't understand the lessons.

I didn't know what to say.

I felt uncomfortable commenting.

I forgot.

I couldn't keep track of where I should be posting or what I should be doing.

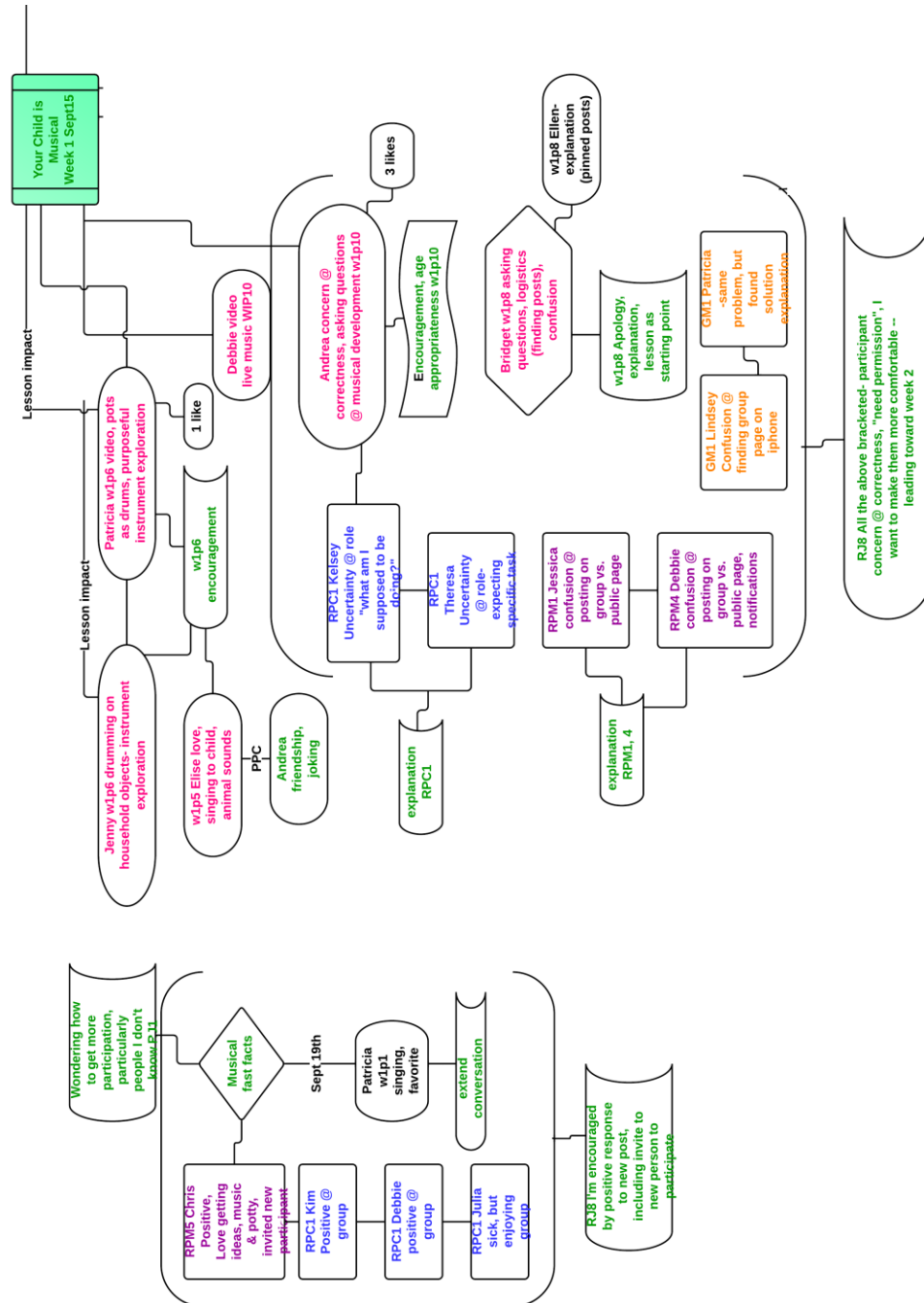
The lessons weren't relevant or helpful to me.

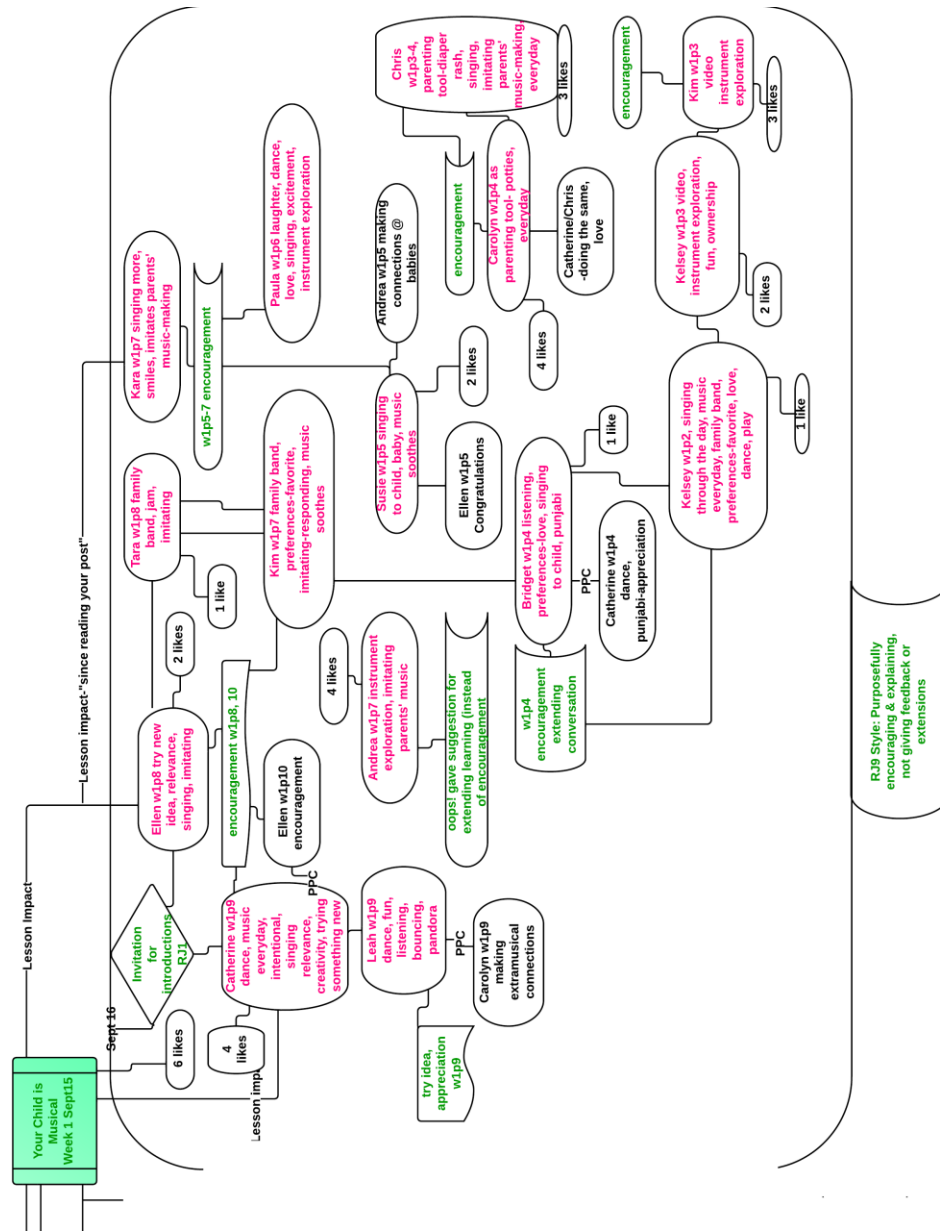
7. What suggestions do you have to make the group better in the future? (free response)

Thank you for your participation in this survey and your contribution to this research.

Appendix F

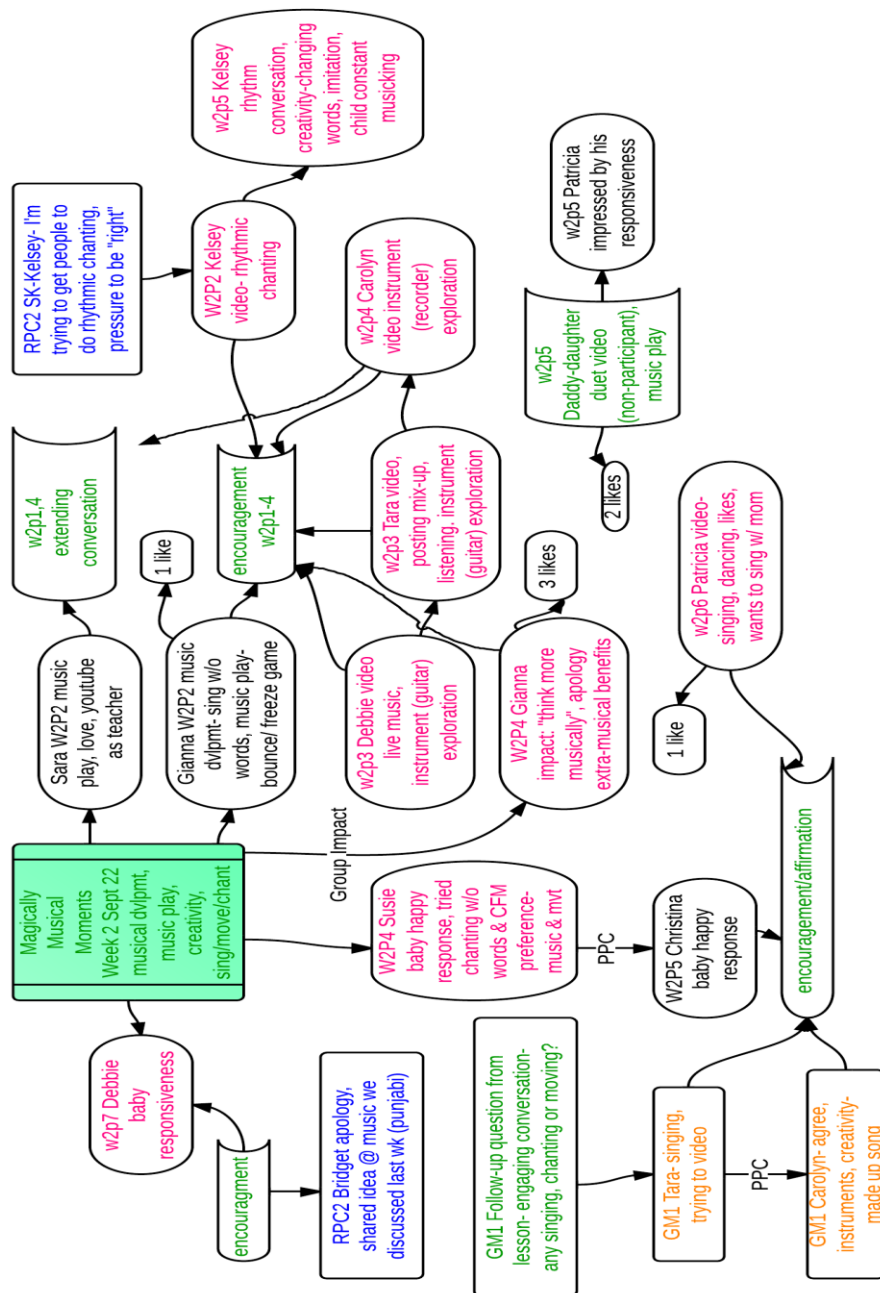
DATA DIAGRAM Week 1

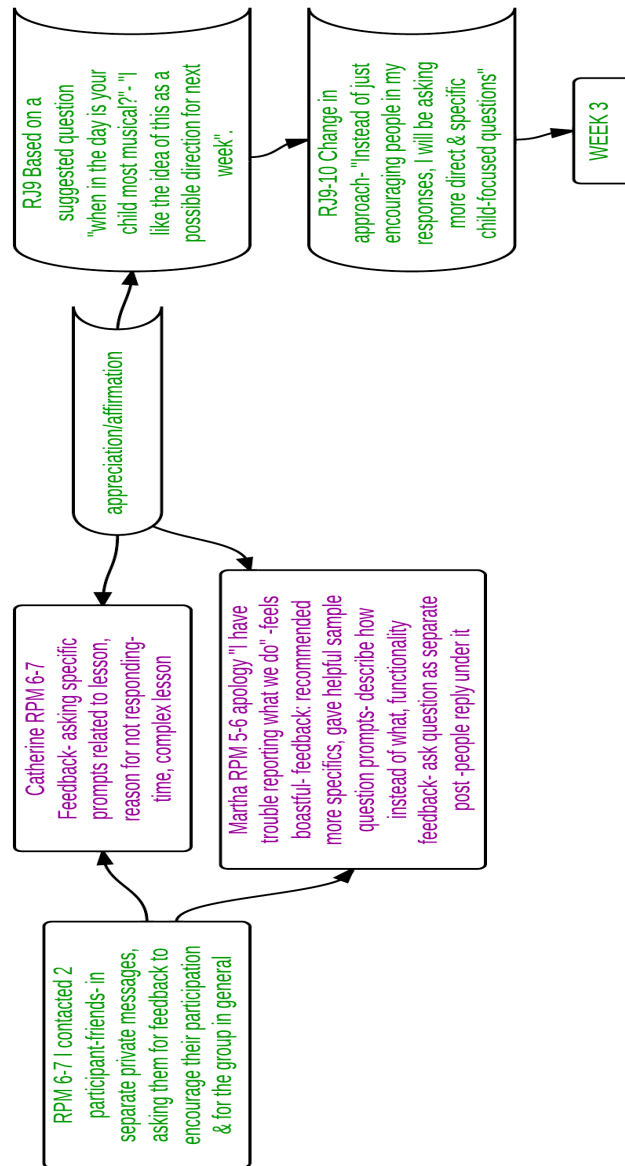




Appendix G

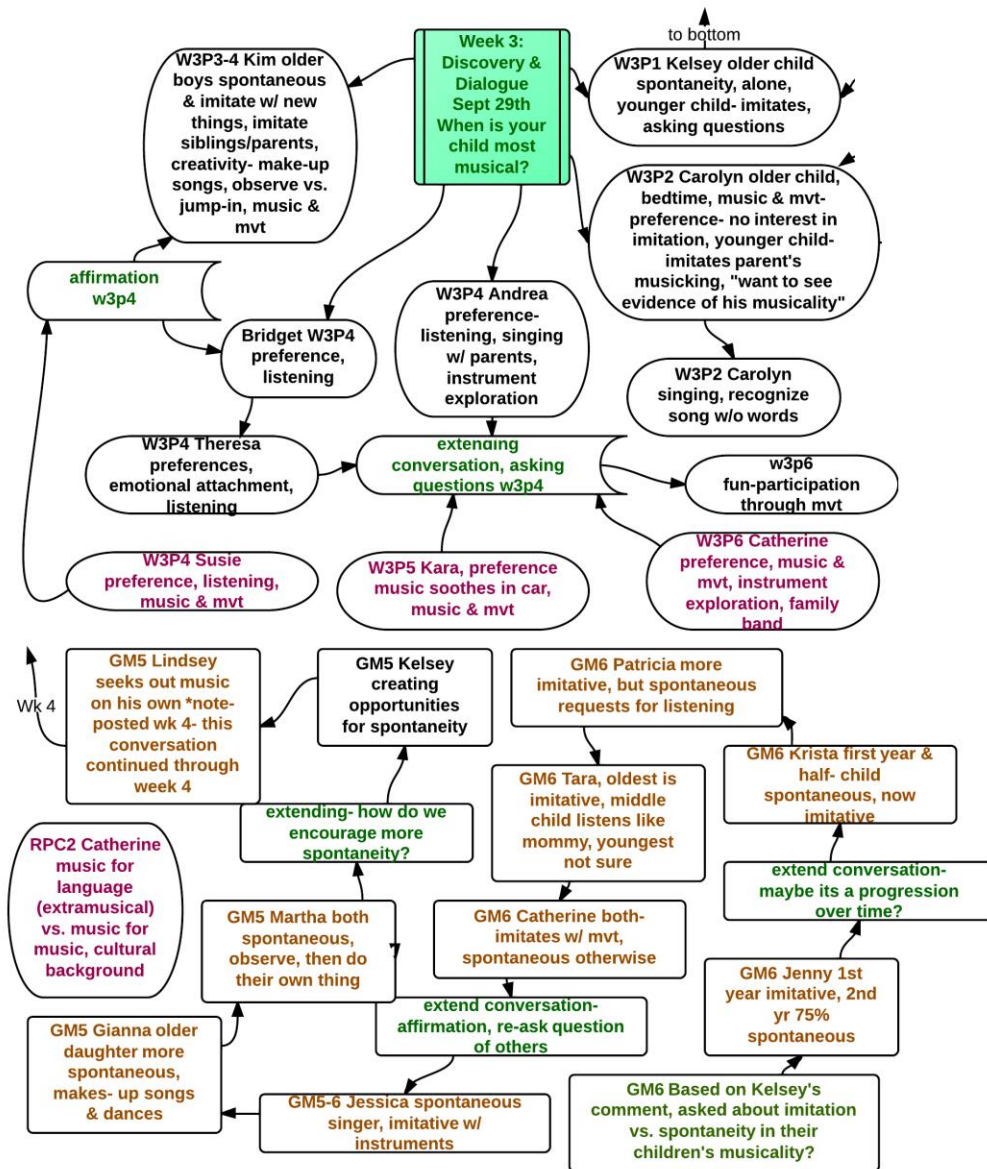
DATA DIAGRAM Week 2





Appendix H

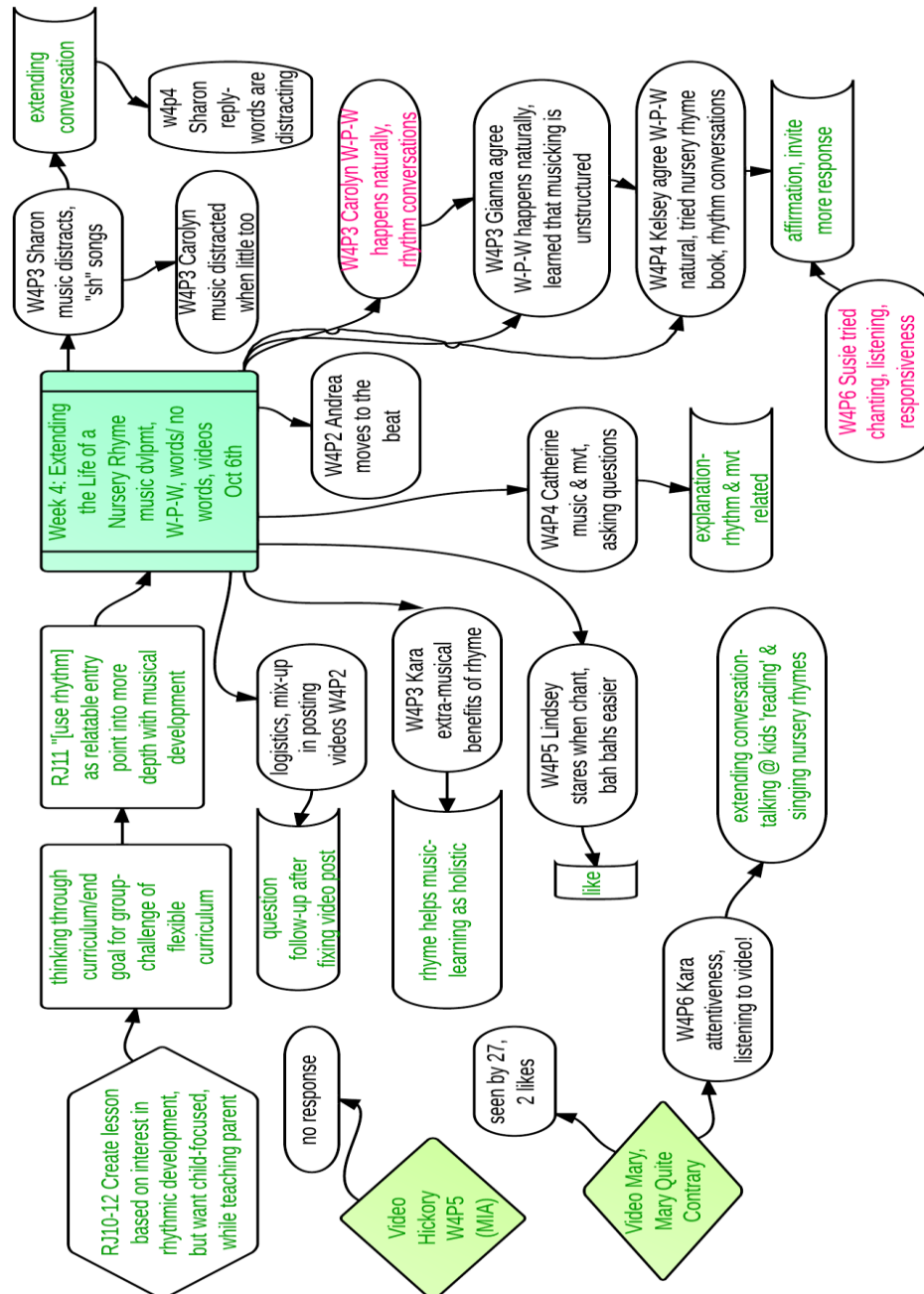
DATA DIAGRAM Week 3

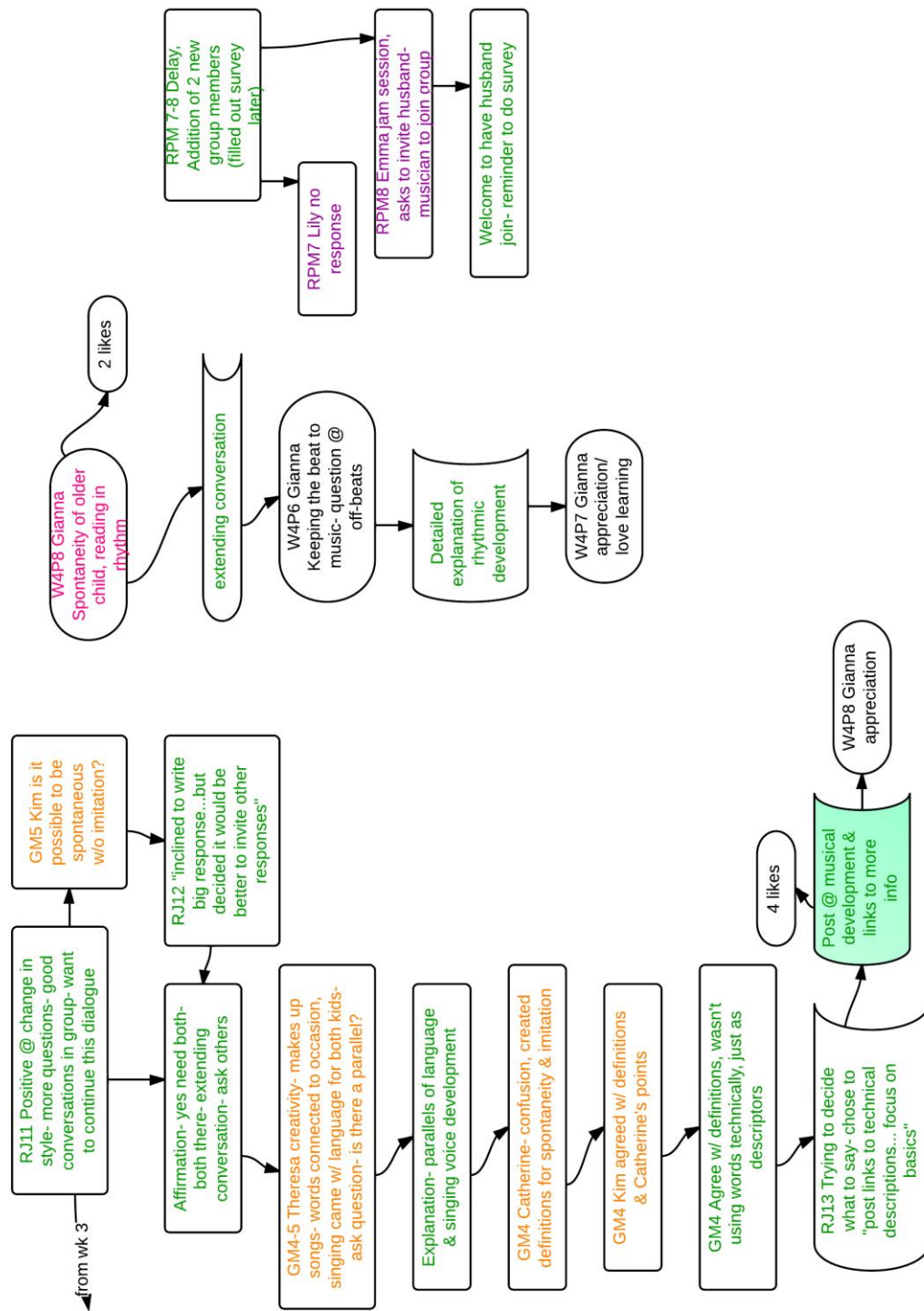




Appendix I

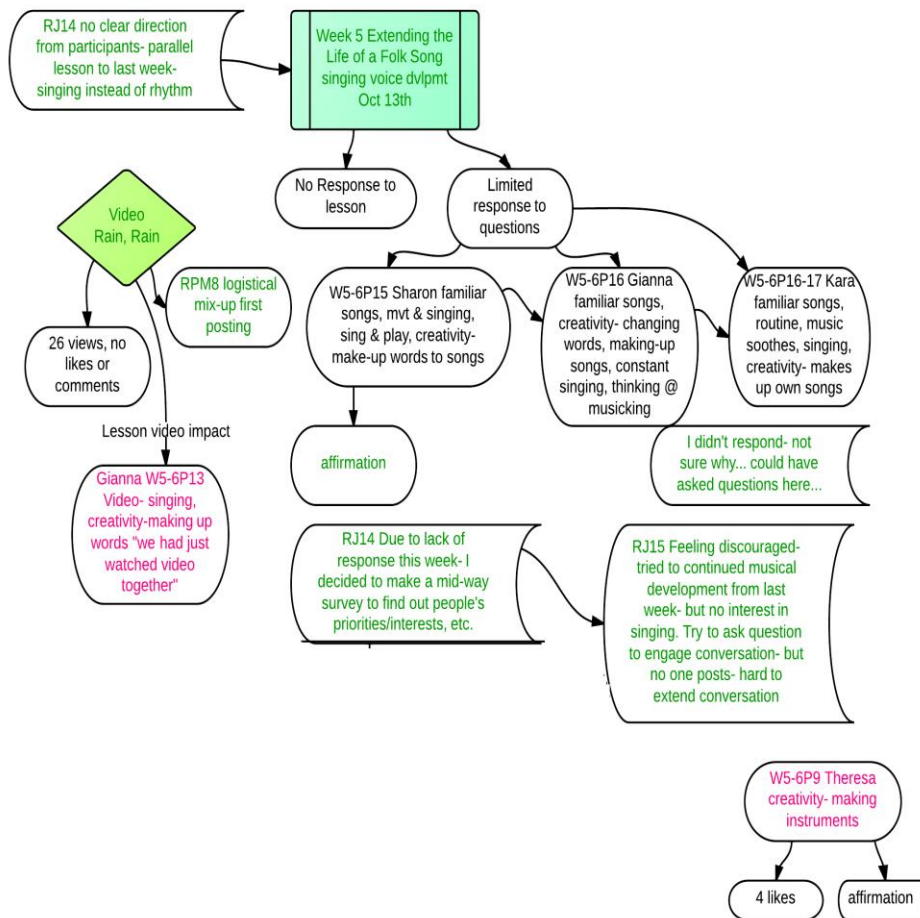
DATA DIAGRAM Week 4

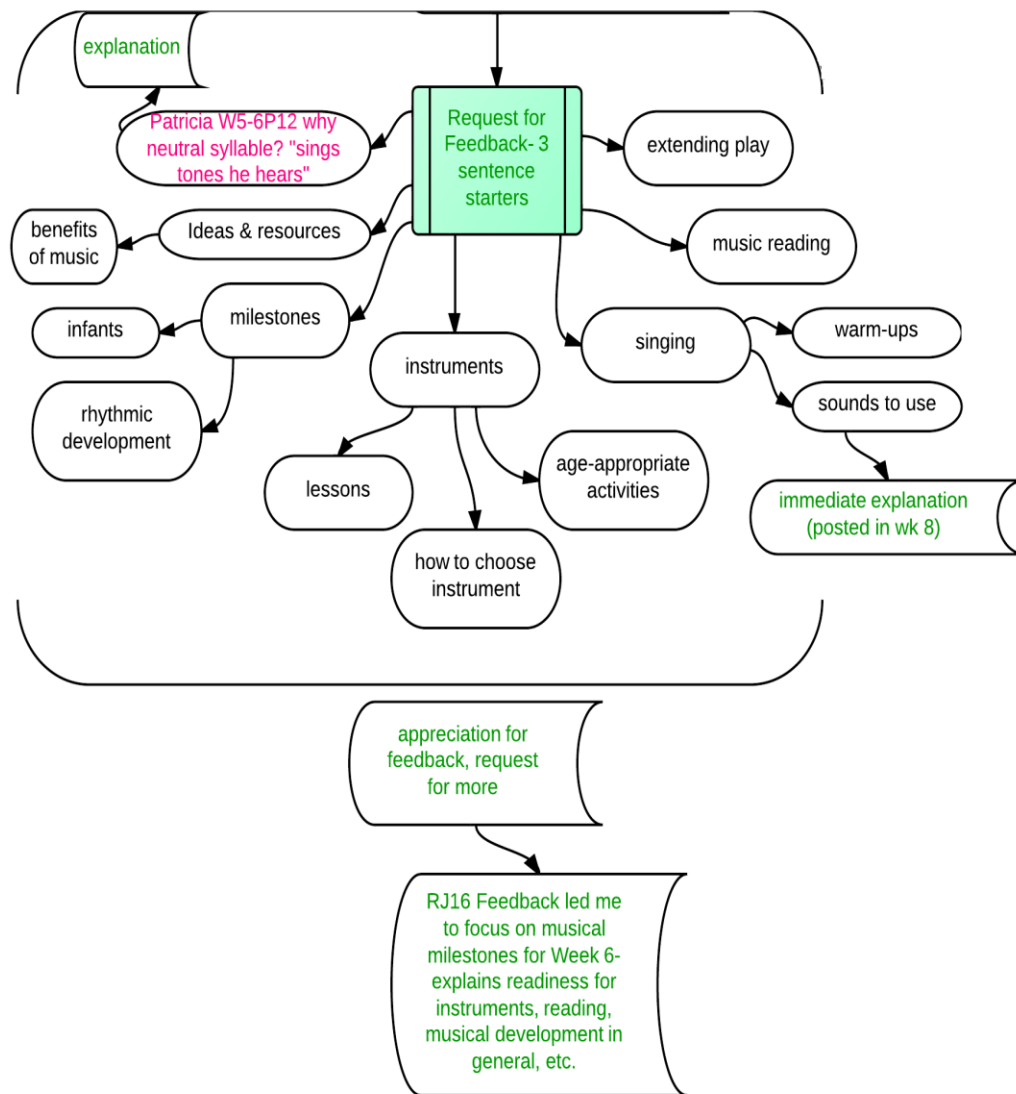




Appendix J

DATA DIAGRAM Week 5





Appendix K

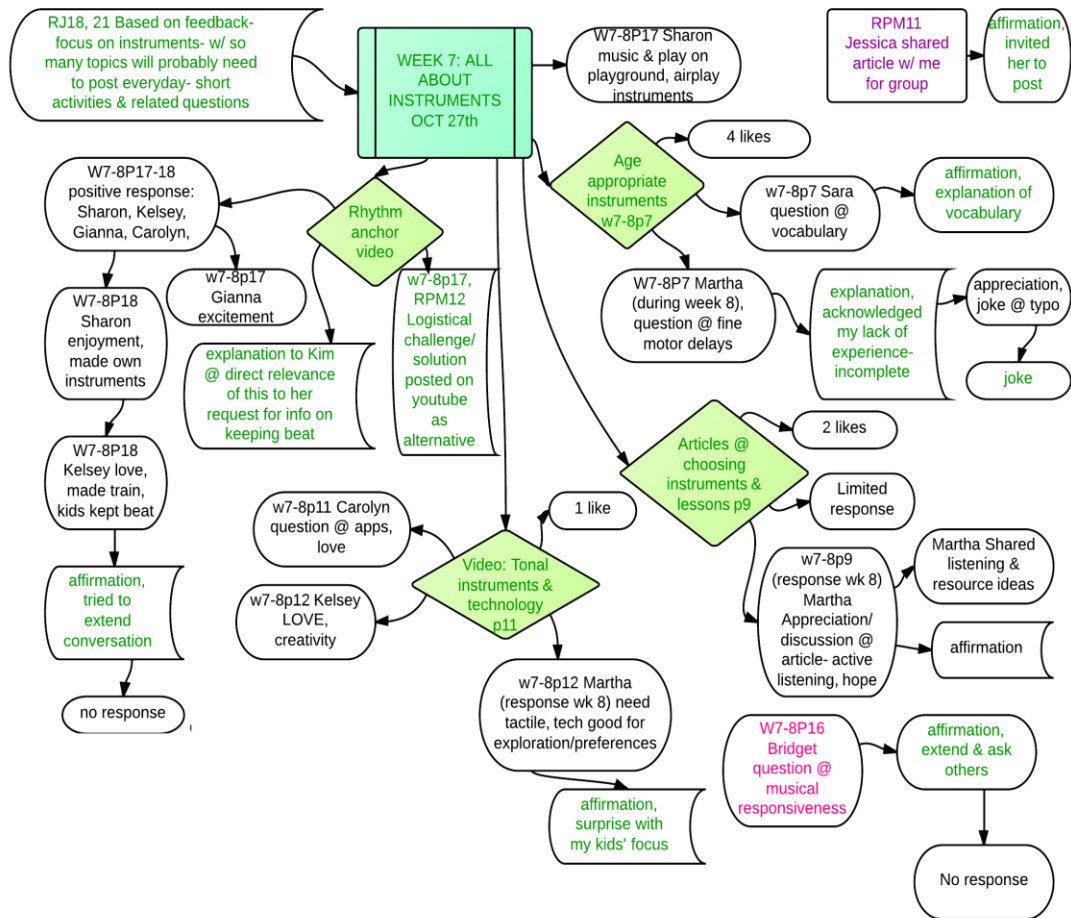
DATA DIAGRAM Week 6

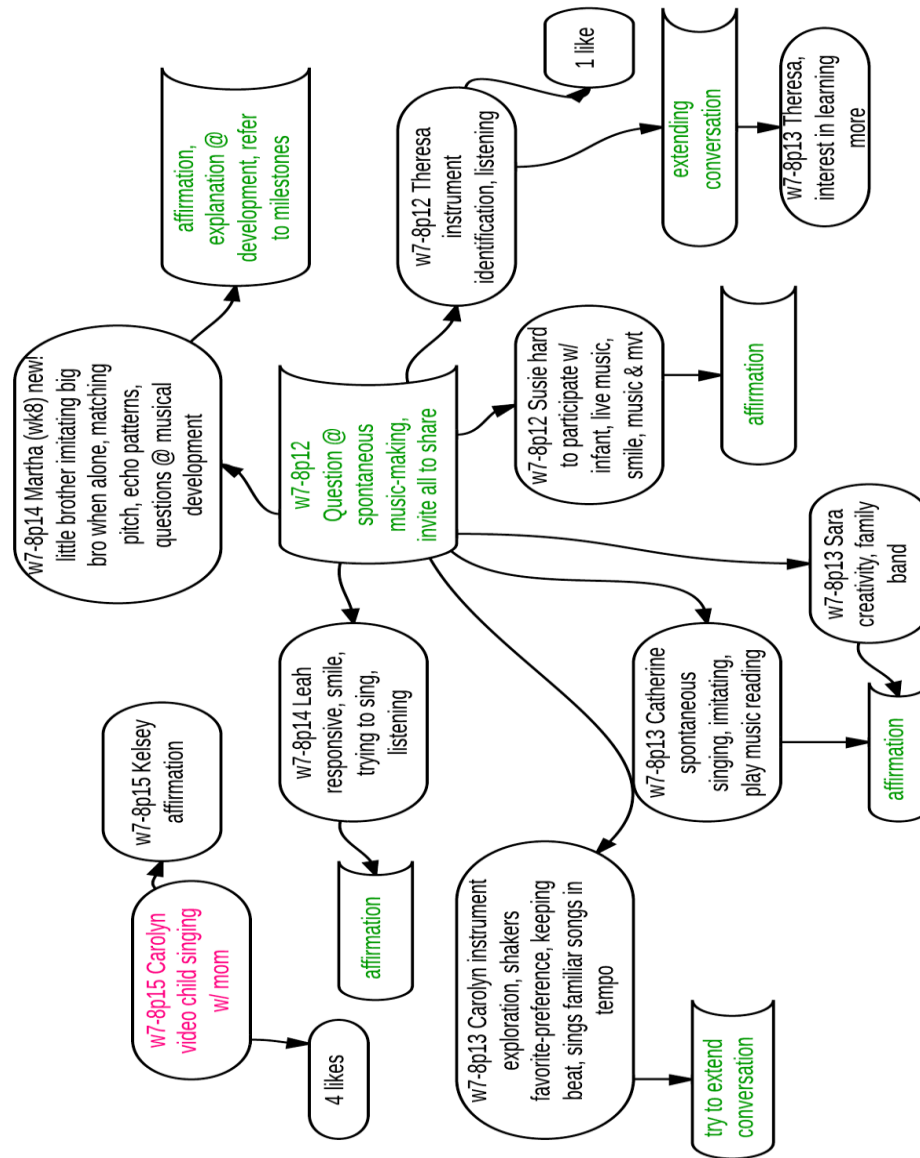




Appendix L

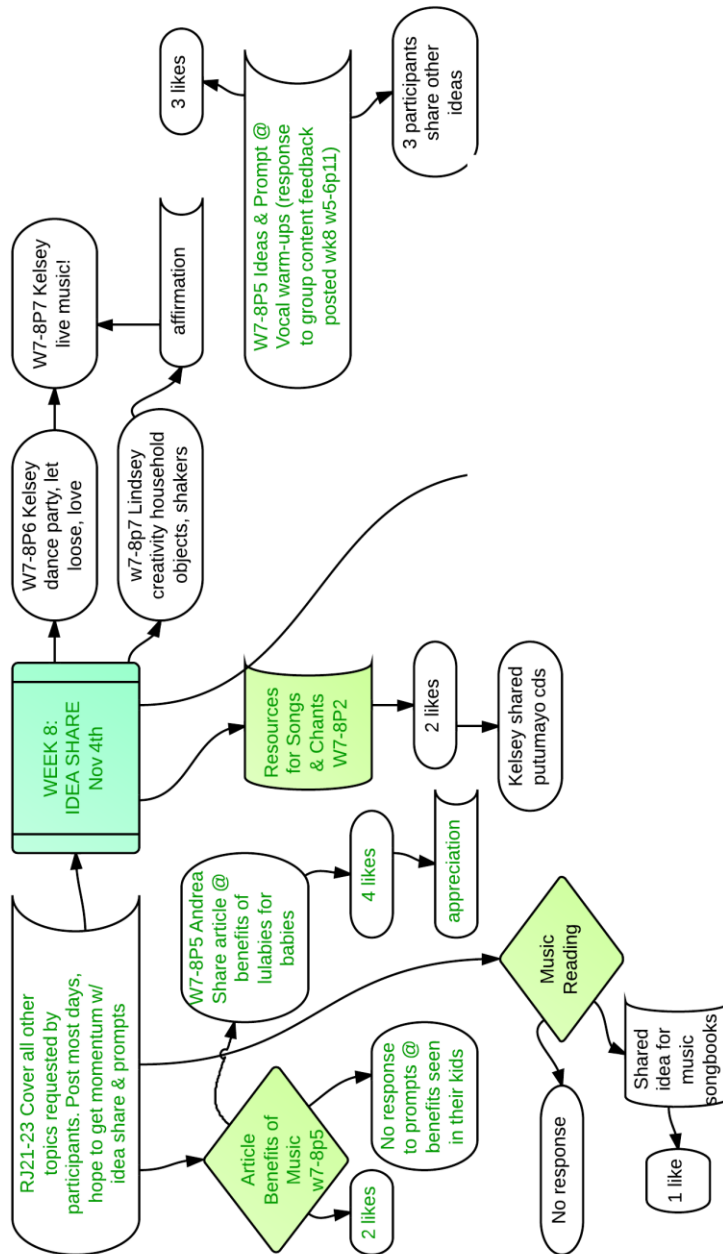
DATA DIAGRAM Week 7

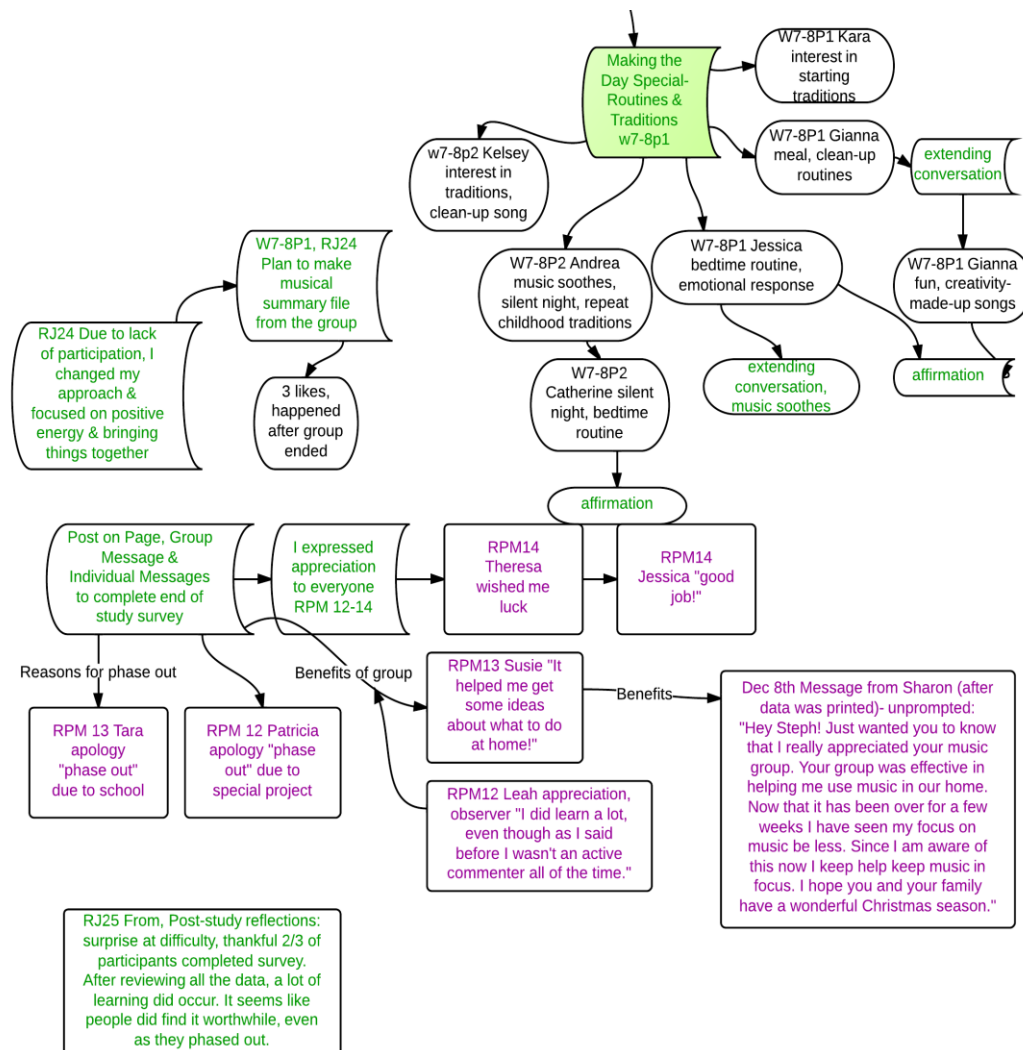




Appendix M

DATA DIAGRAM Week 8

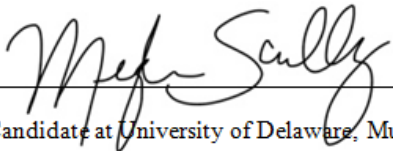




Appendix N

EXTERNAL AUDIT FORM

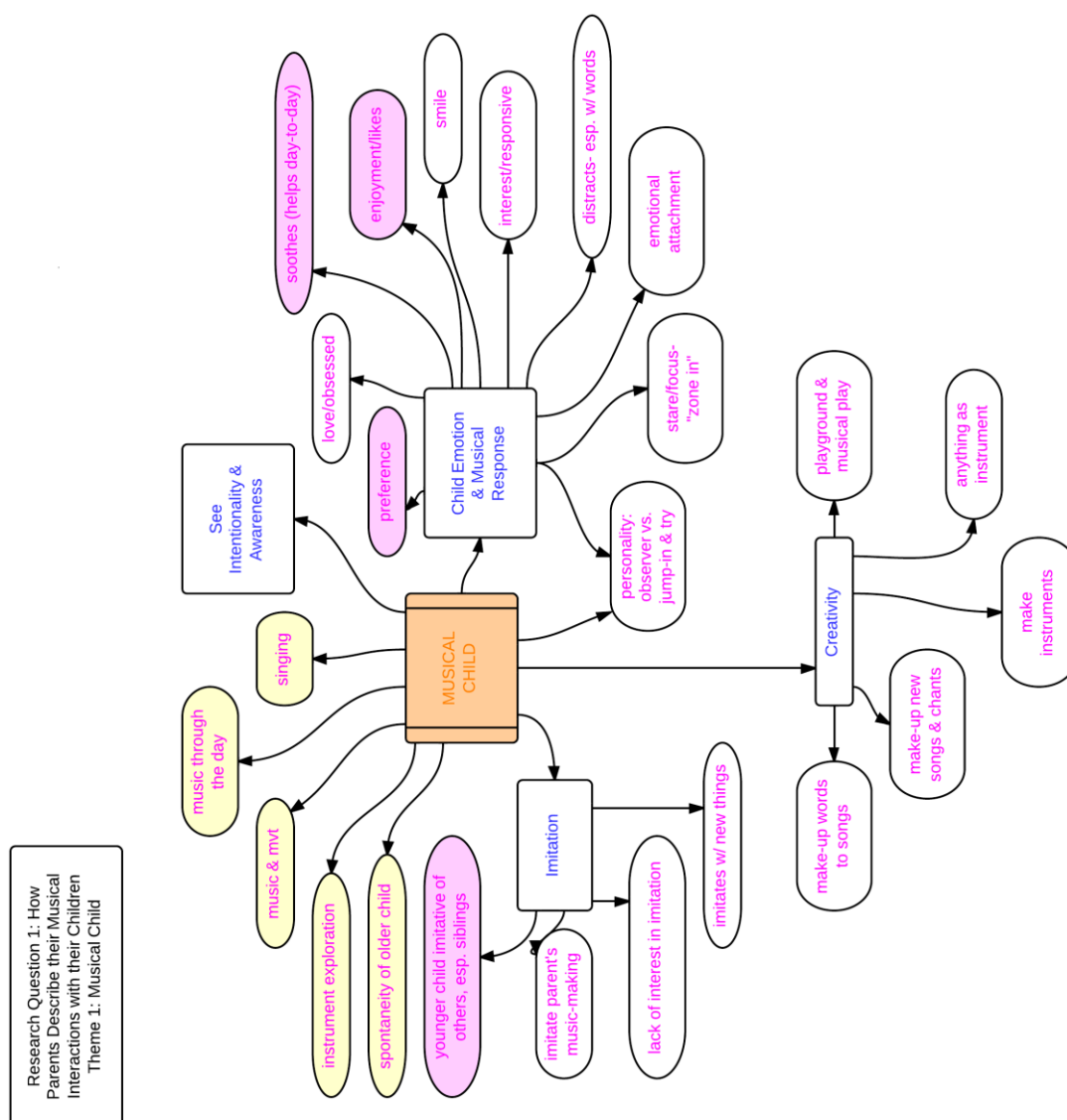
I, Meghan Scully, have reviewed the data coded by Stephanie Kistler for a thesis entitled "Exploring Social Media to Educate Parents about Musical Development." I confirm the accuracy of data coding, organization, and analysis.

Signed 

Master's Candidate at University of Delaware, Music- Teaching Concentration

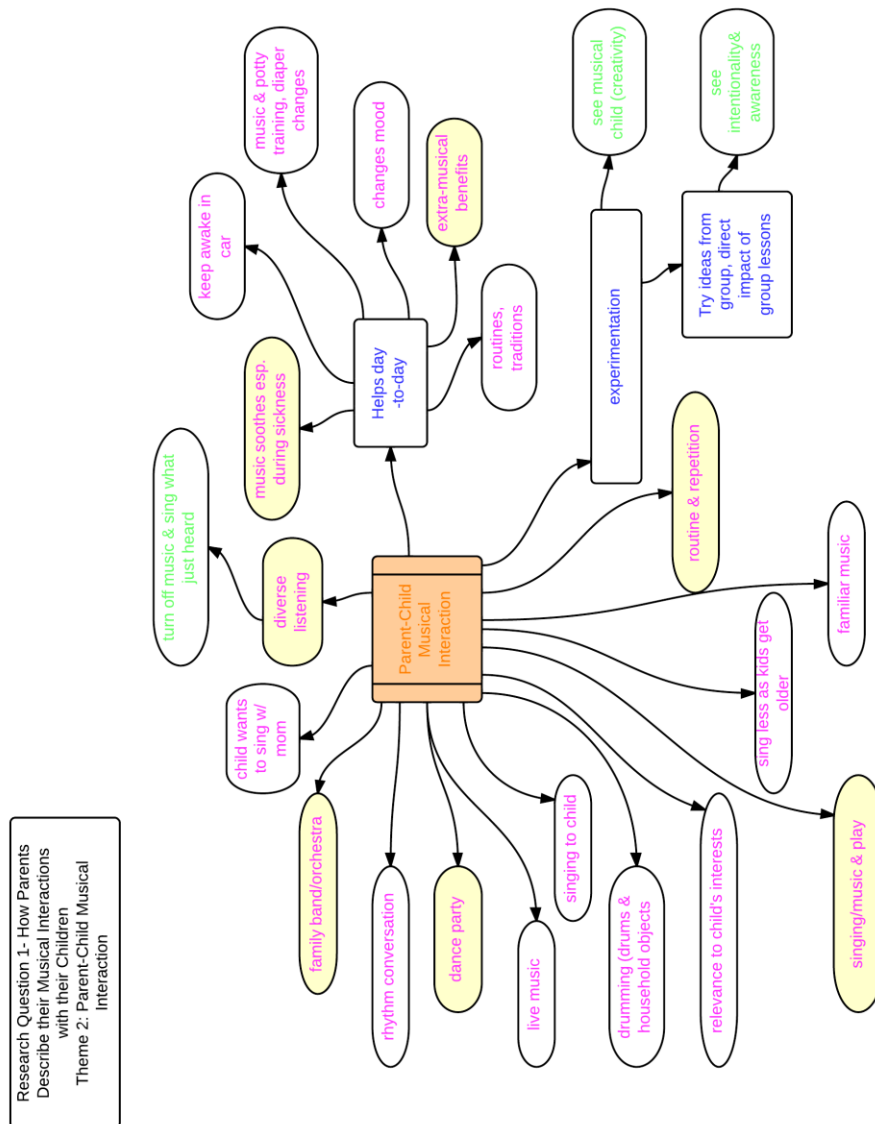
Appendix O

FLOW CHART THEME 1



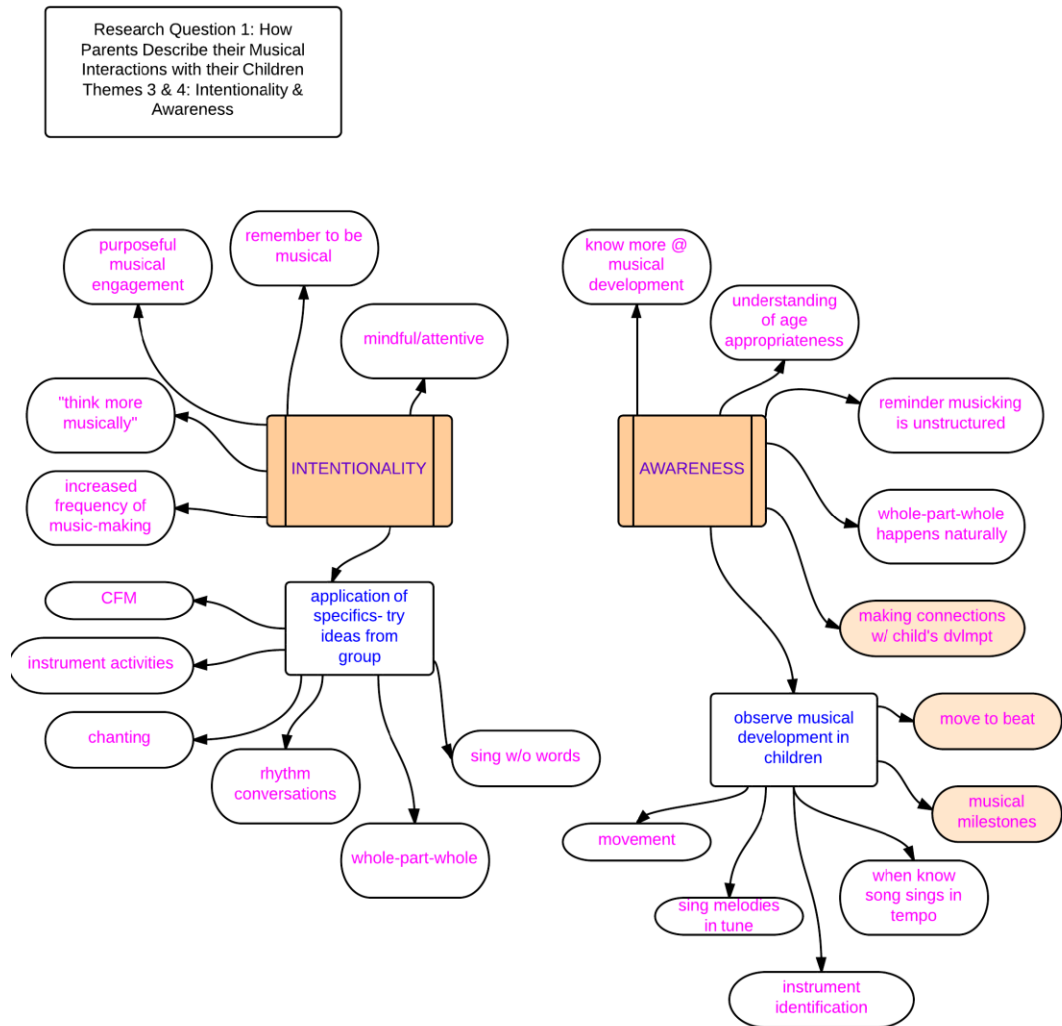
Appendix P

FLOW CHART THEME 2



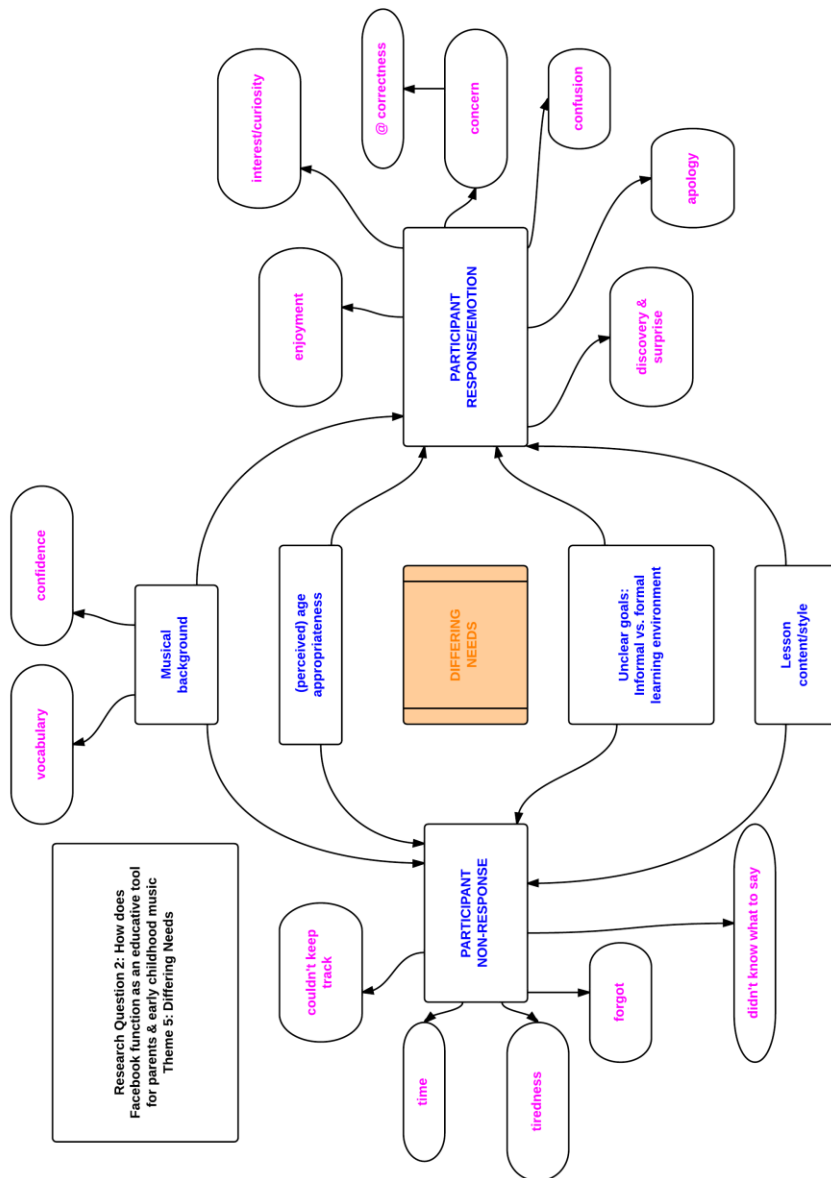
Appendix Q

FLOW CHART THEMES 3 & 4



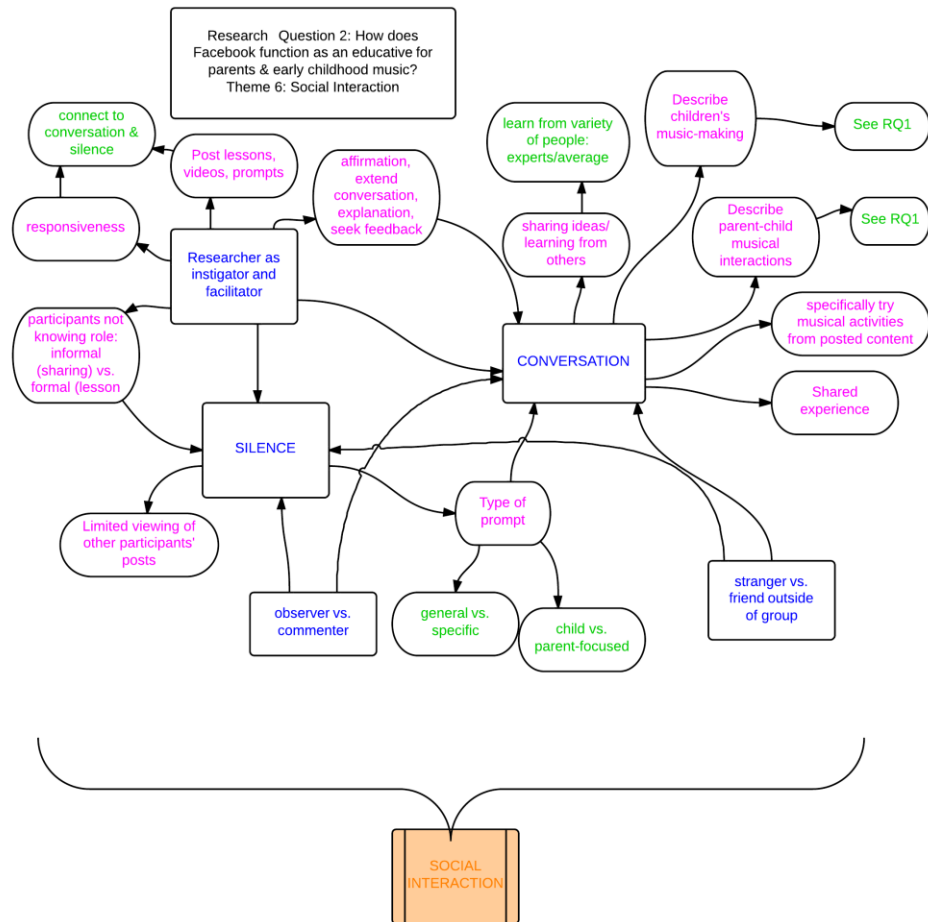
APPENDIX R

FLOW CHART THEME 5



Appendix S

FLOW CHART THEME 6



Appendix T

FLOW CHART THEME 7

