



Press Release

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Singing improves your intelligence

Nowadays children do not sing enough – there was common agreement on this point by the 170 participants of the congress organised together with the General Assembly of Europa Cantat (in Venice, 19th to 21st November 2004). All over Europe singing is simply no longer part of the lives of many children. Often it starts with the fact that the parents themselves did not sing as children, that teachers in playschools and elementary schools are not trained well enough in music or that there simply are no music lessons at all.

However, singing increases the intelligence – recent research proves that music-making and especially singing improve the connections between the two halves of the brain and therefore have a positive influence on the learning potential of children. In addition singing together not only improves social competence but also the immune system.

The conference of Europa Cantat presented innovative projects from different countries for the promotion of singing with children. In **Great Britain**, for example, youngchoirs.net offers the help of musical advisers or animateurs who develop educational models for singing with pupils in schools. In **Belgium** the initiative Attakatamoeva developed special material for primary school teachers which made it easier for them to sing with children: song collections linked to CDs for different age groups. In **Italy** they also recognized the necessity to offer attractive singing repertoire– “Giro giro canto” for primary schools and “teenc@nta” for secondary schools are the first results of this work.

All countries in Europe have recognized that singing among children has to be promoted. **EFMET – the European Forum for Music Education and Training** - was created with the aim of collecting information on music education from all over Europe, letting everybody profit from examples of good practice in other countries and encouraging better cooperation between the formal sector of music education (in schools, music schools and universities) and the non-formal sector (for example in choral organisations).

Europa Cantat wants to help to make sure that in all European countries

- Music/singing is part of the **training of elementary school teachers**
- Music/singing is integrated in the **curricula** of primary and secondary schools
- Singing and choral conducting play an important role in the **training of music teachers**
- **Conducting children’s choirs** is offered as an option in university music courses and in other training courses

Every child is musical – but those who do not develop the joy of singing during their childhood will often find it difficult to find their own voice for the rest of their lives.

Further information at www.EuropaCantat.org -> current projects -> conferences,
Information on EFMET (European Forum for Music Education and Training), a project coordinated by the European Music Council, at www.emc-imc.org

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