BONNIE SIMON'S

INTRODUCING A CHILD TO CLASSICAL MUSIC

Babies

- The parents of a newborn can begin building a child's musical vocabulary with the purchase of his or her first music box.
- Every baby's room should have either a small sound system, a "boom box," or an iPod with speakers for listening to music. Music is soothing for nap time, cheerful for waking up time, excellent for rolling around and exercising.

Ages one to three

- Your child should be actively singing. No car should be without music; every child should have his or her own small player. Begin collecting a music and audiobook library together. Always listen to them together the first time; this sends an important message to your child, namely, that you are also interested in listening.
- Find a parent/child music group. You will learn songs that you and your child can share and take with you everywhere.
- By the age of three, your child may be ready to listen to several other kinds of music. Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* with a book of pictures is appropriate. The American Ballet Theater's video of *The Nutcracker* is excellent for both girls and boys.

Ages three to five

- The three to five year old can begin applied music lessons on instruments that come in sizes (violins and cellos), or the piano where fixed pitches can be found. The Suzuki method is highly recommended for all instruction at this age, but this is only for the parent with time, commitment and patience.

Ages six to twelve

- Child can attend live performances with you. The age to start is not fixed and depends on the child's level of interest, previous exposure, school-imparted listening skills, etc. If your child is not ready to sit quietly and listen for twenty to thirty-five minutes, wait until the next year to take him or her.
- Continue your listening at home and in the car with stories in music, such as the Maestro Classics series and the Classical Kids Series. Continue to have music in the car and listen to classic rock like The Beatles and Queen, other favorites from your teenage years, plus music of their choice. On stressful days, a good rule is that adults and children each have veto power on what to play.

Adapted from Introducing Your Child to Classical Music