

# Music Together<sup>®</sup>

## with Alexia

### Why no in-person classes this year?

You may have seen other children's programs, including camps, gymnastics, and others opening up as the summer starts. So, why isn't Music Together with Alexia offering in-person classes for Summer and Fall 2020?

That's a great question, and something I have been thinking about daily since March. After doing a lot of research, looking at the CDC guidelines, consulting with colleagues, and considering the logistics of our regular classes, I have determined that in-person classes would not be right for us at this time. Here's why:

- In-person classes would require at least 50% reduced class size, which would necessitate an increase in price to cover costs.
- All people over 2, including Alexia, would have to wear face coverings that would prevent the visual observation of facial expressions and mouth shapes that are important to modeling singing to young children. This masking also creates an added layer of anxiety for children and their parents.
- Group singing may be a super-spreader activity, and dancing would also increase the aerosolization of moisture droplets from the breath. (Droplets get smaller and may fly farther.)
- Safe indoor locations require doors that shut (preventing a toddler from leaving the room as they naturally are seen to do!), reducing the amount of ventilation necessary to limit the possible amount of virus in the surrounding air.
- Social distancing requirements would require wandering children to be physically held in place throughout the class. That would be in opposition to our "learn through play" philosophy, and children cannot learn while they are struggling against restraint.
- Certain props, like stretchy bands, balls, the parachute, would not be usable. Free choice of instruments for the play-along would not be possible.
- Temperature checks would be required, which I am unwilling to perform, and which do not indicate if a person is asymptomatic with Covid-19.
- Outdoor classes would be subject to problems of space availability, bathroom accessibility, weather (heat/rain), competing noise, and again, the inability to allow children freedom of movement without fencing to keep them safe.
- **Music Together class, while spirit-sustaining, is not life-sustaining. The restrictions and precautions necessary to run class, I believe, should be reserved for essential services.**

For all of these reasons, as well as my own personal concern for the safety and health of all of our families and my own, I would prefer to take a wait-and-see approach to restarting in-person classes. I believe that the Music Together Online format and the program I have developed is a worthy -- temporary -- replacement for our traditional classes. Considering that we currently have more enrollments for this Summer online than we did for last Summer's traditional session, I think our families agree. Never hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns. as well as any feedback you may have.

Alexia Tate, Director  
Music Together with Alexia  
mtwithalexia@gmail.com  
(646) 872-8147

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