



PRESS RELEASE SPECIAL MATERIAL FOR SUMMER

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GENEVA AS CENTER OF MODERN EDUCATIONAL THEORIES HOSTS COURSES TO DEVELOP SMART AND INTERNATIONAL BABIES

Studies have found that early musical stimulation can help develop higher understanding of mathematics and physics, while movement like crawling contributes to develop reading skills

Geneva, July 2006 – Geneva as a traditional centre of educational theories is always avant garde and now hosts a new but increasingly popular concept of pre-scholar education based on early stimulation of babies and kids from 3 months to 7 years through music and movement. Nicolas Gisiger, Founder and President of Swiss organization Mubabil says that babies that live in Geneva can connect to their cultural roots as they sing and dance in their parents native language while developing an international mindset as they are continuously exposed to different languages, melodies and rhythms.

"Since music is a universal language which babies and small children seem to understand," he continues, "it can also give them the invigorating (liberating) feeling that they are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings even before they are able to speak. This has therapeutically quite a positive impact, especially on toddler who effectively can get quite angry when they are not able to speak yet." Gisiger added.

Movement, which smoothly connects to music, has been another often underestimated tool for the general development of a child. "More than learning kids entire alphabets, numbers, colours, shapes by using flashcards, electronic toys and the like, today we know that you contribute certainly much more even to the cognitive development of a baby or toddler by giving them the chance to move as much as possible" said Gisiger. Scientific opinion has ratified that physical movement, from earliest infancy and throughout our lives, plays an important role in the creation of nerve cell networks which are actually the essence of learning.

Music is a very logical and structured matter, even if it can serve as a container and transmitter of highly emotional content. During his specialisation on the impact of music on humans at the Middlesex University in London, Nicolas Gisiger rediscovered an actually very ancient knowledge which states that the laws of music are unchangeably fixed by nature, hence they are universal and not bound on any culture or era. "The laws which describe the physical modes of existence and interaction", says Nicolas Gisiger, "are the same that govern sound, vibration and rhythm, in other words – music. Through music one can become aware of physical and mathematical principles without having the impression of studying a higher science.

Nicolas Gisiger concluded "They can be babies but that does not imply a limited or small mind. Contrary, the next generation of kids can be the most cosmopolitan as the world is more connected and music is the foremost universal language. It is important to bear in mind that music and movement are an essential tool to stimulate cognitive and emotional intelligence, bring joy & fun, and stimulate creativity and social awareness".

The kids who visit Mubabil courses attend the workshops with their mothers, grandmothers, nannies and fortunately always more frequently with their fathers and grandfathers. Due to the cosmopolitan nature of Geneva the customers are a vibrant blend of people coming from literally all continents.

Geneva has been traditionally a nest of pedagogical figures of worldwide stature such as Jean Piaget, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Emile Jaques-Dalcroze. It stimulates the creation of educational theories as it is a melting pot of different world views, it blends thoughts and mindsets from all walks of life and is a small but rapid changing society. Geneva is looking into the future allowing educators like Gisiger to investing in early childhood education. Preschool education is a concept whose time has come.

However, Gisiger concludes that "to increase the capabilities of all our children to successfully compete for jobs in the international economy, a more cohesive cantonal or national plan recognizing the role of early childhood education will be required". One who has studied preschool education in the context of global competitiveness is Nobel-Prize winning economist James Heckman. When it comes to investing in early childhood education, he says "we can't afford not to"

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In the form of an interview Nicolas Gisiger responded to some questions:

- Why preschooler education and stimulation? Today we know that development of the brain and learning skills can vary dramatically depending on environmental stimuli. Recent research has also shown that emotional and cognitive development in babies' first years is crucial in determining future quality of life. Preschool education has become popular in a society where increasingly both parents work, but is also now seen by many as essential.
- Why music and movement? It is well-known that music and movement represent essential educational tools for preschool children. Musical and physical activities contribute to an overall development of the child, improving their learning ability and success in other disciplines, such as language, math, spatial reasoning, social conduct etc. It is almost like saying: if you exercise your body by doing aerobics, you not only build muscles and gain coordination, but you also improve your skills for playing football or volleyball.
- What is Mubabil's philosophy? Mubabil is committed to an integral approach. Its aim is to stimulate and educate while encouraging and building on natural creativity. "We wholeheartedly embrace the concept that a successful person is one that is encouraged to think out of the box, from a very early age. We support the development of healthy, alert, imaginative, confident, intrigued and socially-minded children, who grow up easily in an increasingly complex society" said Gisiger.

MUBABIL is an independent and non political, innovative Swiss enterprise offering an educational learning experience based on a diverse background which mission is to develop preschool education methods, and making them available to a broad audience. Mubabil's programs are founded on musical and physical activities that aim at children between 3 months and 7 years and their parents. Nicolas Gisiger's academic and professional background embraces more than 20 years as a teacher and musician. He has a degree in "Arts of Recording" from Middlesex University, London, in which he specialized on the impact of music on humans. www.mubabil.com