

Positive Aspects of Making Music



The 3 PLUS of Making Music
The Health PLUS
The Education PLUS
The Community PLUS

Positive Aspects of Making Music

Kompetenznetzwerk
NEUSTART AMATEURMUSIK

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This English abstract is an abridged version. The detailed chapters and scientific contexts have not yet been translated into English, but can be found in the German original.

NEUSTART AMATEURMUSIK ist ein Förderprogramm zur Erhaltung und Wiederbelebung der Amateurmusik in Pandemiezeiten im Rahmen von NEUSTART KULTUR

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Foreword

Music has been vital in societies around the globe through the ages. It affects us as we express and experience it. Through music we share and shape our culture. As individuals we grow and thrive in the making and hearing of music. In many ways music and the interaction we experience in musical settings shape us as individuals and communities. Emotional and physical health, both basic to well functioning societies, benefit from the positive benefits of music. Music has many cognitive benefits for people of all ages. Music provides a wonderful medium for the development and experiencing of community spirit. How very basic music is to us is reflected in the large number of people who enjoy music. Those actively expressing music certainly reap the largest profit.

According to the study "Amateurmusikern in Deutschland" by the German Music Information Centre (miz), 14.3 million people in Germany make music in their free time [Sch+21]. For Benjamin Strasser MdB, president of the Bundesmusikverband Chor & Orchester, the results prove the outstanding importance of amateur music for society: "More than 14.3 million people make music in their free time. As the umbrella organization for amateur music, we represent their interests and feel affirmed. Children and teenagers, adults and seniors - as the new figures show - can acquire knowledge through music. They develop a mutual understanding, practice reliability, perseverance and a strong sense of community. Amateur music-making makes cultural participation possible for everyone. That's why it is and remains our mission to protect and promote it even more".

The German Commission for UNESCO also emphasizes the outstanding importance of amateur music as an intangible cultural heritage: "Instrumental amateur music in Germany is known for its variety and range. It influences all societal sectors and shapes Germany's cultural identity." [HD16] The Secretary General of German Music Council (Deutscher Musikrat), Prof. Christian Höppner, states: „We have a great wealth of cultural diversity in Germany. A creative, reflective, and preserving approach to the musical heritage thrives especially in amateur music.“ The pandemic had a wide ranging effect on society. Musical activities faced many restrictions and were often not possible to sustain. This was very unfortunate in a time in which people needed good resources in order to maintain strength and optimism. Music has a special power in this respect. It is an important resource for maintaining health, education and a sense of community. In this sense we should focus on the positive benefits of amateur music making.

This publication was compiled by Kompetenznetzwerk NEUSTART AMATEURMUSIK (an expert network for the support of amateur music during the corona pandemic). It provides an overview of the positive aspects of making music based on scientific publications and studies. In the first chapter, the positive aspects of making music are summarized and explained in three thematic areas. These aspects are elaborated and presented in their scientific context in the following chapters (have not been translated into English yet). This publication forms the scientific basis of the campaign: The Three Plus - Positive Aspects of Amateur Music Making

For the purpose of this paper we define three thematic areas:

Health: the physical and psychological well-being

Education: the development of understanding of relationships and contexts

Community: a group in social interaction

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1 The 3 PLUS of Making Music 🎵

1.1 The Health PLUS

- + **Music** can provide relaxation and equilibrium for mind and body
 - + can strengthen resilience by supporting emotional regulation and stability
 - + can slow the mental ageing processes

- + **Music** evokes emotions and memories
 - + provides support in dealing with dementia oder Alzheimer

- + **Music** can have medicinal effects
 - + affect heartrate, breathing and hormonal balance
 - + can boost the immune system
 - + can influence general well-being

1.2 The Education PLUS

- + **Making music** stimulates the brain at any age
 - + can strengthen cognitive skills such as learning and memory
 - + can strengthen academic performance and development
 - + can have positive benefits over an entire lifespan

- + **Making music** can improve learning speed and efficiency
 - + can have positive effects on cognitive skills beyond those in musical areas

- + **Making music** is a complex coordinative challenge
 - + develops complex motor skills as with dance
 - + supports verbal skills and articulation through singing

1.3 The Community PLUS

- + **Making music together** is a complex coordinative effort
 - + can synchronise mental processes among the involved
 - + can strengthen the willingness for interaction and cooperation

- + **Making music together** can develop community, empathy and solidarity
 - + can strengthen the ability to empathise
 - + can increase the willingness to cooperate
 - + can build community on an intergenerational basis
 - + can provide a platform for intercultural exchange and integration
 - + can strengthen community spirit and counteract loneliness

- + **Making music together** can help in mastering challenges
 - + can boost motivation and be supportive when coming to terms with crises
 - + can strengthen endurance
 - + can help in dealing with social and political issues through composition and performance of musical works

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