

The benefits of singing



Research by Professor Graham Welch

www.singup.org/blog/article/1390-the-benefits-of-singing/

The benefits of singing

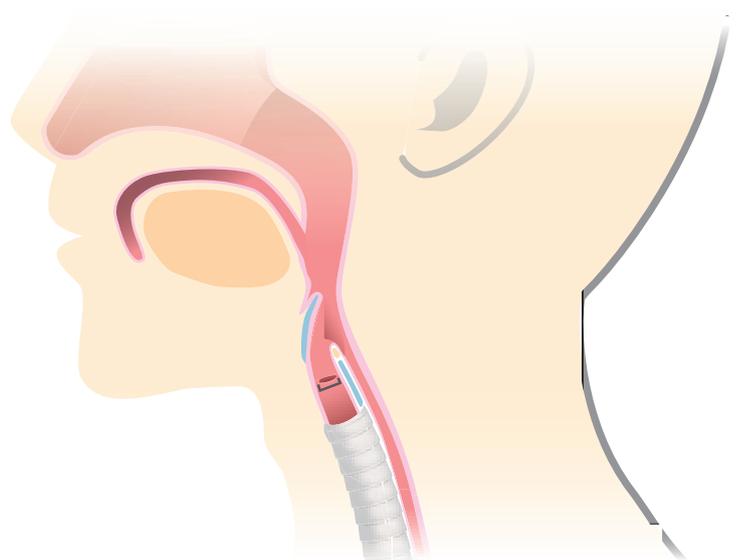
There are many different benefits that arise from engaging in singing activities. These apply to all ages, from childhood into adolescence and through into retirement age and beyond. With appropriately nurturing experiences, singing competency will develop. Almost without exception, everyone has the potential to sing competently and enjoy singing across the lifespan. Childhood provides a crucial opportunity to lay the foundations of a positive lifelong singing (and musical) identity.

Within the various research literatures, there are five main areas of reported benefit from singing. Benefits are physical, psychological, social, musical and educational (and often overlapping).

These combined benefits suggest that singing is one of the most positive forms of human activity, supporting physical, mental, emotional and social health, as well as individual development in the same areas. Successful singing is important because it builds self-confidence, promotes self-esteem, always engages emotion, promotes social inclusion, supports social skill development, and enables young people of different ages and abilities to come together successfully to create something special in the arts.

Development of fine and gross motor control in the vocal system

- Individuals are likely to realise their potential in terms of growth and motor coordination
- Healthy vocal motor behaviours can be nurtured
- Good vocal control is the basis for lifelong vocal identity and effective communication



Respiratory and cardiac fuction



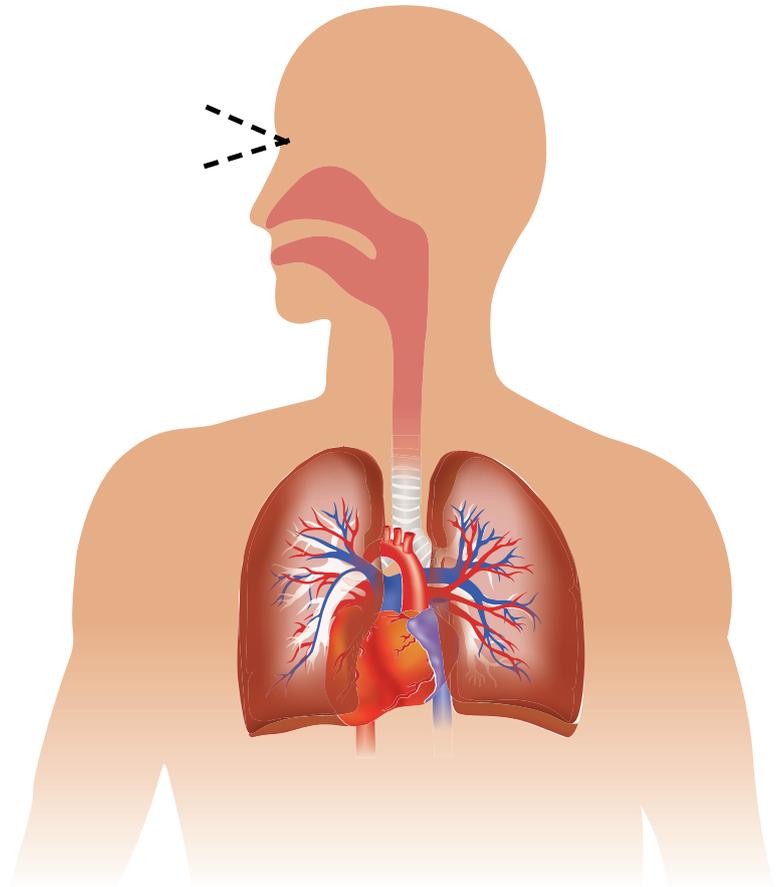
- Singing improves the efficiency of the body's cardiovascular system

- Singing improves overall alertness

- Singing involves dynamic thoracic activity

- Singing is aerobic

- Function of the breathing mechanism and major muscle groups are exercised in the upper body



- Singing counters the symptoms of colds and flu. It is also linked to longevity, stress reduction and general health

- Regular singing activities can also improve lung functioning for people with respiratory illness



Neurological functioning

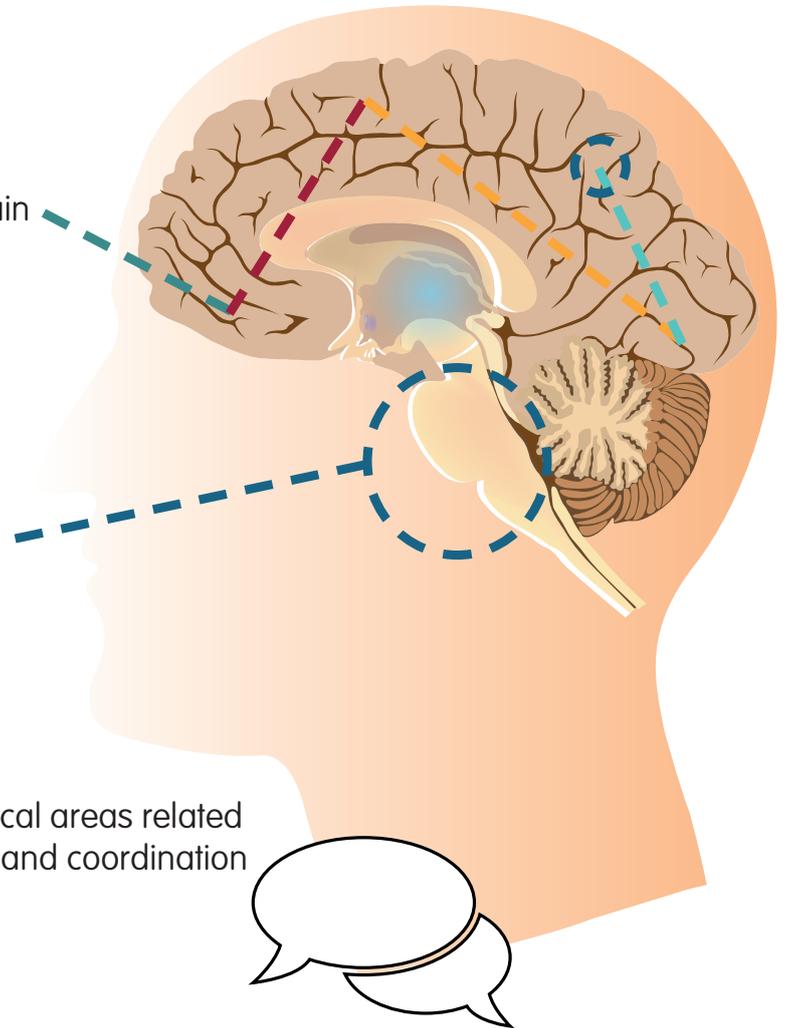
- Singing behaviour is multi-sited neurologically and networked across many different brain areas

- Singers tend to have greater connections between areas of the brain than non-singers

- Singing helps develop the auditory attention and perception of hearing impaired children

- Singing with others involves neurological areas related to human social interaction, empathy and coordination

- Singing encourage development and interaction between parts of the brain that are dedicated to aspects of music (such as pitch, rhythm, timbre), language (lyrics and speech), fine motor behaviours, visual imagery and emotion



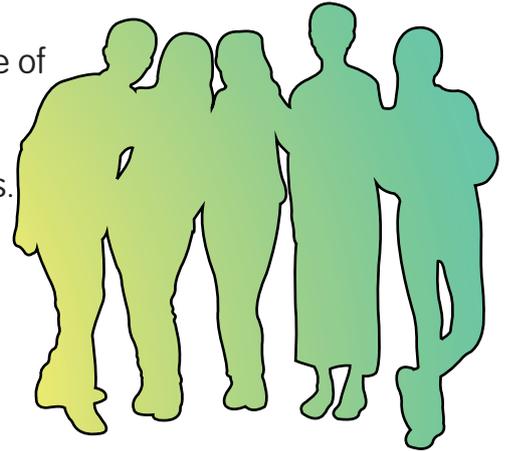
Intra-personal communication and the development of individual identity, both in music and through music

- For 25% of the working population, voice is a critical tool-of-trade
- Our use of the voice reflects our mood and general psychological wellbeing
- All voice use, including singing, is interwoven with core emotional states that are central to the human condition, such as joy and sadness
- Healthy singing enables us to maximise our potential to communicate with others
- Confident and healthy voice use links to a positive self-concept and an ability to communicate
- Successful singing promotes self-esteem, general confidence and self-efficacy



An enhanced sense of social inclusion

Successful singing is strongly correlated with a positive sense of social inclusion. Collective singing, such as in a choir, small group, or larger community gathering generates a positive group identity, as well as physical and psychological benefits. Singing with others enhances the possibilities of empathetic relationships with those around us.



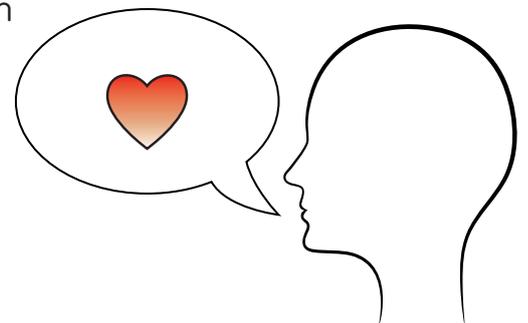
The realisation of our musical potential

Singing activity fosters our intellectual engagement with music. This includes:

- an understanding of musical structure
- phrasing
- the development of musical memory (including music's repetition and variation)
- and tone colouring, as well as other musical building blocks (such as pitch, rhythm, loudness).

Increasing knowledge, understanding and skills about the world around us, both in music and through music

- Singing will likely make you more competent in your own language, including an improvement in reading skills
- A higher frequency of home music activities – which are biases towards singing – contributes positively to the development of children's vocabulary, numeracy, attention and emotions regulation, behaviour and prosocial skills



[Find out more here](#)