

Big Beats for Young Peeps CD



Product code: M2410

Looking for fresh and fun music to share with young children? Big Beats for Young Peeps offers teachers and parents of children from ages 0–8 high-quality, age-appropriate instrumental selections that provide rich musical beats and rhythms for movement activities. Produced by Chip Dixon, an accomplished music producer who’s worked with P. Diddy (Sean Combs), Beyoncé, and Jay-Z, the 20 songs on Big Beats for Young Peeps reflect [a variety of musical genres](#), including hip-hop, jazz, reggae, Latin pop, and techno.

The CD comes with a user guide with details on how to use these songs to support children’s movement, executive function, and self-regulation skills during group times. Listen to samples of the songs here: <https://music.highscope.org/album/big-beats-for-young-peeps>

BIG BEATS FOR YOUNG PEEPS

1. Krump Battle
2. Celebratin' in the Streets
3. Play Those Keys
4. Double Agent
5. Island Shuffle
6. Granddaddy's Jam
7. Dance Party
8. African Hype
9. Cruisin'
10. Robot Re-charge
11. The Güiro Scratch
12. DJ Mixer
13. Zip N' Freeze
14. Fiesta Beat
15. Smooth Flute
16. My Own Rap
17. Turntable Stop
18. Remembering Rio
19. Speed of Light
20. Head Bobbin'

Produced, mixed, and mastered by Chip Dixson of Chipper Kreations, Inc., 4Runners Music Group (SESAC).

HighScope Early Childhood Consultant: Erica Hill
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CD/pamphlet artwork and design: Invisible Engines

Big Beats for Young Peeps is also available as a digital download at the HighScope store. For more information about the HighScope Curriculum, visit HighScope.org.



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What You'll Find in This Guide to *Big Beats for Young Peeps*

Big Beats for Young Peeps offers teachers and parents of children from ages 0–8 high-quality, age-appropriate instrumental selections that provide rich musical beats and rhythms for movement activities. Young children, in particular, benefit from listening to instrumental music because it allows them to concentrate on the musical characteristics of a piece without being distracted by the words (Epstein, 2012).

The 20 tracks on *Big Beats for Young Peeps* reflect a variety of musical genres, including hip-hop, jazz, reggae, Latin pop, and techno.

How to use the musical selections on this CD

This pamphlet describes three different ways you can use these musical selections, including

- How to support children's movement skills during group times for ages 0–8 (p. 1)
- How to support children's executive function and self-regulation skills during large-group times for ages 3–8 (pp. 2–7)
- How to use the music selections during other parts of the day for ages 3–8 (p. 8)

You can also use the music to support additional skills that are typically found in states' early learning standards, including the following:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Keeping a steady beat
- Gross-motor skills
- Comparing and contrasting
- Creative thinking and expression
- Appreciating the arts



How to Support Children's Movement Skills During Group Times

(For ages 0–8)

During group times, encourage children to listen to a musical selection and move their bodies to the way it makes them feel. By listening to the music, thinking of and describing how they want to move, and then following through, children are developing their self-regulation skills and their ability to stop, think, and act.

Support children's movement skills by using the following strategies:

Copy and imitate children's movements

For example, if a child is jumping up and down, jump up and down. Then copy another child's movements. Copy and imitate the movements of several children.

Acknowledge and label children's movements

Describe a child's movements by saying something like "Jayden, you are swaying your body from side to side."

Ask for children's ideas and clarify their actions

You might ask, "Ada, how do you want to move?" If Ada responds by twirling and then jumping, say "Tell me what you call that movement." If Ada responds, "Circle jump!" acknowledge her response by saying "Ada is calling her movement circle jump!"

Connect children's movements to aspects of the music

You might say, for example, "This part of the music has violins playing softly; I noticed that you are slowly swaying your bodies."

Choose a material for children to use and move to the music

Suggested ideas for materials include instruments, fabric (for scarves), stretchy bands, rhythm sticks, shakers, a parachute (or a flat sheet), and Slinkys.

You can use these strategies for **all** of the musical selections; however, tracks 1, 2, 9, 14, and 16 specifically support children's movement skills.

How to Support Children’s Executive Function and Self-Regulation Skills During Large-Group Times

(For ages 3–8)

Executive function refers to a group of skills that helps us manage multiple streams of information, focus on the information that’s important to us at that time, make decisions in light of that information, and revise plans as needed (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2011; Epstein, 2012).

The components of executive function include working memory, inhibitory control, and mental flexibility:

- 1. Working memory:** This is the ability to hold specific pieces of information in our minds and use them over short periods of time.
- 2. Inhibitory control:** This is the skill we use to filter our thoughts and impulses so we can resist distractions. It enables us to pause and think before we respond or act.
- 3. Mental flexibility:** This is the ability to switch gears and adjust to changed demands, priorities, or perspectives.

Self-regulation comprises these three components of executive function. Self-regulation is the “conscious control of thoughts, behaviors, and emotions”; it is the ability to stop, think, and then act (McClelland & Tominey, 2016, p. 4). As children self-regulate their behaviors, they are more intentional in their thinking, reactions, and interactions.

Through thoughtfully planned large-group-time activities, children can develop their executive function and self-regulation skills by learning to stop, think, and then act on their ideas and their peers’ ideas. As children are given choices of what to sing, how to move, and ways to respond during large-group time, they need to regulate their behaviors to participate in the activities, thereby practicing and developing executive function skills.

Let’s take, for example, a child at large-group time who is listening to instructions on how to listen to the music and move her body to fast and slow music. She then participates in this activity by sharing her ideas and following others. This child is listening and paying attention instead of interacting with other children or disengaging (**self-regulation**), interpreting and following instructions in light of past experiences (**working memory**), and stopping her actions and following another child’s actions (**inhibitory control** and **mental flexibility**). By developing these skills at large-group time, she’ll be able to carry these skills to other parts of the daily routine.

Large-group-time activities are particularly suitable in helping children develop their mental flexibility. For example, after children have had lots of experiences moving their bodies fast to fast music and slow to slow music, you can ask them to do the opposite: move slow to fast music and fast to slow music. To do the opposite of what they’ve been doing, children first need to stop their bodies, think through the music and their reactions, and then act accordingly. These skills are vital to children’s social-emotional learning and their capacity to resolve conflicts, helping them learn how to stop hurtful actions, think through a problem, and then act on a solution.

Support children’s executive function and self-regulation skills by using the following strategies:

Moving fast and slow (use with tracks 10 and 12)

Tell the children that they’re going to listen and move to a song. Say “In this song, sometimes the music is fast and sometimes it’s slow.” Ask “What would it look like if you move your body fast?” Acknowledge children’s answers, imitate their movements, and ask the children how they would move their bodies slowly. Again, acknowledge their answers and imitate their movements.

Then tell the children that they’ll now try it with the music. When the music is fast, they can move their body fast; when it’s slow, they can move slowly. Turn on the music, imitate children’s movements, and connect children’s movements to the music. You might say, for example, “This part is fast so you’re jumping up and down really fast.”

After children have completed this activity several times, give them chances to be the leader and ask everyone to follow the leader’s actions. For example, you might say, “Max, you’re the leader of the fast part. What movement should we do if the music is fast?” Then pick another child (Duyen) to show a movement for the slow section of the song, and say “When we listen to the song this time, we will do Max’s movement for the fast part and Duyen’s movement for the slow part.”

Supporting children’s mental flexibility: After children have had lots of experiences matching their movements to fast and slow music, ask them to move their bodies slowly to the fast music and fast to the slow music.

Remember that children must have lots of experiences with the activity (it must be routine to them) before the activity can be done in the opposite way.

Moving and then stopping (use with tracks 6, 13, 17, and 18)

Tell the children that they’ll be listening to a song that starts and stops and then starts and stops again. Ask “What would it look like if we stopped or froze our bodies when the music stopped?” Acknowledge the children’s ideas.

Ask the children to choose how to move their body and then to select another position when the music stops. Have the children move for about 15 seconds and then say “Freeze.” Repeat this a few times and then try it with the music. Once the music plays again, they can move again. Play the music, imitate children’s movements, and describe how children’s movements reflect the music. After children have repeated this activity several times, give them chances to be the leader. Ask everyone to follow how the leader freezes their body.

Supporting children’s mental flexibility: After children have had lots of experiences with this activity, have them freeze their bodies when they hear the music and move their bodies when the music stops.

Moving to loud and soft music (use with tracks 5, 7, and 19)

Tell the children that they’ll be listening to a song where the music is loud and then soft throughout the song. Ask them how they’d move their bodies to loud music, comment on their ideas, and copy their movements. Then ask them how they’d move their bodies to soft music. Comment on their ideas and copy their movements.

Recall with the children their movements for loud and soft music. Play the song, and encourage children to make their movements to the loud and then soft music. Describe how children’s movements reflect the music. After children have repeated this activity several times, give them chances to be the leader. Ask everyone to follow how the leader moves when the music is soft and then loud.

Supporting children’s mental flexibility: After children have had lots of experiences with this activity, have them move their bodies to the loud music the way they would to soft music and vice versa.

Moving to different musical refrains (use with tracks 4 and 20)

Tell the children that they're going to listen and move to a song where there are different musical refrains. Explain what a "refrain" is (e.g., when lines of music repeat), and ask them to listen to the song to see if they can hear the different refrains. Tell the children to touch their ears when they've heard a change in the refrain and to put their hands back down when the refrain changes again.

Play the music, comment on when children hear the different refrains, and/or model for them hearing the different refrains by touching your ears. Once children are comfortable with distinguishing the refrains, say "Now let's think about how we'll move to the different refrains. Let's listen to one of the refrains." Play one refrain, stop the song, and ask "How does this refrain make you want to move?" Comment on children's ideas and imitate their movements. Repeat for the second refrain.

Say "Let's try it for the whole song. Remember the movements you chose for each refrain and do your movements along with the refrains." Make comments that connect children's movements to the music.

After children have had experience with this activity, give children chances to be the leader and have everyone follow the leader.

Supporting children's working memory and mental flexibility: After children have had lots of experiences with this activity, ask two children to choose a movement for each of the refrains. Write down their ideas on chart paper/whiteboard. Then play the music and follow the sequence of movements that children have given for the refrains. Say each child's name and movement so children can remember who and what movement comes first and second.

Moving to a specific instrument (use with tracks 3 [piano], 11 [güiro], 15 [flute], and 8 [drum, shakers, and flute; focus on only one instrument at a time with this track])

Tell the children that they're going to listen to a song that has an instrument called a ____ (add the applicable instrument), and ask them what they know about that instrument. Acknowledge children's responses. Show them the instrument (if possible) or a picture of the instrument. Briefly describe its characteristics.

Ask the children to listen for the instrument in the song. Then tell the children to touch their ears when they've heard the instrument and to put their hands back down when the instrument stops.

Play the song and acknowledge when children touch their ears (or model for them as needed). After you stop the song, ask them to think of a movement to do when they hear that instrument. Describe and imitate their movements. Say "Let's try it with the music. Remember you're going to do your movement when you hear the ____."

After children have had experience with moving their bodies when they hear the instrument, give children chances to be the leader. Ask everyone to follow the leader's movements.

Supporting children's working memory and mental flexibility: After children have had lots of experience with this activity, ask several children to each choose a movement for everyone to follow once they hear the instrument. Write down their ideas on chart paper/whiteboard. Play the music and encourage the children to follow the first child's movement when they hear the instrument and then change to the second child's movement for the next time they hear the instrument, and so forth. For some songs, you'll hear the instrument three or four times or more, so you may have the children doing three or four movements to the song. Say each child's name and movement so children can remember who and what movement comes first, second, and so forth.



Using the Music Selections During Other Parts of the Day

(For ages 3–8)

Cleanup time

Ask children to clean up while the music is playing and then to freeze when the music stops. Repeat cleaning/stopping for the whole song (e.g., play track 10, and ask children to clean up as the music plays and then stop as the “power down” music stops; they can “power up” [i.e., continue cleaning] once the music begins again). See how many times it takes to clean/stop before cleanup is finished.

Small-group times

Have children use art materials while listening to the music (e.g., children paint while listening to fast and slow songs and compare how they may paint differently).

Ask children to think about and then say how the music makes them feel or what it makes them think about. Then have them draw how they feel or think.

Work time (choice time or free time)

Children may choose to create a series of movements and/or dance to a particular track on their own.

Children may choose to create words to a particular track on their own (see, e.g., track 16). [Note: Music should not be used as background music. However, the teacher can play music during work time if a child has chosen to listen to music.]

References

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2011). *Building the brain’s “air traffic control” system: How early experiences shape the development of executive function* (Working Paper No. 11). Retrieved from <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

Epstein, A. S. (2012). *Creative arts*. Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press.

McClelland, M. M., & Tominey, S. (2016). *Stop, think, act: Integrating self-regulation in the early childhood classroom*. New York: Routledge.

Creative Team

Chip Dixson, Music Producer

Chip Dixson is an accomplished music producer, songwriter, and recording engineer. After joining P. Diddy (Sean Combs) to work with popular secular artists such as Carl Thomas, New Edition, Dream, and Chris Brown, Chip signed with the world-renowned production team DarkChild and worked with Beyoncé, Jay-Z, Brandy, and Joe, among other artists, and is now an independent gospel music producer/writer who has won several music awards. He currently teaches music to students in grades 7–10 at the Lighthouse South Charter School in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Erica Hill, Early Childhood Consultant

Erica Hill is an Early Childhood Consultant at HighScope. She has a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education from Ball State University and is a HighScope certified trainer. With more than 15 years of experience working with children of all ages and their families, Erica has owned and operated her own licensed home child care business and has provided training, mentoring, and coaching to other licensed home- and center-based providers. Before joining HighScope, Erica’s passion for making a difference led her to spend four years as a Head Start teacher and Education Specialist in Detroit.

