Hearts for Music

The World’s First Special Needs Orchestra

Transforming Disabilities into Abilities
What is Hearts For Music?
Hearts For Music is a 501(c)3 non-profit created to provide special needs children and teens with a safe, non-judgmental and friendly place in which to practice and perform music as part of a team or ensemble. We are proud to be the first and only Special Needs Orchestra in the USA. Our “orchestra” utilizes a combination of keyboards, electronic devices such as ipads and acoustic instruments to play a wide range of songs ranging from well known classical symphonies to present day pop and rock.

Who can participate?
We welcome all with special needs from Down's to Autism and in-between, ages 7 and up. All those wishing to participate must undergo an interview and/or assessment to ensure that our program is a good fit for them and that we are able to accommodate their individual needs and/or disabilities. To ensure a high quality of training and experience for each and everyone of our orchestra members, participation for 2018 is currently limited to 15 individuals per group.

Umm... won’t they sound off-key?
In the beginning, probably and often! But the goal of Hearts For Music isn’t to train future Mozarts or Beethovens, or to make our beloved orchestra sound as clean and pretty as say the Cleveland Symphony. Our primary mission is to elevate the self-esteem and confidence of all special needs kids who enter our program, and to provide them a sanctuary where music is the common language regardless of disabilities. At Hearts For Music, NO ONE is too dumb, too slow or too disabled to create terrific music. There are no failures, just lessons learnt. As with many things in life, it will take time, love, encouragement and patience. This is a journey, not a race. And we never give up trying. Ever.

Where are rehearsals held and when do they start?
We have two locations: One in Mantua, Ohio and another in Brecksville, Ohio. Each rehearsal session is approximately 1 ½ hrs – 2 hours in duration. Our program officially kicks off in January 2018. Please check back with us for the exact date(s) and time(s).

Are there any fees?
As a non-profit, we rely heavily on the generosity of our community to donate funds as much as possible. But donations unfortunately only go so far, and it can be challenging generating enough income to keep up with organizational expenses such as instrument maintenance. To help keep our orchestra and the whole program alive and kicking, HFM participation for 2018 has a fee of $25.00 per participant per session. We never want any child or teen to be denied participation in our program simply because of financial hardship. To that end, we can and will assist needy families in exploring a variety of funding avenues, including, but not limited to: Ohio Autism Scholarship, Jon Peterson Scholarship and local county funding programs.

Where can I get further information about this awesome one-of-a-kind program?
Please visit us at www.heartsformusic.org or call us at either (330) 298-5549 or toll-free 1-888-MUSIC18 (1-888-687-4218). We would love to hear from you!

I don't have a child with special needs but I would love to help. How can I do so?
Absolutely you can help! Donors and volunteers are at the heart (pardon the pun!) of Hearts For Music. Please consider donating to our orchestra at www.heartsformusic.org or contacting us about becoming a volunteer. Volunteers don’t necessarily need formal music training, just a love for music and a sincere desire to see each child succeed. We are also always looking for people with creative ideas and unique skills to help make things better for our orchestra and our organization. Even simply spreading the word about Hearts For Music on social media such as Facebook is a BIG help!