

IN DEPTH

Karaoke Therapy is the Family Bonding You've Been Missing

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A few weeks ago on a Friday night, I was feeling grumpy and unmotivated. The kids were bored and I didn't have the energy to deal with it. I was about to head upstairs to my bedroom and hide from my family, but then something shockingly spectacular happened. My husband turned on our karaoke machine and our house became a happening spot. All of our moods transformed almost immediately as we sang one upbeat song after another. We became obsessed with trying to come up with the next best song to pull up on our karaoke machine. I think two hours flew by before our voices started getting scratchy and we went to bed.

Singing has always been one of my favorite go-to stress busters. When I'm alone in the car, I love to blast the radio and sing along to my favorite tunes. My children love music and singing as well. They are always walking around the house belting out a song they heard in movies like "Trolls" or "Sing," and sometimes they even make up their own songs. We've also caught my son singing in the shower on several occasions.

We happen to be somewhat of a musical family: I sang in the school choir growing up and now my kids and I take piano lessons. However, the beauty of karaoke is that you can be a total amateur and have a terrible voice, but you can still reap the numerous benefits that singing provides.

As pointed out in a previous [Parent.Co](#) article, scientific research has found that the act of singing (as opposed to just listening to music) can naturally boost our mood because we release endorphins, the "feel good" chemicals in our body. Besides improving our mood, singing karaoke offers many physical, emotional, social, and educational benefits.

Physical

- **Breath better:** Singing helps slow our heart rate and improve our breathing pattern. In addition, when we sing karaoke, we are usually standing up and using our whole body to get into the song. This forces us to breath more efficiently and easily because the muscles from our diaphragm and lungs become fully expanded and our abdominal muscles more relaxed. Finally, our lungs get a workout when we use proper singing techniques and vocal projections.
- **Strengthen immune system:** A study at the University of Frankfurt found that singing can improve our immune system. Professional choir members had their blood analyzed before and after an hour-long rehearsal. The results showed that the amount of proteins in the immune system that function as antibodies, known as Immunoglobulin A, were much higher right after the rehearsal in most cases.
- **Improve posture:** To be a successful singer, we need to stand up straight with our shoulders and back properly aligned. Therefore, karaoke is a fantastic way to show our children how to develop good posture.

Emotional

- **Express feelings and emotions:** When we belt out a song that has meaning to us or inspires us, we trigger an emotional response within ourselves. Singing, therefore, helps us express our feelings and emotions in a creative way. Karaoke also gives us the opportunity to express a specific song and its meaning using our own style and personality. When we do that, we communicate in an emotional way to ourselves and our audience.
- **Increase happiness:** When we sing a happy, upbeat tune, our overall mood improves because it is enjoyable and distracts us from our daily commitments and worries. In addition to releasing endorphins, we have a tiny organ in our ear called the sacculus that creates a sense of pleasure when we sing.
- **Reduce stress and anxiety:** Karaoke does wonders for reducing stress and anxiety, so much so that it has been used as a type of therapy to help people get over their fears or phobias. One study out of Japan analyzed over 19,000 men ages 40 to 69 and discovered that karaoke reduced their stress levels and lowered their risk of stroke and heart disease. First of all, singing releases muscle tension and decreases the levels of the stress hormone cortisol in our body. Singing also provides a sense of relaxation to let us enjoy the present moment to the fullest.

Social

- **Build confidence:** Singing in front of a crowd takes a ton of confidence, so karaoke gives your kids that special experience that will help them grow and develop. At first, they may feel shy and awkward, but with some practice, karaoke will help build their self-esteem. Public speaking is considered most people's top fear, so your children will have a leg up by practicing with karaoke. This hobby is sure to help your kids overcome their fears and challenges – lessons that they can take with them throughout their lives.
- **Practice team work:** When we do karaoke with others, we have to work together to coordinate that we are singing either in unison or at the appropriate alternating times. This creates a type of teamwork approach. Our kids can learn how to encourage their singing mates so that everyone is successful and has a good time.
- **Bond with family:** Karaoke is an amazing way to bring your family together to do something creative, meaningful, and fun. You will enjoy introducing your kids to the “oldies” that you grew up with. What a wonderful way to create some lasting memories for your family!

Educational

- **Stimulate the brain:** Singing can be complex. It requires a lot of brain power to follow along with the rhythm, melody, and lyrics. This challenge causes activity in the neurons of our brain that bring together emotional, physical, and psychological changes.
- **Improve reading.** Karaoke is no simple task. The lyrics flash up on the screen and we need to react quickly by reading accurately and then singing them. Once your children are pretty comfortable with reading, karaoke can help them master their skills. Karaoke makes learning reading fun since it's set to music that they enjoy. It also provides a change of pace from the typical reading hour before bedtime. Karaoke tends to be ideal for visual learners who learn by seeing and doing. Start off by practicing singing along with your children to one of their favorite songs – nothing too vocally challenging. After some practice, let them sing without the backup vocals. Eventually, they will be able to sing using only the instrumental track.
- **Sharpen memory:** Singing along to a song requires us to use the memory section of our brain. Even though the lyrics are in front of us on the screen, we still access the memories we have in our brain about the song if we have heard it before. This helps to stimulate our brain and improve our memory muscle.

The next time you are looking for an entertaining activity for your family, head for the karaoke machine. Your children will grow in so many tremendous ways, all while having a blast singing their favorite songs.

 47
 1



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