

Start early for musical genius

GOOD news for pushy parents. If you want your child to excel musically, you now have better justification for starting their lessons early. New evidence comes from brain scans of 36 highly skilled musicians, split equally between those who started lessons before and after the age of 7, but who had done a similar amount of training and practice.

MRI scans revealed that the white matter in the corpus callosum – the brain region that links the two hemispheres – had more extensive wiring and connectivity in the early starters. The wiring of the late starters was not much different from that of non-musician controls. This makes sense as the corpus callosum aids speed and synchronisation in tasks involving both hands, such as playing musical instruments (*Journal of Neuroscience*).

Christopher Steele of the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences in Leipzig, Germany, says this is the most compelling evidence yet that younger-trained musicians have an advantage because their training coincides with a key period of brain development. At age 7 or 8, the corpus callosum is more receptive than ever to the alterations in connectivity necessary to meet the demands of learning an instrument.



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Tekst 10 Start early for musical genius

- 3p 39 Geef van elk van de onderstaande beweringen aan of deze wel of niet overeenkomt met de inhoud van de tekst.
- 1 Professional musicians have enhanced communication between the two hemispheres of the brain.
 - 2 The more fully developed the corpus callosum, the better one is at alternating between activities.
 - 3 According to Christopher Steele the brain scans provide persuasive evidence.
 - 4 The earlier gifted children start practicing music, the more successful their careers will be.
 - 5 The article implores parents to give their children musical training from an early age.
- Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door “wel” of “niet”.

Bronvermelding

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