Oh, She Already Knows that Song! (Sevan 1982)

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Sevan's neck somehow had become squeezed by her umbilical cord. After having a normal healthy pregnancy, I saw my first baby girl born motionless, not breathing, and all blue! My husband, Ron, collapsed onto the floor, adding to the doctor's stress ("I don't want to have to take care of YOU too!") while doctor and nurses rushed our baby to a work table.

"Breathe baby breathe!" we begged. Finally her first breaths came - as screams! Satisfied, the nurses turned back to me and left our poor screaming babe alone, her body racked, eyes and fists clenched shut.

Ron went to try to comfort her. He remembered her name song which I'd been singing to her for months: "Se--van--, Se--van-- Se-van- Siran-oush- Su-ni---(4/4 Sol--Mi--Sol--Mi--, Sol-Mi-SolMi-Re-Do-Do---". I'd never heard him sing it. She screamed. He sang, "Se--van, Se--van..." She turned toward his voice, opened her eyes for the first time, and became guiet, and attentive.

The nurses said, "What did you DO?"
Ron said, "Oh, she already KNOWS that song".
A few minutes "old", how could a baby already know a song?
The nurses thought he was cuckoo.

Four years later, Sevan sang with me to compose the name song we both sang for her upcoming sister, Anoush. Sevan's name song starts on the downbeat. Anoush's starts on the upbeat:

A-nou----sh, A-nou----sh, A-nou---sh Ta-mar--Su-ni---- (repeat)

6/8 Sol-La---Sol--Sol-La---Sol--Sol-La--Sol-Fa-Mi--Re-Do----

Ron and Sevan's first face-to-face connection was through the song they both knew from "passive" listening. Research shows, though, that listening for unborn babies is not "passive". Within them there is movement to every sound, a response dance to vibrations! As sound is vibration, when we listen together, we vibrate together.

Listening babies are learning babies, moving to and studying sounds months before birth. Repeating songs for them gives them deep learning and lets them memorize. Singing gives rhythmic motion, melodic motion, and harmonic sense, and gives a stream for the flow of info. Babies figure out language and music grammar rules and use them. Their speaking mistakes, so often in exceptions to the rules, show comprehension of rules.

Babies are so smart! Babies WANT to study, repeat and learn. Put everything to a song and they'll memorize it all! Sing their full names and they'll know more than their first name. For babies I know, I use variations on these two basic name songs-downbeat start, or upbeat start. Sing telephone numbers, addresses, full names of grandparents and birthdates, days of the week, the periodic table, countries of the world, the planets, dates of composers, key signatures, the circle of fifths, multiplication tables, physics formulas, poetry, opera, anything!

Sevan was born February 7, 1982, started piano at five days old, and violin at age four. In 2004 at age 22, she took the ECC Every Child Can course to start Suzuki Method teacher training. She called me

afterwards and said, "Mom, I didn't realize how MANIPULATED I was!" I said, "You were NURTURED (by love)".