

MacPhail Music for Life 2023-24 Evaluation Results

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Contents

Introduction.....	1
Method	1
Evaluation results.....	2
Participant survey results	2
Recommendations for program improvement	7
Appendix.....	8
A. Logic model	8
B. MacPhail Music for Life Participant Post-Program Survey	9

Figures

1. Participant gender identity	2
2. Participant age.....	2
3. Music for Life class participants were involved in.....	2
4. First-time and returning participants.....	3
5. How participants heard of Music for Life.....	3
6. Overall satisfaction	4
7. Likelihood of recommending program	4
8. Satisfaction with teaching artists	4
9. Accomplishments – musical	5
10. Best parts of participation – musical outcomes.....	5
11. Accomplishments – non-musical.....	5
12. Benefits of participation – Non-musical outcomes.....	6
13. Impact of classes on participant happiness and on how participants feel physically .	6
14. Impact of classes on participant’s sense of social connection	6

Introduction

Since 2005, the Music for Life program at the MacPhail Center for Music has been offering music classes for older adults to provide the opportunity to learn and practice music skills and socialize with other adults who are interested in music. MacPhail teaching artists lead Music for Life sessions at senior living facilities in the Twin Cities metro area; MacPhail partners with more than 30 locations to offer these sessions. In addition to these sessions, MacPhail offers registration-based classes at a limited number of sites; these sites are in Minneapolis and Austin. MacPhail partnered with Wilder Research to conduct an evaluation of their activities in program year 2023-24

Method

Wilder Research worked with the MacPhail Center for Music to develop a survey to gather perspectives from Music for Life participants at the end of their participation in the program. The survey asked questions about participants' satisfaction with the program; the impact the program had made on participants' emotional and physical health, socialization, and musical skills; their favorite aspects of the program; and areas for program improvement. In total, 129 participants completed a survey at the end of their program.

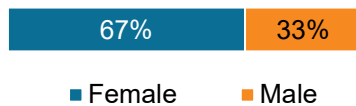
Evaluation results

Participant survey results

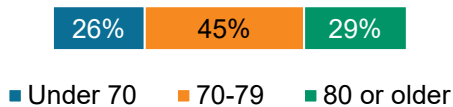
Participant characteristics

Music for Life participants were asked to share a bit about themselves when completing their survey. The majority of respondents identified as female (67%; Figure 1) and White (97%; 1% identified as Asian or Asian American, 1% as Black or African American, 1% as multi-racial). About 3 in 4 participants (74%) reported that they were age 70 years old or older (Figure 2).

1. Participant gender identity (n=122)

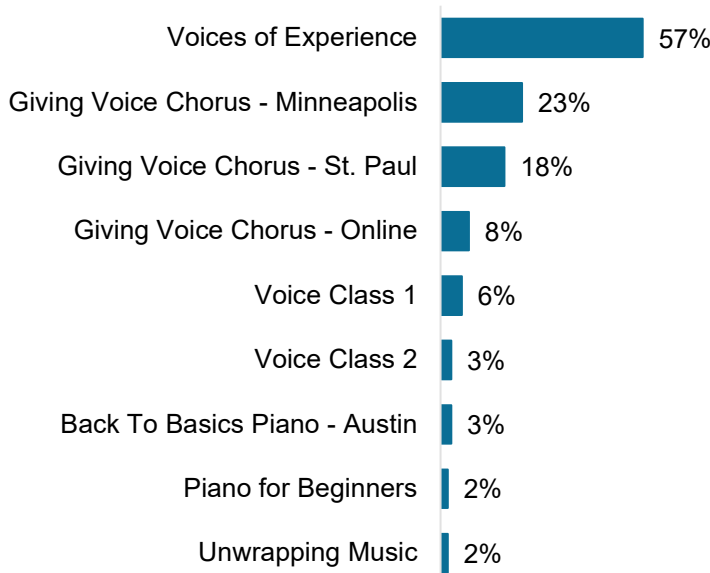


2. Participant age (n=119)



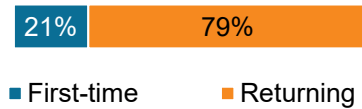
Respondents most commonly participated in the Voices of Experience Choir (57%) and the Giving Voice Chorus – Minneapolis (23%). Please see Figure 3 for the breakdown of survey respondents by Music for Life offering.

3. Music for Life class participants were involved in (n=129)



Participants were asked about their previous experiences with music and Music for Life and why they decided to participate in Music for Life. Nearly 4 in 5 respondents (79%) had participated in a Music for Life class previously and decided to return to the program (Figure 4).

4. First-time and returning participants (n=128)



In the survey, respondents were asked how they heard about Music for Life and were given a list of options to choose from. Nearly 2 in 5 respondents (39%) heard of the class from friends, family, or acquaintances who had previously participated in a Music for Life class (Figure 5). Almost 2 in 5 (18%) said they learned about Music for Life via searching online.

5. How participants heard of Music for Life (n=80)

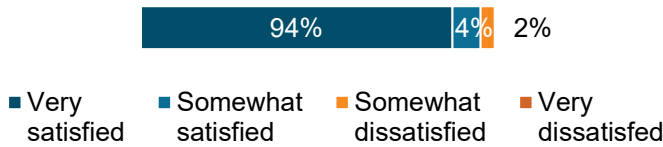
	%
Friends, family, or acquaintances who had previously participated in Music for Life	39%
Online search	18%
Social media (Facebook, etc.)	2%
Friends, family, or acquaintances who had not previously participated in Music for Life	8%

More than 4 in 5 survey respondents (85%) reported that they plan to sign up for another Music for Life class. These participants noted their enjoyment of the classes and the music as well as relationships with other members and teaching artists as why they would like to continue their participation.

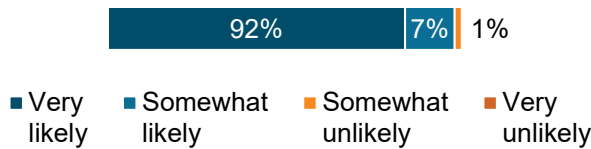
Participants find classes enjoyable and valuable

Nearly all respondents (98%) were satisfied with the course they participated in (Figure 6). Likewise, all respondents (100%) said that it is somewhat likely or very likely that they will recommend Music for Life to a friend or acquaintance (Figure 7).

6. Overall satisfaction (n=124)



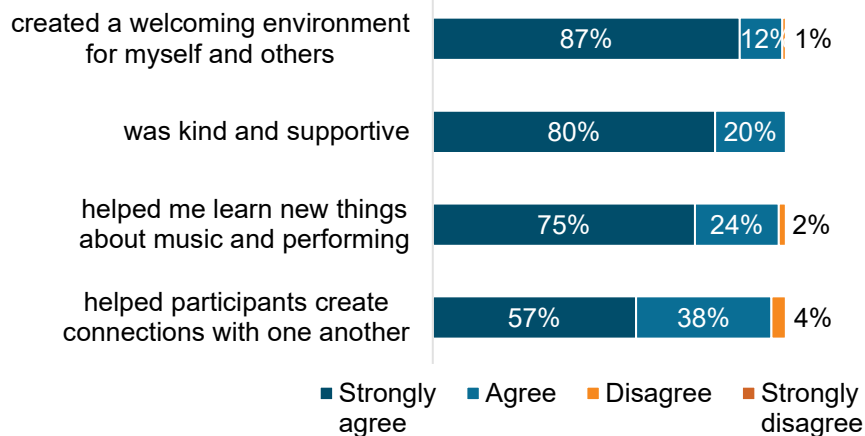
7. Likelihood of recommending program to a friend or acquaintance (n=124)



Respondents were very positive about the teaching artists who led their classes. All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their teaching artist created a welcoming environment for them and others, was kind and supportive, and helped them learn new things about music and performing (Figure 8). While this feedback is overwhelmingly positive, one area for improvement is ensuring that teaching artists help create connections between participants, with a substantially smaller percentage of respondents saying that they strongly agreed with this statement.

8. Satisfaction with teaching artists (n=121-123)

My teaching artist...



Participants develop music skills

Respondents reported developing their music skills through their participation in the Music for Life program. Two in three participants (67%) reported increasing their musical skill and learning more about music, whereas more than half (57%) reported growth in their appreciation of music (Figure 9). Further, participants were asked what aspect of their Music for Life class was the most satisfying for them; they said enjoying learning new music (48%), learning musical techniques (34%), and singing or playing familiar songs (25%) (Figure 10).

9. Accomplishments – musical (n=129)

What did you accomplish by participating in this music class?	%
I increased my musical skills	67%
I learned more about music	67%
I grew in my appreciation of music	57%

Note: Percentages add to more than 100 because participants could select multiple response options.

10. Best parts of participation – musical outcomes (n=128)

What are the most satisfying aspects of participating in MacPhail Music for Life?	%
Learning new music	48%
Learning musical techniques	34%
Singing or playing familiar songs	25%

Note: Percentages add to more than 100 because participants could select multiple response options.

Participants are happier and healthier because of their participation

Participants reported numerous benefits of participating in a Music for Life class for their health, wellbeing, and social lives. They commonly reported that through participating in Music for Life, they socialized with others (74%), improved their mood (70%), were more active mentally (64%), made new friends (64%), and expressed themselves creatively (61%) (Figure 11). Some report that participating allowed them to be more physically active (19%).

11. Accomplishments – non-musical (n=129)

What did you accomplish by participating in this music class?	%
I socialized with others	74%
I improved my mood	70%
I was more active mentally	64%
I made new friends	64%
I expressed myself in a creative way	61%
I was more active physically	19%

Note: Percentages add to more than 100 because participants could select multiple response options.

The aspect of Music for Life that participants found most satisfying was the opportunity to sing and learn with other people (77% of respondents) (Figure 12). Following this, respondents reported that they liked performing (34%), getting to know new people (31%), and expanding their social activities (18%).

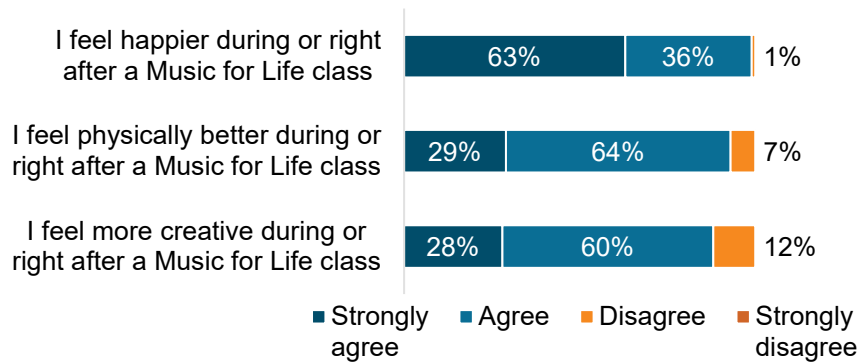
12. Benefits of participation – Non-musical outcomes (n=128)

What are the most satisfying aspects of participating in MacPhail Music for Life?	%
Singing or learning with other people	77%
Performing	34%
Getting to know new people	31%
Expanding my social activities	18%
Physical warm-ups	6%
Other	3%

Note: Percentages add to more than 100 because participants could select multiple response options

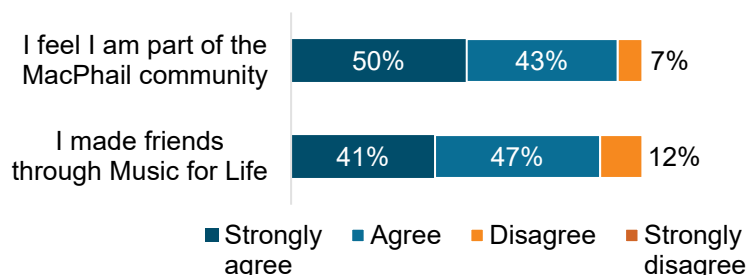
Regarding wellbeing, almost all survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed they felt happier (99%), physically better (93%), and more creative during or right after a class (88%) (Figure 13).

13. Impact of classes on participant happiness and on how participants feel physically (n=124-127)



Further, almost all participants agreed or strongly agreed that they feel they are a part of the MacPhail community (93%) (Figure 14). Almost all participants (88%) likewise agreed or strongly agreed that they made friends through Music for Life.

14. Impact of classes on participant's sense of social connection (n=121-123)



Recommendations for program improvement

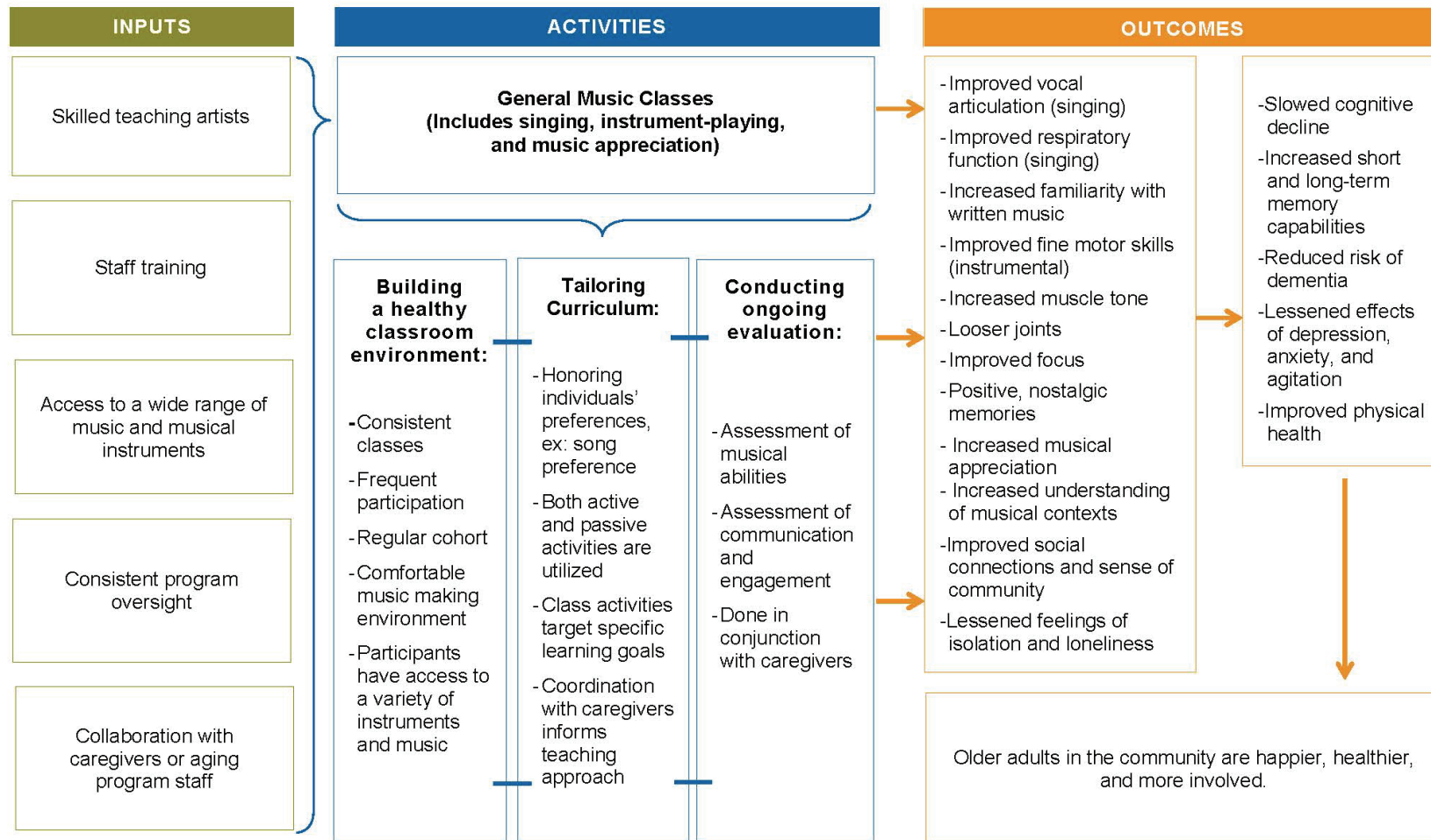
Findings from this evaluation are similar to previous years. Recommendations from Wilder based on evaluation results are likewise similar:

- **Continue facilitating social connections among participants.** Especially since the pandemic, the Music for Life survey has generally shown that participants want more time and focus on social connection in Music for Life offerings. We recommend that MacPhail continue building on this success, making sure that all Music for Life offerings—in-person or virtual, large or small—includes focused time for relationship-building and making connections between participants.
- **Consider ways to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion more fully into the program, and pursue opportunities to serve more participants of color.** Similar to last year’s evaluation, the vast majority of Music for Life participants identify as White. MacPhail should dedicate time and resources to identifying ways to provide programming to older adults of color and low-income individuals. For instance, MacPhail could partner with more organizations that serve older adults, perhaps focusing on culturally specific organizations that serve older adults who identify as BIPOC as a way to improve, expand, deepen, and extend the program’s impact.

Appendix

A. Logic model

Overview: The MacPhail Music for Life program aims to provide music education to older adults, giving them an outlet of creative expression, connecting them with other older adults who share their passions, and providing the opportunity to improve their physical and mental health conditions through musical activity. They do so with classes specifically focused on singing, learning to play instruments or improving their instrumental abilities, and music appreciation.



B. MacPhail Music for Life Participant Post-Program Survey

MacPhail Music for Life™ Participant Post-Program Survey

Thank you for participating in MacPhail Music for Life™ classes! The Teaching Artists and staff at MacPhail appreciate your time completing this brief survey as we end our time together. Please check the appropriate boxes.

Name: _____

1. Where did you participate in MacPhail Music for Life™? Please check all that apply.

- ¹ Minneapolis
- ² Apple Valley
- ³ Austin
- ⁴ Online

2. What MacPhail class did you participate in?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ¹ Giving Voice Chorus – Minneapolis, morning | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁵ Piano for Beginners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ² Giving Voice Chorus – Minneapolis, afternoon | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁶ Back to Basics Group Piano – Austin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ³ Giving Voice Chorus – St. Paul | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁷ Voice Class 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ⁴ Giving Voice Chorus – Online | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁸ Unwrapping Music: Movie Songs |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁹ Unwrapping Music: Verdi Operas |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁰ Voices of Experience |

3. Was this your first MacPhail Music for Life™ course?

- ¹ Yes → What made you decide to join the class? _____
- ² No → What made you decide to participate in the class again? _____

4. What did you accomplish by participating in this music class? (Check all that apply)

- ¹ I learned more about music
- ² I increased my musical skills
- ³ I made new friends
- ⁴ I socialized with others
- ⁵ I was more active physically
- ⁶ I was more active mentally
- ⁷ I improved my mood
- ⁸ I expressed myself in a creative way
- ⁹ I grew in my appreciation of music
- ¹⁰ Other: _____

5. What are the most satisfying aspects of participation in MacPhail Music for Life™? (Check up to 3)

- ¹ Learning musical techniques
- ² Learning new music
- ³ Singing or playing familiar songs
- ⁴ Physical warm-ups
- ⁵ Singing or learning with other people
- ⁶ Performing
- ⁷ Expanding my social activities
- ⁸ Getting to know new people
- ⁹ Improving my mood
- ¹⁰ Other: _____

6. Approximately how much additional time (in minutes) per week outside of rehearsal or class do you spend reviewing or practicing Music for Life™ materials? _____ (minutes)

7. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. I feel happier during or right after a Music for Life class.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
b. I feel physically better during or right after a Music for Life class.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
c. I feel more creative during or right after a Music for Life class.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
d. I made friends through Music for Life.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
e. Participating in Music for Life increased how frequently I socialize with friends.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹

8. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. My Teaching Artist was kind and supportive.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
b. My Teaching Artist helped me learn new things about music and performing.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
c. My Teaching Artist created a welcoming environment for myself and others.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
d. My Teaching Artist helped participants create connections with one another.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
e. I would recommend Music for Life to my friends and acquaintances.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
f. I feel I am a part of the MacPhail community.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹

9. Did you participate in Music for Life™ online this semester?

- ¹ Yes
- ² No

10. [If yes to Q9] Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. It was easy to participate in the online Music for Life classes.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
b. Music for Life gave me a way to socialize with others more during the pandemic.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
c. Participating in Music for Life helped me feel happier during the pandemic.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹

11. [If Yes to Q9] Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statement.

MacPhail staff provided me with the technological support I needed to participate fully in the online classes.

- ¹ Strongly agree
- ² Agree
- ³ Disagree
- ⁴ Strongly disagree
- ⁵ Not applicable

12. What did you enjoy most about MacPhail Music for Life™?

13. What could make the class better, such as different class content, making it more convenient to participate, and improving your experience overall? Please be specific.

14. What other types of classes or activities should MacPhail provide?

15. How did you hear about Music for Life?

- 1 Friends, family, or acquaintances who had previously participated in Music for Life
- 2 Friends, family, or acquaintances who had *not* previously participated in Music for Life
- 3 Social media (Facebook, etc.)
- 4 Online search (Google, etc.)
- 5 Another way, please describe: _____

16. How often do you visit the MacPhail website?

- 1 Once every week or more often
- 2 Multiple times per month, but not every week
- 3 Once every month
- 4 Multiple times per year, but not every month
- 5 Once every year or less often than that
- 6 I have never visited the MacPhail website

17. [For any response other than "I have never visited..." to Q16] Why do you visit the MacPhail website? Check all that apply.

- 1 To learn about offerings like classes, ensembles, and events
- 2 To register for classes or ensembles
- 3 For Student QuickLinks (e.g., class or ensemble schedules, building hours, contact information)
- 4 To view archived performances
- 5 To explore the "Read, Watch, Listen" content
- 6 Something else. → For what other reason(s) do you visit the MacPhail website?

18. How likely are you to recommend Music for Life™ to someone else?

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Very unlikely

19. Overall, how satisfied are you with the class?

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2 Somewhat satisfied
- 3 Somewhat dissatisfied
- 4 Very dissatisfied

20. Do you plan to sign up for another MacPhail Music for Life™ course in the future?

- ¹ Yes
- ² Maybe
- ³ No
- ⁸ I don't know

Why?

21. Please share any other comments you might have about MacPhail Music for Life™ here.

Now, we'd like to know a little more about you.

22. With what gender do you identify?

- ¹ Female
- ² Male
- ³ Prefer to self-describe: _____
- ⁴ Prefer not to answer

23. What is your age (in years)? _____

24. How do you identify your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply.)

- ¹ American Indian, Native American or Alaska Native
- ² Asian American or Asian
- ³ Black, African American or African
- ⁴ Hispanic or Latino/a
- ⁵ White or Caucasian
- ⁶ Multi-racial or other (please describe: _____)
- ⁷ Prefer not to answer

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Wilder Research, a division of Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, is a nationally respected nonprofit research and evaluation group. For more than 100 years, Wilder Research has gathered and interpreted facts and trends to help families and communities thrive, get at the core of community concerns, and uncover issues that are overlooked or poorly understood.

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