

PLAYGROUND

Orlando

> education
issue!

Recess Moms
RECAP

+

Parents Dish
ABOUT LOCAL SCHOOLS

PACK A LUNCH
PUNCH!

FEATURING
Michael J of Winter Garden
in SMARTY PANTS Fashion
on page 29

20

MUST-HAVE
ENRICHMENT
RESOURCES

Fall Family
events





Hitting a high note

Holly Lesnick's award-winning Kindermusik program is music to our ears.

Words by Lisa A. Beach | Photo by Erin Monroe

In 2005, with a 6-week-old son and a 3-year-old daughter, Orlando mom Holly Lesnick kept a busy schedule packed with naptimes, feedings and playdates. You'd think launching a new business wouldn't be a high priority for this new mom. But Holly's kids, Aiden and Anna, were instrumental in her decision to launch Grow and Sing Studios in Orlando that year.

Holly had been going to a local Kindermusik studio where she fell in love with this research-based music-and-movement program for early learners. Understanding the connection between music and learning, Holly loved this program's whole-child development approach.

So, Holly was thrilled when, in 2002, the studio owner offered her a position as a Kindermusik educator. Holly aced the training and taught for three years, finding joy in the weekly sessions that helped families bond over singing, dancing and playing musical instruments together.

But in 2005, the studio owner moved and closed up shop, which gave Holly the blues (these music puns are just too easy!). Instead of lamenting the loss of a great music program, Holly decided to fill the void by launching Grow & Sing Studios. "I selfishly started the company because I had nowhere else to take my kids," explains Holly, an early childhood specialist with a degree in music therapy.

Without the power of social media back then, Holly relied on word-of-mouth to get families jazzed about her new business. Initially, she offered two sold-out classes to 24 families. Her husband, Will, eventually came on board, along with four other licensed educators.



...You've got to balance family, work and self. Self has to go into the equation"

Together, these traveling minstrels took Kindermusik to malls, churches and community groups throughout the area.

"We wanted to serve the community and go where the need was," Holly says. This philosophy served her well, especially during the recession. When other brick-and-mortar shops were closing, her program grew because it wasn't tied to a physical location.

Flash forward to 2017, when Grow & Sing Studios just earned the Conductor's Circle Maestro Award for the 10th year in a row. This prestigious award recognizes Holly's program as one of the top 1 percent of Kindermusik programs among 5,000 programs worldwide. Now in nine locations across Central Florida, Grow & Sing Studios has served nearly 3,000 families since 2005.

With growth comes the delicate act of balancing it all. "You have to know when to stop and say, 'That's enough. I'm done with this today, and now it's family time'," Holly points out. "You've got to balance family, work and self. Self *has* to go into the equation." Following her own advice, Holly created a meditation room in her house where she practices yoga, meditates and journals.

Ending on a high note, Holly reflects, "Do what fills you up with joy."

Visit growandsing.com for details about Holly's Kindermusik programs and for more information about a free preview class.



LISA BEACH is a freelance journalist, content marketing specialist and copywriter. Check out her writer's website at www.LisaBeachWrites.com.