



Upside-Up® Music's Financial Aid Program

Upside-Up Music's mission is to provide highest quality music classes to all families in the greater Shelburne Falls/Ashfield/Greenfield area who wish to participate, regardless of financial circumstance. We are proud to have offered financial aid to area families since our founding as Hilltown Music Together in 2003. Here are a few FAQs - if you don't see the answers to your questions here, or if these FAQ's bring up new questions, please contact me, Lui Collins, Director, at (413) 628-0197 or lui@upsideupmusic.com

Who may benefit from Upside-Up's financial aid program?

Anyone may benefit from financial aid: families taking the class for the first time or families who have been part of the Upside-Up community for years.

What types of financial aid are available?

- 1) For families who can afford the tuition but can't pay the full amount at one time, we offer payment plans. Typically the tuition is divided into two or three parts, with the first payment made with registration, the second at the start of the session, and the third in week 5.
- 2) We offer aid in the form of reduced tuition, with barter and/or partial scholarship making up the difference. We encourage families to contribute as much as they reasonably can, because that enables us to cover our costs and to offer assistance to more families.
- 3) We also suggest that families reach out to extended families and friends for assistance. We've found that grandparents and other family members and friends enjoy giving gift certificates (in full tuition or any amount) as birthday or holiday (or no occasion at all) gifts. Again, this helps us spread out our assistance to more of the community, and extended family members often welcome the opportunity to get involved in this way. We love to have them visit class too! Then they can see with their own eyes (and hear with their own ears) the pleasure their gift brings!
- 4) On rare occasions, in a case of hardship, we will offer a full scholarship.

What kinds of barter do you suggest?

Over the years we have happily accepted any number of barterers, from help putting up flyers or assembling materials packets, to a CSA share, farm products, and gardening help. Other ideas: coordinating a fundraiser for the scholarship fund (T-shirts? mugs? bumper stickers? bake sales?), photography, professional consulting, maple syrup, honey, or eggs (I miss my chickens!), extra produce from your garden. All ideas happily considered!

What is the application process?

If you request financial aid we take you at your word that you need the assistance. Consider the

options outlined above as to the ways we can help, then call me, Lui, at (413) 628-0197 and we'll discuss what would work best for your family. No financial data is asked for; the honor system applies. For privacy purposes we keep scholarship amounts confidential and ask that you do the same.

May a financial aid recipient apply for subsequent help?

Yes, we are happy to consider financial aid as long as it is needed. Our goal is to support your family in giving your child the lifelong gift of music. Just ask.

Why this mission of music for children?

When my children were young, we received help in ways that continue to impact their lives, even as adults. Both their dad and I were self-employed, and it was a challenge to meet normal expenses, say nothing of enrichment for our children or handling emergencies. When our second child was born with medical challenges, Boston Children's Hospital provided free care, and a grant program in our town gave further assistance. He now shares his love of skiing, hiking and climbing with his own two little boys. All three of our children attended our local Montessori school for years, made possible by their generous scholarship program. And, as adults and parents, they have retained the love of learning and exploration they developed through Montessori. When I began my teacher training, I recognized in the research-based Music Together program qualities I so admired in the Montessori approach – but focused on music, which has been my own life's work and joy. By accepting my offer of financial aid, you allow me to pass on the gifts that were so generously granted to my own children, and the joy of music to yours.

Can I contribute to the scholarship fund?

Yes! We welcome donations to the Scholarship Fund and will put them to good use, to help us make family music classes available to anyone who is interested. Please contact Lui (lui@upsideupmusic.com), and thank you in advance!