

“When we look at what is happening in education, we have some very peculiar mismatches between what neurologically we know the child is needing and physiologically what we are giving them. Five, six, seven, eight year olds are being ask to sit still an awfully long day at a time when the body is no where near ready to think or sit still. In fact, unless that child is able to move and mature the reflexes, and go through some of the motor development paths that are unfinished business for them, they will never really be able to sit still and think. They can sit still with great effort, but they won't have gotten to where it's automatic for them to have those postures, therefore they are using a lot of their attention just to balance in their chairs, and just to sit there, and there's very little left over to think with. And we're sending them on to the upper grades still unfinished in the way of motor development so that the mind isn't really free to have its turn. And the stuff that you're doing in the classroom... all of the movements, the working with activities on the midline, the balance activities, the building of beat and rhythm as Phyllis Weikart talked so eloquently about, are **fundamental to a child's neurological development**. Without that we don't really put their minds in place so that they can learn.

Dee Joy Coulter, “Music's Gifts to the Developing Mind”  
(Detroit: Orff Schulwerk National Conference  
presentation)