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## New series shows transformative power of music on Australian children

*Don't Stop The Music* – Part 1 airs Sunday November 11th at 7.40pm on ABC and ABC iview

63% of primary schools in Australia offer no classroom music [1]. Despite the proven benefits of music education, most schools don't have the resources for a music program in their curriculum.

*Don't Stop The Music* is a three-part documentary series on ABC that follows the journey of a primary school from an underprivileged area of Perth embarking on a music program, and the transformative effects this has on the students, teachers and families involved.

Australian music sensation Guy Sebastian is on-hand to mentor and inspire the students, most of whom have never touched a musical instrument. Through Guy's warm and supportive coaching, many heartwarming moments unfold and they begin to develop a love of music.



Guided by leading music educators, including Micheál McCarthy from WAAPA, teachers are given new tools to teach their students to play instruments and sing.

*Don't Stop The Music* will screen as part of ABC's annual Ausmusic Month in November. For the month of November, ABC celebrates and embraces Australian music across all its platforms with special initiatives, live performances and programming, highlighting and paying tribute to the diverse, depth and variety of Australian music.

Filmed over 9 months, the series follows primary school students at school and at home with their families as they learn, practice, struggle and persevere with their instruments. The students perform for their peers and are treated to performances from visiting bands and choirs and hands-on workshops as a culture of music begins to develop in the school.

The benefits of music begin to play out among the children, tempering disruptive behavior, bringing serial truants back to the classroom and providing a creative outlet for kids who haven't excelled in traditional academic areas.

Featured in the series is Dr Anita Collins, an award-winning educator, researcher and writer in the field of brain development and music learning.

“Two decades of frenzied research has now found that music education grows, hones and permanently improves neural networks like no other activity.

Children who undertake formal, ongoing musical education have significantly higher levels of cognitive capacity, specifically in their language acquisition and numerical problem-solving skills. They also continue in education for longer, reverse the cognitive issues related to disadvantage, and earn and contribute more on average across their lifetime.”

In tandem with the series, the ABC, the Salvation Army and Musica Viva will launch a national appeal, encouraging people to donate unused or unwanted musical instruments that can be provided to school music programs.

#### Key Facts:

- 63% of primary schools in Australia offer no classroom music[1].
- Despite 90% of parents valuing music and wanting their children to be involved, access to quality music education in schools has become highly inequitable[2].
- Recent studies have shown how incorporating music in a child's education has life changing benefits; improving literacy, numeracy, confidence, behaviours and wellbeing.

[1] National Review of Music Education Report 2005

[2] Music Australia's Music Is Good Fact sheet, Aug 2017



**Production Credits:** An Artemis Media Production, made in association with ABC, Screen Australia, Screenwest and Lotterywest. Producer Celia Tait. ABC Executive Producer Stephen Oliver.

Based on the format Don't Stop the Music developed by Fresh One Productions Limited.

**ENDS**

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