



Participant Handbook



Website: www.harmonyprogram.org

Email: info@harmonyprogram.org

Phone: 646-981-1882

Welcome to the Harmony Program

Harmony Program families:

Welcome to the Harmony Program! We are a nonprofit organization that provides intensive, high quality music instruction in communities across New York City. Our students receive musical instruments, lessons, books/supplies, and access to various cultural events throughout the year. And, importantly, they become part of a city-wide community of musicians.

We've created this handbook to make it easy for you to access information on the following:

- Harmony Program's mission and goals;
- What to expect from your participation;
- All of the learning and performance options available to you;
- The commitments and responsibilities of students, parents, and the Harmony Program;
- How to get answers to any questions you have about the Harmony Program.

Contacting the Harmony Program

We are always available to our parents and participants. Please follow us on social media and feel free to reach us by email or phone if you have a question, comment, or suggestion for us.

- **Website:** www.harmonyprogram.org
- **Email:** info@harmonyprogram.org
- **Phone:** 646-981-1882
- **Social media:**
 - <https://www.facebook.com/harmonyprogram>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/user/HarmonyProgramMusic>
 - <https://www.instagram.com/harmonyprogram>
 - <https://twitter.com/harmonyprogram>

We look forward to getting to know you and to sharing a wonderful year of making music together!

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Guerriero, Ph.D., Director of Education

The Harmony Program's Mission and Model

The Harmony Program believes that music should be an integral part of every child's education, and that great expectations lead to even greater achievement. We believe that by training young musicians and building youth orchestras, we not only shape the lives of our children but also engage and inspire their parents and their broader communities. We are delighted to welcome you to the Harmony family.

Our students begin the Harmony Program with little to no prior experience studying music. **Each student receives an instrument, instruction, books, supplies, and tickets to concerts and cultural events throughout New York City.**

The vision of a better world made possible through music continues to guide our work, inform our mission, and shape the experiences of our students, teachers, and staff.

Our Program and What We Offer

We currently provide our students with the following:

- Group instrumental instruction (6-10 hours each week) on strings, brass, winds, and percussion instruments;
- Ensemble performance opportunities;
- Coaching by professionals through our partnerships with the New York Philharmonic and other organizations;
- Access to performances, both on-site and at cultural venues throughout the city.

Harmony Program Curriculum

The Harmony Program's curriculum is based on the National Association for Music Education's standards as well as the New York City's Blueprint for Music Education. In addition to our curriculum, we've adapted the model and philosophy of El Sistema to the unique needs of our communities, and every day we create supportive environments for learning, instill life skills through music making, and encourage cooperation and responsibility through ensemble training.

Harmony Program Teaching Staff

Our teachers are trained at the nation's top college music programs and conservatories and are hired by the Harmony Program only after receiving clearance from the Department of Education. The Harmony Program provides its teachers with additional year-round training and support, including classroom observation and formal evaluation each semester.

How Your Child Benefits from The Harmony Program

- Harmony students receive a comprehensive music education. Our intensive curriculum introduces students to fundamental skills and advanced concepts in music theory, music appreciation, and performance.
- Music education research has shown that learning to play a musical instrument helps a child's brain to develop with more complexity, specifically in areas involved in language acquisition, executive function, and spatial reasoning.
- Learning to play an instrument helps children develop an alternative and creative form of self-expression that is safe and non-violent.
- Students experience the rewards of collaborating in a musical community; working together toward common goals encourages dedication and focus, skills that our students can apply both at school and at home.

Increased Opportunities through Music Education

Students who participate in the Harmony Program receive the instruction and support to go on to do great things. Some of our students' experiences include:

- Scholarships to the Diller Quail School of Music, the O'Connor Method Camp, and the Usdan Summer Camp for the Arts;
- Performances with the New York Youth Symphony, and festivals, including the National Take a Stand Festival in Los Angeles;
- Participation with The All-City High School Music Program, the Salute to Music Program, and The Juilliard School Music Advancement Program;
- Participation with The InterSchool Orchestras of New York;
- Selection for competitive public schools for the performing arts, including Laguardia and Frank Sinatra High School.

Expectations of Harmony Program Students

The Harmony Program requires a serious commitment from its students. All students in the program agree to the following:

- Caring for the instrument they have received, on loan, from the program;
- Attending classes consistently (attendance is VERY important);
- Practicing assignments at home on a regular basis;
- Participating in public performances each semester;
- **Attending summer instruction during the months of July and August.**

The Harmony Program's Schedule and Structure

Our mission of expanding access to music education is made possible through our partnerships. We partner with schools and community centers to bring instrumental music instruction to young people in the communities where they live and learn. We also partner with cultural organizations to expose our students to the highest levels of study and performance.

The Program functions on a 35- week calendar:

- Fall Session: 15 weeks (September to December)
- Spring Session: 15 weeks (January to May)
- Summer Intensive: 5 weeks (July to mid August)

Performances: Students perform in concerts at least twice a year. Performances are public events, and we urge you to attend with your family and friends. Your child's teacher will notify you of the date, time and locations of performances.

Special Opportunities: The Harmony Program provides students with cultural and musical opportunities throughout the year. In the past, these have included Young People's Concerts at the New York Philharmonic, side-by-side concerts with the New York Youth Symphony, and performances by members of the West Point Band, the Orchestra of St. Luke's and others. Advanced students have the opportunity to be part of our All Star Ensemble and study and perform with musicians of the New York Philharmonic.

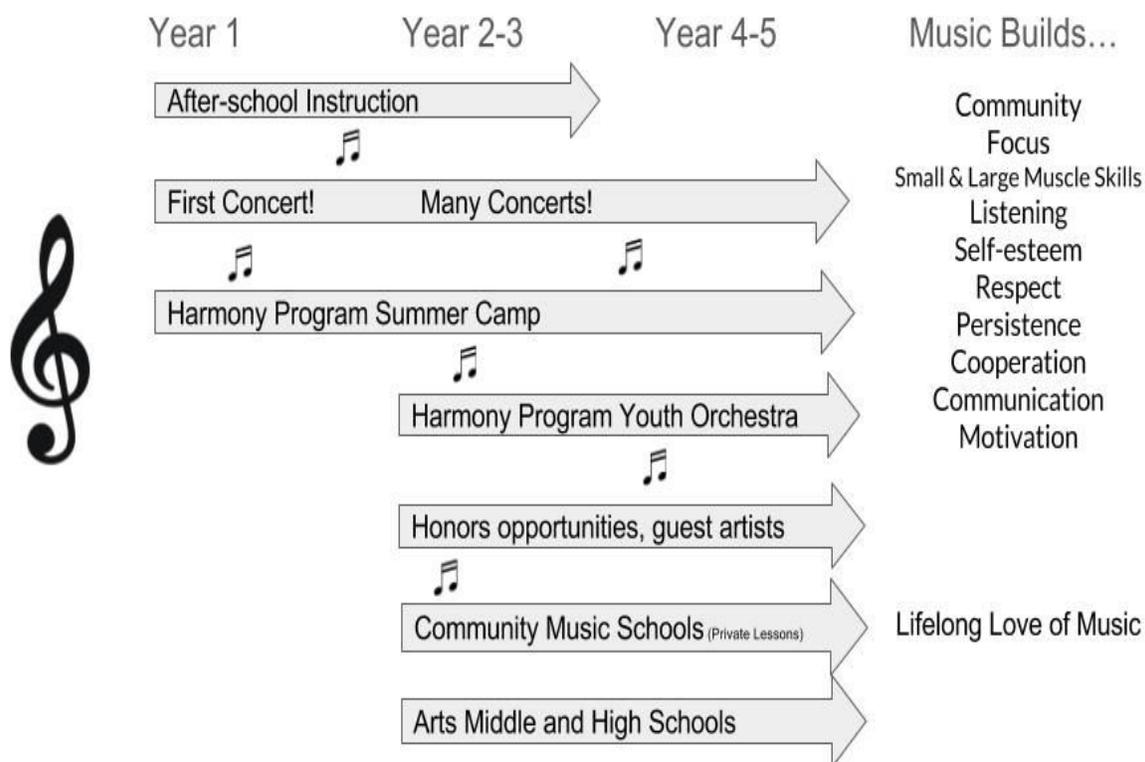
Harmony Program Youth Orchestra:

After the first full year of instruction, students are expected to participate in the Harmony Program Youth Orchestra North (Washington Heights, Bronx, Queens) or Harmony Program Youth Orchestra South (Lower Manhattan, Brooklyn, Long Island). These ensembles are open to Harmony Program students as well as young musicians from the community and meet for two hours each week. Students joining must be entering at least 4th grade (exceptions made upon occasion) and have had at least one year of instruction on an instrument.

Student Journey:

We hope that being part of the Harmony Program will open up a lifetime of music enjoyment for you and your child. On the next page you will find a snapshot of your child's musical journey as a Harmony student. Once your child reaches their second and third year in Harmony, we will begin to discuss with you what ways he or she can continue music instruction beyond Harmony Program. Additionally, the Harmony Program office is always happy to connect you with resources to support your child's learning, such as private lessons at a local community music school. Feel free to contact us at any time!

The Harmony Program Journey



Important Program Policies

Enrollment and Reenrollment

- New and returning students are asked to complete an Enrollment Application in August or September.
- New students and parents must attend a required “Meet-and-Greet” at their respective instructional sites.

Report Cards

- All students receive report cards at the end of each semester.

Instruments

- The Harmony Program provides its students with instruments. ***There is no fee, but the instrument must be returned if the student leaves the program.***

- Any damage to an instrument should be reported immediately to the student's teacher, who will make arrangements for repair. Please don't attempt to repair an instrument yourself, or take it to a repair shop. Any damage to the instrument beyond normal "wear and tear" is the responsibility of the parent.

Attendance

Regular attendance is required for classes and ensemble rehearsals. Students who are not able to attend a class or rehearsal must notify the teacher with as much notice as possible for it to count as an excused absence. Consistent attendance is very important.

Student Pick-Up

Parents are expected to pick up students on time. Under no circumstances will a Harmony Program student be left alone. Please notify the teacher if you plan to arrive late to student pick-up.

Practicing at Home

Students must agree to practice their instruments at home. We ask for the cooperation of parents in encouraging this habit, as well as for their cooperation in making sure that instruments are being treated carefully.

Every Harmony Program student is given a *student assignment book*. Teachers provide practice goals and expectations after each class meeting so that students know what to work on at home. Parents are asked to check the student assignment book and monitor practicing habits at home to ensure improvement and musical success.

Classroom Rules

We believe that positive reinforcement helps our students grow and achieve. All of our Harmony sites implement the following classroom rules. We encourage you to review these rules with your child regularly.

Listen when your teacher is talking

Follow directions quickly

Raise your hand

Wait your turn

Be kind

Make smart choices

Leaving the Harmony Program

If your child must withdraw for any reason from the Harmony Program, please notify his/ her teacher *and* our office as soon as possible. We will make arrangements for the return of his/her instrument and any other materials on loan.