



2022 CRESCENDO REPORT

Community Engagement & Education

Transforming lives through music



Crescendo
Creating a brighter future through music education

WASO’s community programs improve lives. Crescendo, our music education program delivered at two primary schools in Kwinana, is a great example of this. Piloted in 2014 to a single year level, today Crescendo is fully embedded in both Medina Primary School and North Parmelia Primary School, delivering a free sequential music education to every student from pre-primary to year 6.

Each week, all students receive a 45-minute vocal based music lesson. From year 4, students also receive 30 minutes of small group string instrumental lessons, and year 5 and 6 students participate in 45-minute string ensemble sessions. Before school choir is optional for all students, taken up mostly by year 3-6 students.

Research indicates that high-quality music education improves cognitive development and enhances general learning. Crescendo is a unique example of how music education can be integrated in a primary school setting to improve music, development and education outcomes. It is an innovative program created to help grow WA into an inclusive and thriving community with music at its heart. It brings arts to each school in a way they have not been able to previously provide. The socio-economic disadvantage of the participating schools presents a strong social need, with high rates of First Nations and LBOTE (Languages/Backgrounds Other Than English) pupils.

Play-based learning programs for young children, such as Crescendo, provide a solid basis for future success at school. Students engaging with and playing music have improved school attendance, accelerated learning, and increased confidence to face challenges and create solutions. The program has provided significant benefits, contributing to improved academic performance and social outcomes for the participating schools, their students and the broader community.


West Australian Symphony Orchestra respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and Elders of Country throughout Western Australia, and the Whadjuk Noongar people on whose lands we work and share music.

Combined schools string ensemble

In 2022


430

students received classroom music lessons,




165

students received violin lessons, and



42

students participated in string ensemble lessons.



692 classroom, 231 violin, 64 string ensemble lessons were taught, totalling 16,800 hours of lessons delivered.



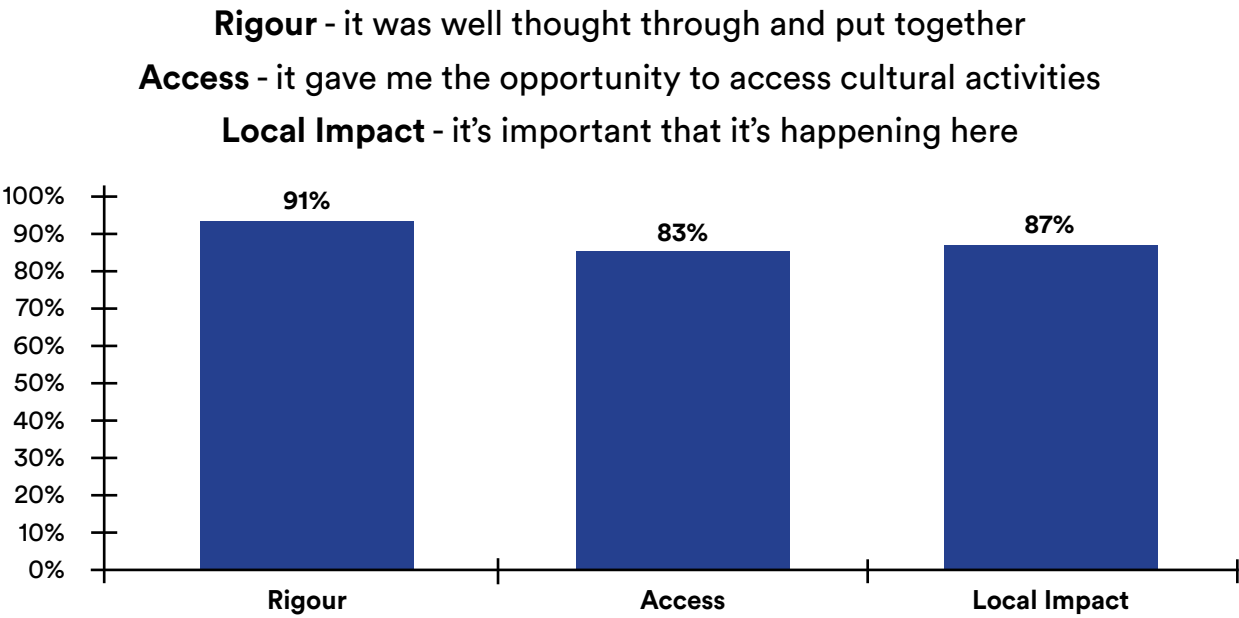
Student evaluation

At the end of each class, all students respond via tablet survey with a smiley face, an indifferent face, or a sad face to measure how they felt about the class they took. Overall -



Staff & parents survey

By way of the annual survey, staff and parents were asked to indicate as a percentage how much they agree with the following statements divided into three areas -



In addition –

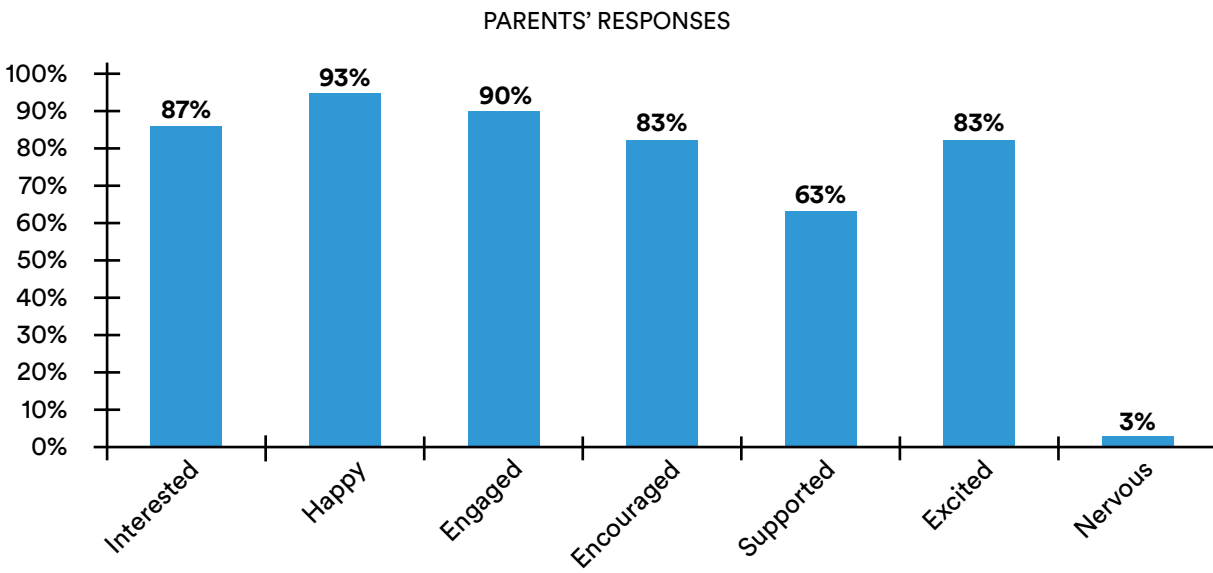
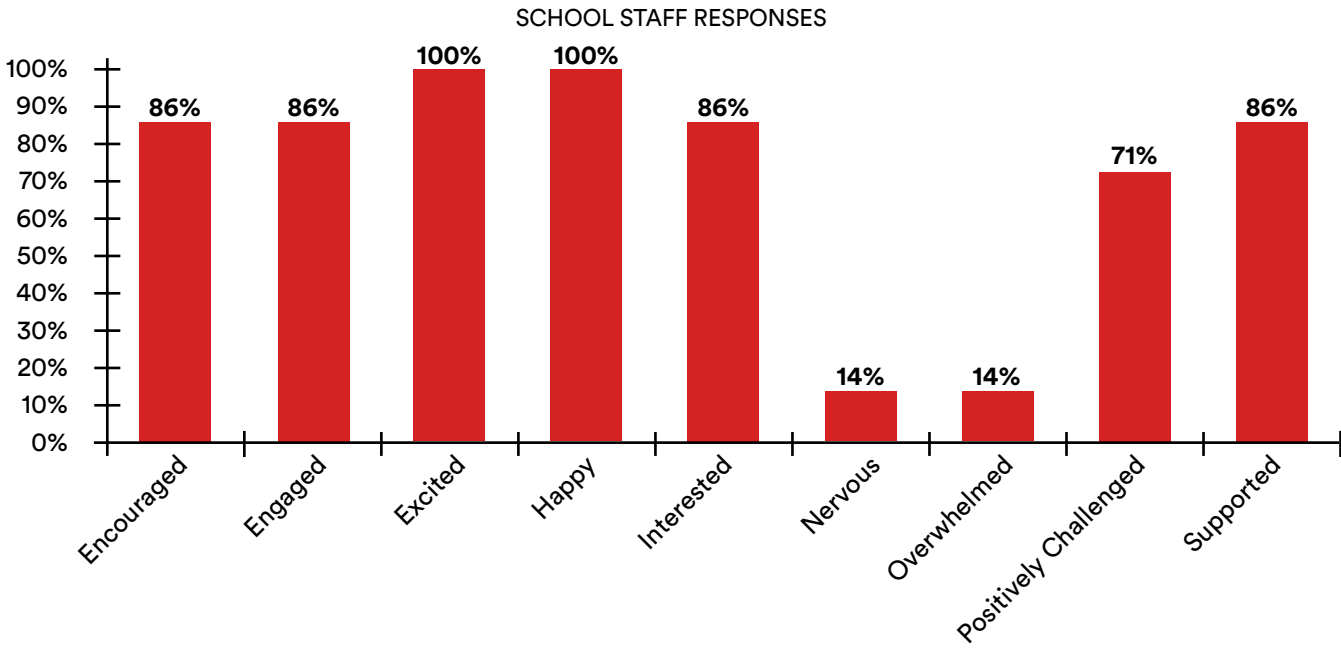
93% aggregate response from staff agree that the program is relevant to students’ music (or Arts in general) education; **89%** from parents.

88% aggregate response from staff agree that the incursions and workshops are relevant to the students’ music (or Arts in general) education.

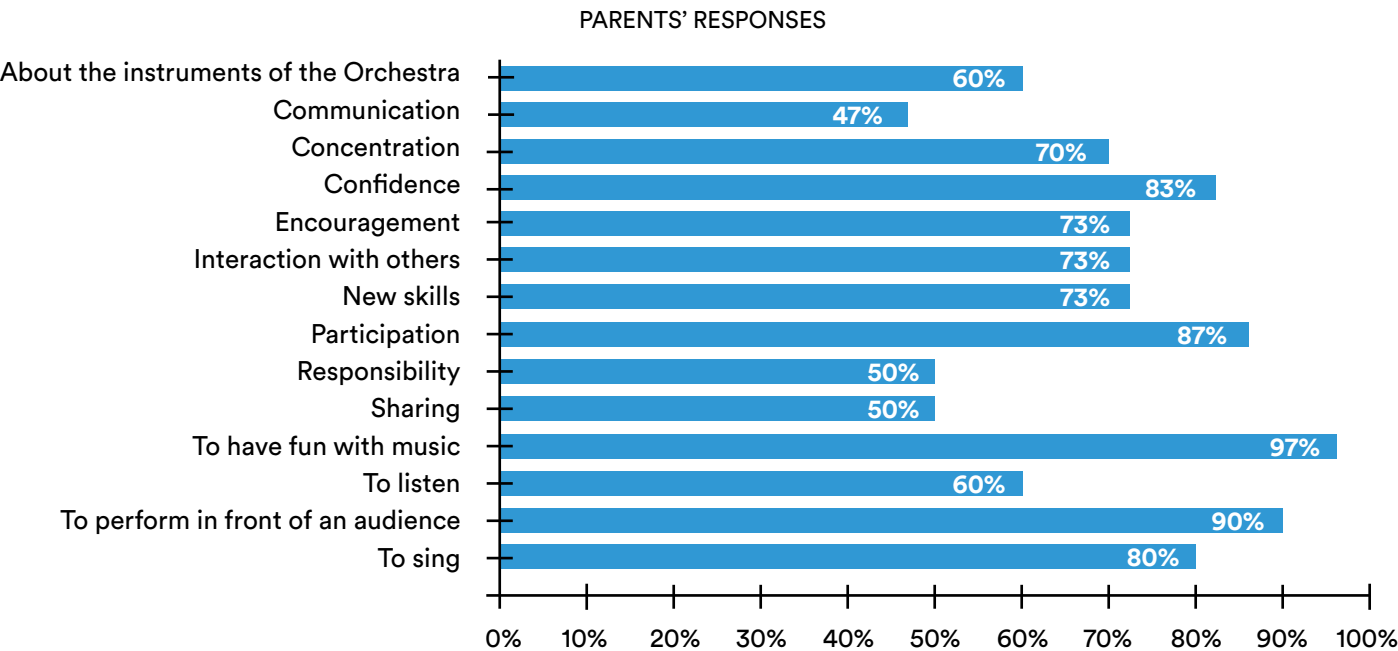
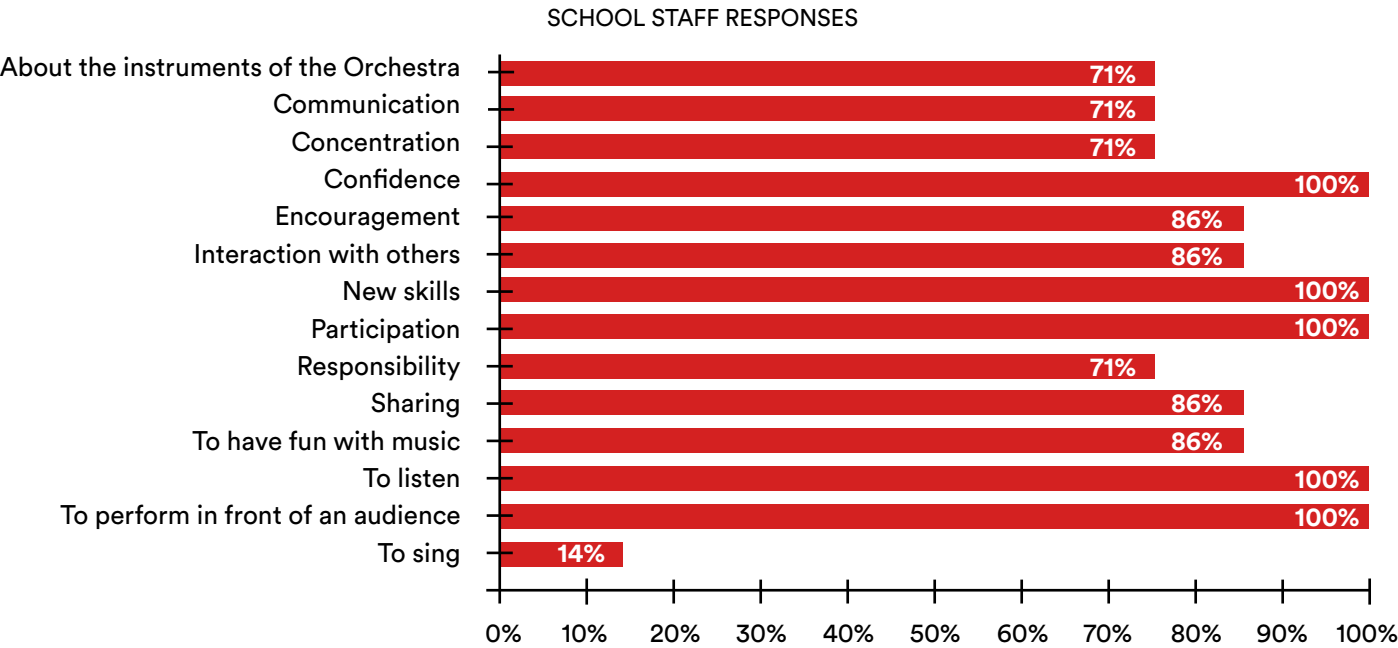
92% aggregate response from parents agree that the Crescendo team is supportive of students’ needs.

92% aggregate response from parents agree that the Crescendo team is understanding of the schools’ community.

Staff and parents were asked to choose words they felt reflected the students’ responses to the Crescendo program at large -



Staff and parents were asked to choose which skills they observed in the students' learning -



Highlights

Choir Club

In 2022, the Crescendo Teaching Artists established a Choir Club at each school. Held before classes start in the morning, Choir Club provides another pathway for students to discover and nurture their vocal ability. It was met with great enthusiasm and continues to draw an average of twenty students at each school.



Choir rehearsals at Medina Primary School



North Parmelia Primary School open the Lyrik Awards

NAIDOC Week & Lyrik Award Performances

2022 saw Crescendo’s recognition spread beyond the classroom, with the City of Kwinana inviting students to perform at two special community events, the Lyrik Awards and the NAIDOC Week opening. Year 5 and 6 students from North Parmelia opened the Lyrik Awards with choral and violin performances, while the NAIDOC Week opening event was headlined by year 5 and 6 Medina students singing “Wanjoo” and performing on violins.

String Ensemble and ANAM Workshop

In June, the two Crescendo schools joined forces, bringing the Medina Primary School year 5 and 6 String Ensemble students to North Parmelia Primary School for two combined ensemble rehearsals. The students were paired with a desk buddy from the opposite school, extending the community elements of the program through social engagement opportunities.

These combined rehearsals were followed by a full day of composition workshops led by WASO’s Assistant Conductor, Jen Winley, which were held in August and offsite from school at the Darius Wells Centre in Kwinana. A very special experience, it was designed to inspire the young Crescendo musicians, as they worked alongside exceptional students from the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM). As the Crescendo students drew on the artistic experience of the ANAM students, a parallel opportunity for the ANAM students was created as they mentored the Crescendo students. The day ended with a performance of the new piece of music created by students to an audience of parents, teachers and fellow students.



Combined schools string ensemble



“Thank you for what you do. I think this is an awesome program for the kids that attended. Especially in this area, too – not many of the kids here get good opportunities, and a love of music is something that will keep on giving.” MPS staff member



Deborah Cheetham leads a workshop at Medina Primary School

Short Black Opera Workshop

Crescendo students also experienced an intensive workshop with Short Black Opera: over two days, Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO and Toni Lalich OAM taught years 4, 5 and 6 students First Nations culture, language and song from the *Dhungala Children's Songbook*.

Deborah was so impressed with one student's violin playing after the workshop, that she offered a scholarship to work and perform with Ensemble Dutala, Australia's first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander chamber ensemble, as part of the 'One Day in January' program in Sydney.

Crescendo graduate Sandra Hart travelled to Sydney in January 2023 to take up this amazing opportunity, adventuring out of Western Australia on a plane for the first time. Across four days, Sandra had the opportunity to play alongside other scholars, members of the Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras, and members of Ensemble Dutala. Sandra also received mentorship from the professional musicians, including Artistic Director of Ensemble Dutala, Aaron Wyatt, a regular casual violist with WASO.

It was a big opportunity for Sandra that started from small beginnings in the classroom, and we are thrilled to see Sandra take her experience with the violin to a whole new level.

"Music education is vital in our society, and so I'm absolutely thrilled to have been invited to make a contribution to the Crescendo program." Deborah Cheetham



Sandra Hart with One Day in January musicians in Sydney



"I always knew that [my son] enjoyed music, but having a little chat, he told me how much he looooooved music, and how much he loved WASO and that it was the best thing ever. He explained that music makes him feel happy and it's fun, but when he closes his eyes, it is just as good because it makes him feel calm listening with his eyes closed." MPS Parent

Medina Primary students perform at the End of Year concert

Enjoying WASO live

In May, Crescendo students from pre primary to year 6 travelled by bus to the city to experience WASO in the Perth Concert Hall with *Leon and the Place Between*, a multimedia concert that brought the pages of Angela McAllister’s magical story to life through music and art. Students were treated to a WASO-provided morning tea prior to the concert.

June brought the Orchestra to Kwinana: Crescendo students experienced an incursion of the WASO concert *Milli’s Marvellous Musical Adventure*, a new work featuring percussionist and educator Thea Rossen and the WASO Education Chamber Ensemble in a special musical reading of Stephen Michael King’s award-winning Australian picture book, *Milli, Jack and the Dancing Cat*.



Enjoying WASO live at the Perth Concert Hall

End of Year Performances

In late November and early December, Crescendo students across all year groups came together in their respective schools to perform their annual magnificent End of Year Concerts, attended by staff, their families and you, our wonderful supporters. This year’s concert theme was “The Crinch That Stole Crescendo”, and it included both vocal and instrumental performances. The students shone on stage, performing with joy and confidence.

After each concert, the graduating class of year 6 students joined with Teaching Artists and supporters for morning tea, excitedly sharing their achievements as they prepared for their formal graduations.



Cello, Have a go!

In preparation for the integration of cello lessons from year 4 in 2023, Crescendo Teaching Artist Griffin Wright and WASO staff led students in a Have a Go session, where they were able to learn about this magnificent instrument - and even have a play, trying their hand at “Happy Birthday” and the *Jaws* and *Star Wars* themes.



Students had the chance to interact with musicians throughout the year, even sharing Christmas correspondence.



Letter from student to Semra Lee, Assistant Concertmaster, and her reply.

Dear Riley,

Thank you for your letter! I hope you enjoyed your school holidays.

So, to answer your questions, this year marks 20 years that I have been in WASO as a permanent musician! And yes, I have broken a string during a performance. It was an E string and I didn’t have a spare so 2 very kind (and prepared!) friends passed me their spare E strings. The first one was the wrong kind but luckily the second one worked. I managed to change the string, continue to turn pages for the concertmaster, retune my E string and join in again in the last movement of the symphony. It was very stressful!

Good luck with your violin studies this year! I hope you continue to enjoy your lessons.

All the best,
Semra



North Parmelia Primary End of Year School Concert

Staff and Farewell to Griffin

This year’s team of inspirational and dedicated Crescendo Teaching Artists included Nami Cheng, Aria Scarlett Delcore, Fynn Evans-Ocharen, Sue Hingston, Natasha Mitchell, Gabrielle Scheggia, and Griffin Wright.

At the end of 2022, we farewelled Crescendo Teaching Artist Griffin Wright. Griffin commenced with Crescendo in 2016, first with musicianship classes, then helping to build the violin program from the ground up. During his early years with the program, he obtained his teaching degree and established his place with the program as a much-loved teacher for the students and colleague for the teachers at each school. In 2021 he stepped up his duties, becoming full-time and taking on additional Crescendo admin duties to support the WASO team with its delivery. He has nurtured new staff into the program, and has become an advocate in the community and exemplary staff member within the program and wider WASO. Griffin’s work with Crescendo has had a positive impact on so many young people.



Griffith Wright, Crescendo Teaching Artist, instructing a violin lesson

Thank you

Crescendo is only possible because of the ongoing philanthropic and corporate support we receive. Without the Crescendo program, these schools would not have access to such high-calibre music education and would thus lack the opportunity to bolster students’ development with the well-documented benefits that learning music provides.

Your generosity is the spark that ignites music’s power. Thank you for making a difference to these children’s lives.

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Contact

If you would like to find out more about this transformative program, we would love to hear from you.

Program Lead

Alena Tompkins, Executive Manager – Community Engagement & Education

tompkinsa@waso.com.au (08) 9326 0088

Development

Emma Matson, Philanthropy Manager

matsonem@waso.com.au (08) 9326 0065

Jordan Crockett, Corporate Partnerships Specialist

crockettj@waso.com.au (08) 9326 0075



North Parmelia Primary End of Year School Concert