**SOUND FOUNDATION SOMERSET SINGING STRATEGY 2014-15**

**10 REASONS WHY EVERYONE SHOULD SING!**

**1. It's good for your heart;** Singing is an aerobic activity so beneficial for your heart and lungs.

You’ll probably [live longer](http://life.nationalpost.com/2013/07/10/singing-has-the-same-calming-health-benefits-as-yoga-study-finds/)**,** in general.A 2008 joint study by Harvard and Yale stated that choral singing in a Connecticut town had increased residents’ life expectancy.

**2. It’s** [**really good for your brain**](http://barbershop.org/news-a-events-main/291-health-benefits-of-singing.html) **and will enhance your mental awareness, concentration, and memory;** Reading sheet music in general [improves your math skills](http://www.berksmusic.com/whymusic/whymusicimprovemath.html), as well as other cognitive functions.When you sing your brain also releases “feel-good” chemicals including endorphins.

Consequently singing can be a brilliantly effective [mood buster](http://www.mindbodygreen.com/tag/happiness.html) and there is an increasing body of research to show that it is a valuable tool in alleviating depression.

**3. It’s relaxing;** Through singing we can learn to [breathe more deeply](http://www.mindbodygreen.com/tag/breathing.html) and with more [awareness](http://www.mindbodygreen.com/tag/mindfulness.html). When stressed or anxious, exhaling for longer than inhaling helps to calm the nervous system. Singing encourages us to do this, using a shorter inhalation and a longer outward breath.

**4. Express yourself;** Singing is a natural and global form of human expression. You don’t have to consider yourself good at singing for singing to be good for you. It is something that the vast majority of us can participate in and benefit from socially, physically or psychologically, and usually all three.

**5. It builds confidence;** Singing regularly can improve your ability to use your speaking voice with more clarity and confidence too.

**6. It makes you part of something life-affirming;** Joining a choir and singing with other people can be rewarding and fun. It can also enhance your sense of community, connection and creativity.

**7. It’s a natural beauty treatment;** When you sing you exercise your facial muscles.  (Not important for the kids, but great for the grown ups!)

**8. It’s eco-friendly;** Your body already has all of the equipment you need and you don’t require fossil fuels or expensive upgrades.

**9. You reclaim your birthright;** Children sing very easily, freely and without feeling self-conscious. Sometimes, as we grow up or experience judgement and criticism, the simple pleasure of singing can get lost. There are many accounts of people being told that they “can’t sing.”

We can all learn to sing with more confidence, freedom and control through guidance and practice. While our individual physicality undoubtedly shapes and defines our voice, we can learn to use more of our vocal potential and sing with a greater expressive range, no matter how old or young we are.

**10. You'll become a better listener;** By learning to sing, you develop your musical ear and start to listen to yourself and other singers with a greater level of appreciation and understanding. You learn to hear more nuance and subtlety in vocal performances and in music itself as well as being able to listen with more concentration in general.

