



Collaboration plays a key factor in building impact and fostering solidarity.

**SAMANTHA FUNG**  
FOUNDER OF MUSIC FOR EVERY CHILD

'GLOBAL GOOD' EXCLUSIVE COLUMN BY TANITH HARDING

# MUSIC FOR EVERY CHILD

## HOW MUSIC BECOMES A BRIDGE TO BELONGING

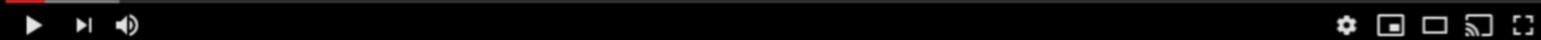
*Founder of Music For Every Child, a charity dedicated towards youth mobilization and changing lives of children with special needs through the power of music, Samantha Fung is currently running continuous weekly music therapy programs in 40 schools across 9 cities.*

**TANITH:** Music For Every Child was built around inclusion and access. What first showed you the power of collective action in creating opportunities for children with special needs?

**SAMANTHA:** When I volunteered in the Special-Ed program at my school, I would bring friends to volunteer with me and together, we were able to connect with more students and raise more awareness within our school community. This inspired me to continue sharing the joy of giving with my peers when I started MFEC. Seeing MFEC grow beyond what I'd imagined by being able to rely on one another, forge partnerships with other organizations, and collaborate with educators, therapists, and school boards, continues to show me the power of collective action in creating change and having a consistent, long-lasting impact in the lives of children with special needs.

### MUSIC FOR EVERY CHILD

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH SAMANTHA FUNG BY TANITH HARDING





**TANITH:** Your work brings together schools, therapists, families, and communities. How have you seen solidarity show up in unexpected ways through this collaboration?

**SAMANTHA:** We initially started our program to promote educational equality and inclusivity by introducing music as a learning avenue. Witnessing the program become a part of peoples' weekly routines, we saw how communities were drawn together. Our programs fostered solidarity through the power of music to facilitate meaningful interactions and interpersonal connections. One of the schools we serve in Ottawa brought their community together through our program and even raised over \$1000 to donate to MFEC; a beautiful testament to the power of solidarity.

Wanting to maximize the interconnecting power of music, we've also begun running partnership programs within schools where mainstream students are given permission to join the Special-Ed program during music therapy sessions and build meaningful relationships with them. Our partnership programs have also been adapted to inter-school models where students from private schools visit nearby MFEC programs in public schools. Through these collaborations, the power of music to connect students of all backgrounds and abilities strengthens local communities and fosters solidarity.

**TANITH:** Running weekly music therapy programmes across 40 schools is no small feat. What role has shared belief and community support played in sustaining and scaling this work?

**SAMANTHA:** MFEC is run entirely by volunteers and is founded on the shared belief that young people can change the world. Our scalable and cost-effective model allowed us to expand quickly across Ontario, having an average cost of 0.5£ per child to provide year 'round weekly music therapy.

Our success in scaling within Canada encouraged us to start international endeavours, pursuing partnerships in four African countries, including Chad, where we started a charity subsidiary and are collaborating with local grassroots organizations to bring the connecting power of music to underprivileged children in Africa.

## CBC OUR TORONTO: MUSIC FOR EVERY CHILD

INTERVIEW FEATURING MUSIC FOR EVERY CHILD

CLICK, TAP OR SCAN



TO WATCH NOW



*Music speaks to the soul, which I believe is what gives it its power to build understanding and unity.*

**TANITH:** Music has a unique ability to connect people beyond language or ability. In your experience, how does music help build understanding and unity where other approaches may fall short?

**SAMANTHA:** Music speaks to the soul, which I believe is what gives it its power to build understanding and unity. The presence music has in many cultures and its significance across history is a testament to the inherent connection we have to music. It has served as an accessible, inclusive avenue for so many foundational skills such as learning, creativity, expression, and connection.

**TANITH:** Many young people want to create change but don't know where to start. What advice would you give to those who want to build impact through collaboration rather than going it alone?

**SAMANTHA:** Collaboration plays a key factor in building impact and fostering solidarity. Despite this, it is also important to focus on self-improvement; as your skillset grows the impact you're able to have also grows – enabling you to drive issues with self-awareness and conviction. For any young person wanting to start their journey as a changemaker, I urge you to start. It can definitely seem like a daunting task but every little step leads to something positive, and your youthfulness will act as one of your biggest advantages!

**TANITH:** Looking ahead, what gives you hope for the future of inclusive education and youth-led change?

**SAMANTHA:** MFEC is looking at partnerships to bring the power of music to countries in Africa in hopes of fighting for inclusive education across cultures, backgrounds, and abilities. In our international endeavors, there are many obstacles we've had to consider such as the physical distance between our volunteers and those we're trying to help and the lack of training in music therapy for local teachers. These challenges simply fuel us to improve and fight for our cause. MFEC is looking forward to continuing our fight for inclusive education and our insistence that young people can change the world. ■

Find & follow **Music For Every Child** on Instagram: [@musicforeverychild](https://www.instagram.com/musicforeverychild)  
Learn more online: [www.musicforeverychild.com](http://www.musicforeverychild.com)



**TANITH HARDING**

*Director of International Development, The Legacy Project, RoundTable Global*  
[www.awarenowmedia.com/tanith-harding](http://www.awarenowmedia.com/tanith-harding)

Tanith is leading change management through commitment to the RoundTable Global Four Global Goals of: Educational Reform, Environmental Rejuvenation, Empowerment for All & Creativity. She delivers innovative and transformational leadership and development programmes in over 30 different countries and is also lead on the international development of philanthropic programmes and projects. This includes working with a growing team of extraordinary Global Change Ambassadors and putting together the Global Youth Awards which celebrate the amazing things our young people are doing to change the world.

# Say hello to PrintLink



Mixam's revolutionary print-on-demand service empowers self-publishers to transform their ideas and stories into high-quality, customizable prints.

Visit [mixam.com](http://mixam.com) for a free quote and get a 5% discount by entering code 'AWARE' into your order's Messages tab.

**mixam**  
the smart way to print

