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Motherly music

Mom's CDs entertain, educate children, also appeal to parents

By **Tim Waldorf**
STAFF WRITER

Two years into motherhood, Cory Goodrich embarked on a mission to make children's music that neither patronized children nor tested the patience of parents forced to listen to it over and over.

"I hate to mention Barney, but he just makes me insane," said Goodrich, a Wheaton resident.

The Wiggles, she added, aren't much better.

But after the summer release of her two albums of children's music, meant to educate children while identifying with the challenges and rewards of parenthood, Goodrich said, she has found that even her own voice grows old if she hears it often enough.

Whenever they travel together in the car, Celia, Goodrich's 2-year-old daughter and the inspiration for her music, always asks her mother if she can hear "Piggy Toes." That is Celia's way of requesting "Wiggly Toes," one of Goodrich's two albums.

Sometimes Goodrich responds to Celia's request in song, offering her daughter a live performance. But most of the time, Goodrich said, Celia wants to hear the compact disc instead.

"So she doesn't want me to sing. She wants to hear the CD, which is really nice," Goodrich said. "But sometimes I get really sick of hearing myself sing."

In Celia's defense, Goodrich doesn't normally tote around the type of musical talent found on the CDs. Goodrich said her albums boast the highest production values in musical composition, performance and recording.

On both "Wiggly Toes," a collection of playtime songs, and "Hush," a collection of lullabies, a number of well-known Chicago session musicians lend Goodrich their talents: Steve Rashid of Woodside Avenue Music Productions plays piano, harmonica, trumpet, synthesizers and the B-3 organ; Kevin Connelley plays drums; Don Stiernberg plays acoustic and electric guitars, ukulele and mandolin; Paul Mertens plays flute, piccolo, saxophone, clarinet and tin whistle; and Paul Moulder plays jazz guitar.

Together, they recorded blues, ska, mariachi and swing tunes on "Wiggly Toes" and

ON THE NET

For more information on Cory Goodrich's music or on Wagtail Productions projects, visit www.coryshouse.com.

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jazz, Celtic, country and pop pieces for "Hush."

"Our goal was to really make music for kids that wouldn't drive their parents crazy," Goodrich said.

Both CDs are filled with original music written by Goodrich. In the music, she weaves playful lyrics that appeal to both youthful spirits and adult sensibilities while managing to educate in the same breathe. On "Wiggly Toes" alone, Goodrich tackles simple Spanish lessons on "Hola Lola," the birds and the bees in "The Miracle of Life" and self-esteem in "I Like Who I Am." She still manages songs such as "Baby Blues" and "Senorita PoopyPants," which deal with uncooperative infants that won't sleep at night and demand that their dirty diapers be changed.

"So parents, I think, relate to the music," she said.

But, more important to Goodrich, so far it's a hit with kids.

"It's much more sophisticated than the normal kids music," she said. "I certainly don't believe in talking down to kids, and I think they need to be exposed to different kinds of music."

Goodrich and her business partner Paul Clement — "he sparks my creativity" — don't intend to stop with the release of these CDs. They have founded Wagtail Productions in hopes of producing "Cory's House" shows, both live and on DVD. With the help of her puppets, the shows will consist of episodic stories that deal with life issues concerning children and their parents — issues such as safety, self-esteem, school and birth.

Goodrich and Clement are also developing a series of small, durable and colorfully animated children's books with accompanying CDs that touch on similar issues.

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