

# NEXT DOOR PEOPLE

INTERESTING CAREERS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

## Harness Trail's Karen Shapiro Hirschman is tuned in to kids



As a senior environmental consultant, Karen Shapiro Hirschman worked 60-80 hours each week. It was after she had children that Karen realized she needed a career more in tune with motherhood.

Karen began performing shows for local children and taught music at several preschools. It was then she noticed the lack of substance in children's music programs, especially those for toddlers.

With only a handful of clients, she set up shop in her living room and created Sing Along with Karen. Karen's goal is to inspire children and teach them positive self-esteem and critical think-

ing. Her lessons are as dynamic and spontaneous as the children are. "I have songs for every mood," she says. Now she holds classes in Potomac, Bethesda and Rockville six days a week.

Music has always been a part of Karen's life. Her best childhood memories involve her musical family. "I can remember harmonizing with my sisters while I accompanied them on my guitar," she says.

A benefit of Karen's classes is the children bond with the adult who accompanies them. Karen's two sons, Evan and Benjamin, often help with classes, continuing the tradition of music bringing families together.

*Jessica Casselman and daughter Elle enjoy Karen's performance.*