

# Music Therapy

*Using music to achieve non-musical goals*

## **What is Music Therapy? \*\***

Music Therapy is the clinical and evidenced-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program. Music therapy is a well-established allied health profession similar to occupational therapy and physical therapy. It consists of using music therapeutically to address physical, psychological, cognitive and/or social functioning.

Because music therapy is a powerful and non-threatening medium, unique outcomes are possible. In music therapy, each individual is provided support and encouragement in the acquisition of new skills and abilities. Because music touches each person in so many different ways, participation in music therapy offers opportunities for learning, creativity and expression that may be significantly different from more traditional educational/ therapeutic approaches.

## **Are Music Therapists Employed in Public/Private Schools? \*\***

Nationwide, hundreds of credentialed music therapists are currently employed by local school districts and private educational centers. Music therapy is recognized as a related service that can be an integral component in helping the student receiving special education services reach his or her IEP goals.

In many school districts, music therapists also offer support services for music educators in the form of:

- Direct Service
- Consultation
- In-service Training

## **Music therapy can be used to address many of the goals targeted in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) \*\***

- Learning of Academic Concepts
- Increase Cooperation and Appropriate Social Behavior
- Providing Avenues for Communication
- Increasing Self Esteem and Self Confidence
- Improving Motor Responses and Agility
- Encouraging Exploration and Examination of Issues that Impact the Life of the Student

## **How Does Music Therapy Make a Difference with Young Children? \*\***

- Music stimulates all of the senses and involves the child at many levels. This “multi-modal approach” facilitates many developmental skills.
- Quality learning and maximum participation occur when children are permitted to experience the joy of play. The medium of music therapy allows this play to occur naturally and frequently.
- Music is highly motivating, yet it can also have a calming and relaxing effect.
- Enjoyable music activities are designed to be success-oriented and make children feel better about themselves.
- Music therapy can help a child manage pain and stressful situations.
- Music can encourage socialization, self-expression, communication, and motor development.
- Because the brain processes music in both hemispheres, music can stimulate cognitive functioning and may be used for remediation of some speech/language skills.

## **Interventions Used by Music Therapists**

- Exploration of Instruments
  - Shape, Color, Sound, Feel
- Playing of Instruments
  - Sound: Match Beat, Echo/Repeat Beat
  - Playing to Familiar Songs
  - Drum Beats to Demonstrate Rhythmic Flow of Speech
- Movement Activities with Music
  - Action Songs, Start/Stop
- Singing
  - Familiar or Improvised Songs
- Using Music to Facilitate Discussions
  - Anger/Frustration
  - Happiness/Excitement
  - Drugs/Alcohol
  - Grief/Depression
  - Support/Goal Setting
- Writing Songs to Explore Feelings and Experiences

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