



MUSIC THERAPY WITH AUTISTIC CHILDREN: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

By

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INTRODUCTION

What is Autism?

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and autism are both general terms for a group of complex disorders of brain development. These disorders are characterized, in varying degrees, by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication and repetitive behaviors. They include autistic disorder, Rett syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder, pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) and Asperger syndrome. With the May 2013 publication of the new DSM-5 diagnostic manual, these autism subtypes will be merged into one umbrella diagnosis of ASD. ASD can be associated with intellectual disability, difficulties in motor coordination and attention and physical health issues such as sleep and gastrointestinal disturbances. Some persons with ASD excel in visual skills, music, math and art.¹

Autism is a condition that effects 1 in 88 children according to estimates from the Centers for Disease Control. Treatments for autism remain very limited with many families attempting to try to improve symptoms based on changes in diet, supplements, or other interventions.²

In a recently published study in the journal Biological Trace Element Research, Arizona State University researchers report that children with autism had higher levels of several toxic metals in their blood and urine compared to typical children. The study involved 55 children with autism ages 5-16 years compared to 44 controls of similar age and gender.³

¹What Is Autism? What is Autism Spectrum Disorder? <http://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism>

² Brainwave Neurofeedback for Autism: Can It Help? Helping children to control their own brainwaves may help autism symptoms Published on June 12, 2013 by Arshya Vahabzadeh, M.D. in Spectrum Theory

³ Higher Levels of Several Toxic Metals Found in Children With Autism Feb. 25, 2013

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The aim of the researchers was to determine if there are alternative methods in treating children with autism. Children diagnosed with autism are currently under special schools with a different type of curriculum. Many methods have been used by psychologists and psychiatrists to treat children diagnosed with autism. Children with mental or physical disabilities have been isolated in the common educational environment. The focus of this study was to try to help and enhance methods that may, in return, aide in the rehabilitation and treatment of children with mental and physical disabilities, specifically children with autism.

When a child is first diagnosed with autism, parents often scramble to find appropriate autism services, doctors, schools and therapists. What we don't always anticipate is that relationships with friends, family and neighbors often change. Some will stand by our side, doing what they can to help and embrace our child no matter the diagnosis. However, some people will either sit quietly on the sidelines or abandon the relationship altogether.⁴

The study utilized case studies and testimonies, and even articles about Music Therapy with autistic children. Music therapy in the Philippines is still relatively growing in number. One of the pioneers of Music Therapy in the Philippines is one of the co-authors of this research study Ms. Celeste S. Sanchez. Prof. Pelayo is now undergoing workshops under the Divine Mercy Mobile Center of Music and Arts Therapy for Special Children, Adults and Seniors.

What is Music Therapy?

Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-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 an established health profession in which music is used within a therapeutic relationship to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals.

⁴ Autism in Real Life A Mother's Journey: Hoping, Coping & Succeeding by Kymberly Grosso
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After assessing the strengths and needs of each client, the qualified music therapist provides the indicated treatment including creating, singing, moving to, and/or listening to music. Through musical involvement in the therapeutic context, clients' abilities are strengthened and transferred to other areas of their lives. Music therapy also provides avenues for communication that can be helpful to those who find it difficult to express themselves in words. Research in music therapy supports its effectiveness in many areas such as: overall physical rehabilitation and facilitating movement, increasing people's motivation to become engaged in their treatment, providing emotional support for clients and their families, and providing an outlet for expression of feelings.⁵

Music Therapy is a dynamic combination of many disciplines. It revolves around two main areas: Music and Therapy. Music is the universal phenomenon people of all cultures listen to, performs, creates and enjoys. Music is an experience common to everyone.⁶

BRIEF HISTORY

Music Therapy in the Philippines

Music Therapy Philippines is a Music therapy online news about the therapy techniques, therapy intervention and rehabilitation experiences of a Music therapist in the Philippines with persons with disabilities and senior citizens. A music therapy sessions incorporating other fields of therapies - Arts, Speech, Play, Trauma, Counselling, therapy depression, Cognitive, Psychotherapy, Alzheimer's therapy and Children therapy. Music Therapy Philippines is all about music as therapy.⁷

⁵ American Music Therapy Association. <http://www.musictherapy.org/about/musictherapy/>

⁶ What Music Therapy did to George. Experiences of a Music Therapist with special people. By Celeste S. Sanchez (2004)

⁷ <http://musictherapyphilippines.blogspot.com/p/mobile-center.html>

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Mobile Center History

Celeste S. Sanchez: It all began in the early years of my music teaching career when I was giving piano lessons to three children from a prominent family in Manila. Everytime I was there. I noticed this little boy who was always trying to get a pick at what his sifers and I were doing. He was very curious, and all throughout the lessons, I would catch him there, looking at us. Whatever his parents or his sisters would notice him, though, he would be shooed away, and I wondered why they didn't allow the little boy to participate in what we are doing. It was very clear that he wanted to get involved, play the piano and sing. He was a mentally-challenged boy. It was then that I realized that music therapy can do a lot of good for these special children. That through Music, they may be able to overcome their disabilities and express themselves more.⁸

Divine Mercy Center was organized in 1993.⁹

LITERATURE REVIEW

The majority of music therapy work with children takes place in schools. This book documents the wealth and diversity of work that music therapists are doing in educational settings across the UK. It shows how, in recent years, music therapy has changed and grown as a profession, and it provides an insight into the trends that are emerging in this area in the 21st century. Collating the experiences of a range of music therapists from both mainstream and special education backgrounds, *Music Therapy in Schools* explains the procedures, challenges and benefits of using music therapy in an educational context. These music therapists have worked with children of all ages and abilities from pre-school toddlers in nursery schools to teenagers preparing for further education, and address specific issues and disabilities including working with children with emotional and behavioural problems, and autistic spectrum disorders. This book

⁸ <http://musictherapyphilippines.blogspot.com/p/mobile-center.html>

⁹ What Music Therapy did to George. Experiences of a Music Therapist with special people. By Celeste S. Sanchez (2004)





will be essential reading for music therapists, music therapy students and educational professionals. Contents of this book include: (1) Setting Up and Developing Music Therapy at a Children's Centre, for Pre-school Children and their Parents and Carers (Clare Rosscornes and Emma Davies); (2) Open Doors, Open Minds, Open Music! The Development of Music Therapy Provision in an Assessment Nursery (Nicolette O'Neill); (3) Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy in a Nursery Setting: Supporting Music Therapy Students on Placement (Chris Achenbach); (4) Multiple Views of Music Therapy (Ann Bruce and Suzie High); (5) The School Challenge: Combining the Roles of Music Therapist and Music Teacher (Jan Hall); (6) Music Therapy and the Expression of Anger and Aggression; Working with Aggressive Behaviour in Children aged 5-9 who Risk Mainstream School Exclusion (Jane Brackley); (7) Music Therapy in a Special School; Investigating the Role of Imitation and Reflection in the Interaction between Music Therapist and Child (Jo Tomlinson); (8) "Music, my Voice" Projects for Children; The Development of one Aspect of a Community Based Music Therapy Service in York and North Yorkshire (Angela Harrison); (9) Music Therapy in Interface Schools in Belfast--A Creative Response to Cumulative Trauma (Karen Diamond); (10) Music Therapy in a Special School for Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Focusing Particularly on the Use of the Double Bass (Ian McTier); (11) "How Can I Consider Letting my Child Go to School when I Spend all my Time Trying to Keep him Alive?" Links between Music Therapy Services in Schools and a Children's Hospice; Supporting Healthy Attachment and Separation and Helping Facilitate Integration of the Sick and Well Child (Orla Casey); (12) Psychodynamically Informed Music Therapy Groups for Teenagers with Severe Special Needs in a College Setting; Working Jointly with Teaching Assistants (John Strange); and (13) "Yeah I'll Do Music!" Working with Secondary-Aged Students who have Complex Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (Philippa Derrington). [Foreword by Dr. Frankie Williams.]¹⁰

¹⁰ Music Therapy in Schools: Working with Children of All Ages in Mainstream and Special Education Author(s): Tomlinson, Jo, Ed.; Derrington, Philippa, Ed.; Oldfield, Amelia, Ed. Source: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Pub Date: 2011-00-00





The aim of this study was to examine how severity of autism affects children's interactions (relatedness) and relationships with their parents. Participants were 25 parent-child dyads that included offspring who were children with autism aged from 4 to 14 years. The severity of the children's autism was assessed using the calibrated severity metric of the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (Gotham et al. in "J Autism Dev Disord: 39:693-705, 2009). Parent-child dyads were videotaped in 10-min semi-structured play interactions, and qualities of interpersonal relatedness were rated with the Dyadic Coding Scales (Humber and Moss in "Am J Orthopsychiatr" 75(1):128-141, 2005). Quality of relationships between parents and children were evaluated with a parent self-report measure, the Parent Child Relationship Inventory (Gerard in "Parent-Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI) manual." WPS, Los Angeles, 1994). Multivariate regression analysis revealed that severity of autism was inversely related to patterns of parent-child interaction but not to reported quality of parent-child relationship. We consider the implications for thinking about relatedness and relationships among children with autism, and opportunities for intervention.¹¹

Down syndrome (DS) is a genetic disorder resulting from chromosome 21 having three copies (trisomy 21). Cognitive functioning and anatomical features cause speech and language development delay (Kumin, 2003). Children with DS generally enjoy communication (Schoenbrodt, 2004), and respond well to interaction and social scripts. Music therapy has been extensively used in the past four decades as a treatment for children with disabilities (Nordoff & Robbins, 2007; Wigram, Pederson & Bonde, 2002). Children with DS seem specifically responsive to music and show potential to be part of group music-making (Wigram et al., 2002). In both speech and music, rhythm and sound are primary elements and all elements of music may be integrated into a speech-language programme (Birkenshaw, 1994; Wilmot, 2004). Family and caregiver support are required for therapy to be effective. Caregivers' views of music therapy for children with DS were examined as a preliminary step in the

¹¹ Autism Severity and Qualities of Parent-Child Relations Author(s): Beurkens, Nicole M.; Hobson, Jessica A.; Hobson, R. Peter Source: Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, v43 n1 p168-178 Jan 2013 Pub Date:2013-01-00



evaluation of music therapy outcomes for this population. A questionnaire examining perspectives of effects of music on the communication development of children with DS was given to 19 caregivers of children with DS working in a special school environment. Consistent with reports in the literature, caregivers perceive children with DS as responsive to music, and to have musical and communicative strengths. Caregivers perceived that communication and social skills may develop through regular music therapy sessions. These perceptions corresponded with the views of music therapists who were later interviewed as part of this study.¹²

The DVD, a key component of the "Autism in the Schoolhouse" initiative, is designed to provide general education teachers with strategies for supporting their middle and high school students with autism. It was produced by the Organization for Autism Research (OAR) in collaboration with Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools, and made possible by grants from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation and the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism. The DVD contains the following segments: (1) Characteristics; (2) Integrating Supports in the Classroom; (3) Practices for Challenging Behavior; and (4) Effective Use of Teacher Supports.¹³

Developmental dyslexia (DD) is more prevalent as an "umbrella" disorder than many educators realize. The music educator can play a particularly useful role in helping children in the general or choral classroom cope with DD, given the temporal nature of cognitive issues inherent in the disorder. The purposes of this article are to provide a brief overview of DD and to offer teaching strategies for music educators to assist students with DD in the music classroom. Melodic and rhythmic activities are described and suggested as ways to engage children with DD as part of inclusive general music classrooms.¹⁴

¹² Music Therapy for Children with Down Syndrome: Perceptions of Caregivers in a Special School Setting
Author(s): Pienaar, Dorothea Source: Kairaranga, v13 n1 p36-43 2012 Pub Date: 2012-00-00

¹³ Understanding Autism: A Guide for Secondary School Teachers. DVD Source: Organization for Autism Research Pub Date: 2013-00-00

¹⁴ Inclusive Music Teaching Strategies for Elementary-Age Children with Developmental Dyslexia Author(s): Heikkila, Elizabeth; Knight, Andrew Source: Music Educators Journal, v99 n1 p54-59 Sep 2012 Pub Date: 2012-09-00





Four music therapy educators participated in semi-structured, in-depth interviews as part of a qualitative study. The purpose of this study was to explore the phenomena of feminist pedagogy as experienced by music therapy educators using phenomenological inquiry. The study examined the following research questions: (a) do music therapy educators use feminist music therapy pedagogy in teaching music therapy, (b) if so, how do they use feminist music therapy pedagogy, (c) what is their experience in using feminist music therapy pedagogy, and (d) how do feminist music therapy educators define their use of feminist pedagogy in undergraduate and graduate music therapy education. Each interview lasted from 1 1/2-3 hours. Data were analyzed according to Giorgi's (1975) phenomenological method and feminist theory. The researcher used member checking, inter-rater reliability, and triangulation of data (interviews, analytic memos, and music lyrics) to address issues of trustworthiness and dependability. Five categories were identified from the meaning units: (a) philosophical framework, (b) goals, (c) teaching methods, (d) institutional and social issues, and (e) backlash and response. A composite summary, discussion of the implications of the findings, consistency and inconsistency with the literature, limitations, revisiting of assumptions, personal reflections, guidelines for using FMTP, and areas for future research are included.¹⁵

"Play-Based Interventions for Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders" explores the most recognized, researched, and practical methods for using play therapy with the increasing number of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs), and shows clinicians how to integrate these methods into their practices. Using a diverse array of play-based approaches, the book brings together the voices of researchers and practicing clinicians who are successfully utilizing play and play-based interventions with children and adolescents on the autism spectrum. It also examines the neurobiological underpinnings of play in children on the autism

¹⁵ Conversations from the Classroom: Reflections on Feminist Music Therapy Pedagogy in Teaching Music Therapy Author(s): Hahna, Nicole D. Source: ProQuest LLC, Ph.D. Dissertation, Lesley University Pub Date: 2011-00-00



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spectrum and the overall effect of play on neuro-typical and neuro-atypical development. Finally, through careful integration of theory with real-world clinical case application, each chapter also shows clinicians how to incorporate a particular treatment approach and make it a viable and effective part of their work with this challenging clinical population. This book is divided into four parts. Part I, Foundations, contains the following: (1) Safety and Connection: The Neurobiology of Play (Badenoch and Bogdan); and (2) Playing on the Autism Spectrum (Rubin). Part II, Individualized Play-Based Interventions, contains the following: (3) Helping Children with ASD Through Canine-assisted Play Therapy (VanFleet and Coltea); (4) Family Theraplay: Connecting with Children on the Autism Spectrum (Bundy-Myrow); (5) From Monologue to Dialogue: The Use of Play and Drama Therapy for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Gallo-Lopez); (6) LEGO-based Play Therapy for Improving Social Competence in Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder (LeGoff, Krauss and Allen); (7) Touching Autism through Developmental Play Therapy (Courtney); (8) Relational Intervention: Child-centered Play Therapy with Children on the Autism Spectrum (Ray, Sullivan and Carlson); (9) The Narcissus Myth: Resplendent Reflections, and Self-Healing: A Jungian Perspective on Counseling a Child with Asperger's Syndrome (Green); (10) Communication and Connection: Filial Therapy with Families of Children with ASD (VanFleet); and (11) The World of Sandtray and the Child on the Autism Spectrum (Richardson). Part III, Programmatic Play-Based Interventions, contains the following: (12) DIR/Floor Time: A Developmental/Relational Play Therapy Approach Towards the Treatment of Children Impacted by Autism (Hess); (13) The PLAY Project: A Train-the-Trainer Model of Early Intervention for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Solomon); and (14) The ACT Project: Enhancing Social Competence through Drama Therapy and Performance (Powers-Tricoli and Gallo-Lopez). Part IV, Expressive/Creative Interventions, contains the following: (15) Art Therapy: Connecting and Communicating with Children on the Autism Spectrum (Goucher); (16) Music Therapy Interventions for Social, Communication, and Emotional Development for Children and Adolescents with Autism





Spectrum Disorders (Walworth); and (17) Moving into Relationship: Dance/Movement Therapy with Children on the Autism Spectrum (Devereaux).¹⁶

Research on music and music therapy suggests that math and music are related in the brain from very early in life. Musical elements such as steady beat, rhythm, melody, and tempo possess inherent mathematical principles such as spatial properties, sequencing, counting, patterning, and one-to-one correspondence. With new understanding about the nature of everyday learning experiences, the key role of patterns in the development of literacy and mathematics, and the need for a stimulating environment in the very early years, the importance of music in the home and in the classroom is becoming clear. Music is children's first patterning experience and helps engage them in mathematics even when they don't recognize the activities as mathematics. Music is a highly social, natural, and developmentally appropriate way to engage even the youngest child in math learning. This article offers tips for using music to engage children in mathematics.¹⁷

The researcher acknowledges the importance of creativity and innovation in terms of discovering more methods or strategies on improving intellectual growth of an individual. In this case, the researcher focuses on the Social Learning Behavior of high school students. About 15 years ago, a professor of psychology stirred up the music world with the idea that listening to Mozart could make you smarter. Before the decade was out, the work of Dr. Frances H. Rauscher, professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, had brought forth a veritable flood of pop-psych books, tapes, and CDs promising in newspaper inserts and on television infomercials to boost your brain. One enterprising author even went so far as to trademark the phrase "The Mozart Effect." Albert Bandura believed in "reciprocal determinism," that is, the world and a person's behavior cause each other, while behaviorism essentially states

¹⁶ Play-Based Interventions for Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders Author(s): Gallo-Lopez, Loretta, Ed.; Rubin, Lawrence C., Ed. Source: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group Pub Date: 2012-02-03

¹⁷ The Patterns of Music: Young Children Learning Mathematics through Beat, Rhythm, and Melody Author(s): Geist, Kamile; Geist, Eugene A.; Kuznik, Kathleen Source: Young Children, v67 n1 p74-79 Jan 2012 Pub Date: 2012-01-00





that one's environment causes one's behavior. Bandura, who was studying adolescent aggression, found this too simplistic, and so, in addition, he suggested that behavior causes environment as well. Based on the results of the study, it is appropriate to infer that because Mozart's music created an environment conducive for learning in the academic setting and therefore it may lead to high academic performance of students. Since continuous exposure to Mozart's music in the academic setting conditioned students to elicit high percentages in behavior leading to learning, eventually Mozart's music may lead to high academic performance of students.¹⁸

The question of competence in providing music therapy has rarely been the focus of interest in empirical research, as most music therapy research aims at measuring outcomes. Therefore, the aim of this study is to analyse and describe musicians' learning processes when they study music therapy as a caring intervention. An initial presumption is that musicians are highly qualified to take advantage of the potential of music but need to become familiar with the caring perspective. Ten freelance musicians participated in an education programme with music therapy anchored in a lifeworld-oriented caring science model. They were interviewed about their learning experiences. The data was analysed according to a phenomenographic method. The musicians' understanding of their learning music therapy is described in terms of four qualitative categories: conversion, openness, reflection and practice. Learning as a continuous process is discussed in relation to pedagogic theories about tacit knowledge and "learning by doing".¹⁹

Classical Piano Instrumental Music has been used for meditation hitherto. This study tried to discover the insights and opinions of individuals with no formal musical training and how it may affect their mood, emotions, feelings, imagination, attitude, perception in life, and personality. The researcher conducted this study in order to

¹⁸ The Effect of Mozart's Music on Social Learning Behavior of High School Students Author(s): Pelayo, Jose Maria G., III Source: Online Submission, M.A. Thesis, Philippine Women's University Pub Date: 2010-03-00

¹⁹ Music Therapy as a Caring Intervention: Swedish Musicians Learning a New Professional Field Author(s): Petersson, Gunnar; Nystrom, Maria Source: International Journal of Music Education, v29 n1 p3-14 Feb 2011 Pub Date: 2011-02-00



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determine if this type of music could be a basis for meditation, relaxation, used for studying, reviewing, contemplation, or other purposes. The study used Yiruma, a Korean pianist, with his album "Poemusic." There were 26 participants in the study. Based on the results of the study, 84% will recommend classical piano instrumental music to others, especially their loved ones, as cited in our discussion after answering the questionnaire. During the discussion, 3 males and 1 female even cited that it was their first time to listen to this type of music but will still recommend it to their friends and family. The researcher may infer that this type of music could be accepted even by first time listeners and also by adolescents since the average age of the respondents of the study is 15.8 years old.²⁰

This article presents a review of nonverbal literature relating to therapy, music, autism, and music therapy. Included is a case study of a woman with autism who was nonverbal. The case highlights and analyzes behaviors contextually. Interpretations of communication through the music therapy, musical interactions, and the rapport that developed through the music therapy treatment process are provided.²¹

The environment at indoor inflatable playgrounds, featuring giant bounce houses and slides, can become an ideal place for children with autism to receive helpful sensations. This is the reasoning behind Sensory Nights hosted by the Autism Society of America and Pump It Up, a national franchise of giant, indoor inflatable playgrounds. The private play times are designed exclusively for children with special needs and their families--the music is turned off and the bounce arenas are less crowded, so children aren't as likely to be overstimulated as in other similar environments that might be noisier. But besides avoiding overstimulation, bouncing in this sort of environment

²⁰ Insights and Opinions of College Students on Classical Piano Instrumental Music Author(s): Pelayo, Jose Maria G., III Source: Online Submission Pub Date: 2013-05-00

²¹ Nonverbal Communication, Music Therapy, and Autism: A Review of Literature and Case Example Author(s): Silverman, Michael J. Source: Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, v3 n1 p3-19 May 2008 Pub Date: 2008-05-00





also can provide therapeutic benefits for sensory challenges by creating a calming sensation called proprioceptive input.²²

The authors conducted a literature review on music therapy for individuals with autism because of the frequent use of music therapy for those with autism and recent research on the musical abilities of this population. To accomplish this narrative review, articles were searched from relevant databases, reference lists from articles, and book chapters to provide a thorough critique of past research, which was categorized according to the area of symptomology the therapy intended to treat (social, communicative, behavioral). Music therapists and researchers have carried out mostly case studies and a surprisingly limited number of empirical investigations. Although these reports provide limited empirical support of the therapy with this population, they have utilized a wide array of creative techniques and varying types of music therapy worthy of discussion. The qualities of necessary future empirical investigations are explored.²³

The unstructured space, running, climbing, sliding, and loud nature of playground time can be overwhelming for children with autism who thrive on predictable and structured routines. As a result, these preschoolers often do not experience the learning and social development benefits from outdoor play seen in their typically developing classmates. However, new research suggests that music may help bridge the gap between children with autism and their peers. A study, published in the *Journal of Music Therapy*, is the first to examine strategies to promote positive peer interactions during outdoor play for preschoolers with autism in inclusive child care programs. This report summarizes the methods and findings of the study. [This FPG

²² Therapeutic Play at Inflatable Playgrounds Author(s): Yavorcik, Carin Source: *Exceptional Parent*, v39 n4 p26 Apr 2009 Pub Date: 2009-04-00

²³ Searching for Music's Potential: A Critical Examination of Research on Music Therapy with Individuals with Autism Author(s): Accordino, Robert; Comer, Ronald; Heller, Wendy B. Source: *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, v1 n1 p101-115 Jan-Mar 2007 Pub Date: 2007-00-00



Snapshot was produced by the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.]²⁴

Learning to wash hands, go to the bathroom and other self-care skills are significant steps toward independence for young children. Each step toward independent self-care is a milestone that is expected and valued. However, for young children with autism such steps may not occur naturally. Research shows that songs can assist children with memorization and sequencing of events. In a study published in "Music Therapy Perspectives," FPG researchers hypothesized that using songs to prompt a series of steps might help a child with autism more independently complete multi-step self-care routines. This Snapshot summarizes the study. [This brief document was produced by the FPG Child Development Institute at UNC-Chapel Hill and is based on: Kern, P., Wakeford, L., & Aldridge, D. (2007). Improving the performance of a young child with autism during self-care tasks using embedded song interventions: A case study. "Music Therapy Perspectives," 25(1), 43-51.]²⁵

This study evaluated the effects of individually composed songs on the independent behaviors of two young children with autism during the morning greeting/entry routine into their inclusive classrooms. A music therapist composed a song for each child related to the steps of the morning greeting routine and taught the children's teachers to sing the songs during the routine. The effects were evaluated using a single subject withdrawal design. The results indicate that the songs, with modifications for one child, assisted the children in entering the classroom, greeting the teacher and/or peers and engaging in play. For one child, the number of peers who greeted him was also measured, and increased when the song was used.²⁶

²⁴ Music Therapy Engages Children with Autism in Outdoor Play. FPG Snapshot. Number 39, February 2007
Source: FPG Child Development Institute Pub Date: 2007-02-00

²⁵ Using Music to Improve Task Learning. FPG Snapshot #43 Author(s): Source: FPG Child Development Institute
Pub Date: 2007-04-00

²⁶ Use of Songs to Promote Independence in Morning Greeting Routines for Young Children with Autism
Author(s): Kern, Petra; Wolery, Mark; Aldridge, David Source: Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders,
v37 n7 p1264-1271 Aug 2007 Pub Date: 2007-08-00





METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

There were eight (8) participants, seven (7) Male and one (1) Female and were all diagnosed with autism. The average age was 12.75 years old. The youngest is four (4) and oldest is eighteen (18).

B. Sampling

Purposive Sampling was used in this research study. All of them were case studies and are under the Divine Mercy Mobile Center of Music and Arts Therapy for special Children, Adults and Seniors.

C. Analysis

The case studies will be analyzed qualitatively to determine common effects or developments with the use of Music Therapy. It will only describe and not evaluate or assess the case studies. Thematic coding will also be used in order to draw out the results and conclusions.

CONCLUSIONS

THEMES FROM THE CASE STUDIES

A. COMMON PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED DURING PRELIMINARY MUSIC THERAPY SESSIONS WITH AUTISTIC CHILDREN.

"Instinctively, I knew Joseph was in trouble when he first showed up at the Center with his parents. He had that distant look, or one of detachment. He avoided eye contact at every possible turn. And while I was talking to his father,



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he was quietly seated on the chair nearby looking at everything, even the empty ceiling. Yet i knew he was liostening intently to our conversation."

"He grew hyperactive, and when someone tried to stop him from touching and moving things around, he got into one of his tantrums. He seemed uncontrollable and unconsolable."

"Paul is an autist who is hyperactive. He cannot seem to stay put in one place, even for a brief period of time. So the routine around the Center went on as scheduled. We would take our educational walks, and once inside the Center tracing his usual business, I will add a new musical instrument or song for him to touch or learn. Most times, I would compose impromptu melodies and songs, each describing his movements around the center. He seemed to respond positively to this type of exercise."

"It was difficult getting Ace's attention at first. He moved around so much, seemingly tireless."

"John was a hyperactive teenager who had temper tantrums. Physically, he looked liked any of our teenagers today, and was even smarter than most boys of his age that I knew off. Yet, he could not keep a good, clean conversation going. His subjects were limited to simple basic things. His tantrums surfaced when he felt frustrated over something he believed he missed or could not do."

"At first , he shied away from other students. He would not even participate in the group singingerehearsals. It took him several sessions before I got him adjusted and in tune with his classmates."

"During our first session, she manifested typical autistic signs – tantrums, short attention span, and living in a world of her own."



B. RHYTHM AS AN ESSENTIAL TOOL IN MUSIC THERAPY.

"I approached Joseph and showed my approval by smiling back at him. And after ten minutes of piano playing, I asked him to take the drum set. I sat on the piano stool and started a tune (Oh When the Saints Go Marchin In!) Two more numbers followed this. He picked up his rhythm and began thumping away at the drums. His timing was correct. I shifted to waltz and he suddenly paused. But I knew he was just trying to get the $\frac{3}{4}$ timing. Music was in his veins."

"Michael saw the drumset. He left the ukele in a hurry, and started pounding noisily on the drums. At tis time I was at the piano attending to my other pupils. I asked his father to let his son join the other students for our group activities."

"I made sure Paul's progress was recorded. By thattime, he waqs able to concentrate more on his activities; he could make eye contact with other people learn parts of the face, rhythm and coordination (feet and hands); enunciation and pronunciation of some simple words and vowels and consonants; was able to tone down his tantrums; and, physically, his daily exercises strengthened his once frail body."

"On his second month, I introduced him to the various musical instruments available at the Center. I started with the tambourine. It was his first encounter with such thing. Ace's attention span was still shoert. So, after a few clang-cling-clangs on the tabourine , he would go around the Center in his indefatigable way."

"Immediately, upon seeing the drum set nearby, he began pounding the sticks. I played a tune on a the piano and listened to John's natural flair for rythm."

C. DEVELOPMENTS IN COMMUNICATION AND SOCIALIZATION.





"From playing musical instruments, I then asked him to render me a song. I was much surprised when he sang a beautiful Tagalog classic (Ang Tangi Kong Pagibig) Of course, there were a few lines missing, some stammering and stuttering, but he kept up the tune until it was over."

"Autist like Michael need constant exposure to the company of other people. And I made certain he joined our activities (Atleast most of them) and he also liked to pray, especially to the Divine Mercy of Jesus."

"I also taught him more words on how to follow simple directions: such as opening the door this way or that, saying goodmorning, goodbye, go up or down, in or out, and so on."

"The program i designed for him enabled him to be more attentive to his surroundundings and peers."

D. CURIOSITY LEADING TO COGNITIVE ENHANCEMENT.

"After the interview with his parents, I asked his father to escort his son over to the piano across my table. He instantly hit one of the keys with one of his fingers. He then ran his entire right hand over the stretch of the ebony and ivory colored keyboard."

"Michael took fancy of the ukelele hanging in a nearby wall at the Center. He went to it and tried to reach it but could not. So, I gave it to him and started strumming. This was the start of our first session together."

"It was at this point that he began to grow curious. Atleast, this was a stage towards some degree of normalcy."





E. OVERALL EFFECTS OF MUSIC THERAPY

"After a few more numbers, I knew he could follow rhythm and the flow of the melody. Shifting from one musical piece to the other no longer bothered him."

"Music was the major factor in soothing his nerves in all our sessions. And also was the instrument in giving him the opportunity to be able to interact with other people- old and young alike."

"Another significant change in Paul was his ability to control his tantrums."

"He showed off his singing talent and theatrical prowess that evening, even if he veered somewhat away from my original script and direction. But the audience never could tell, as they must have all believed Ace's antics on stage was part of the whole show. Neither did he disturb the other performers. Applause after applause was the gift we got in return for Ace's and other participants' performance that night."

"Throughout the music therapy sessions, John showed no temper tantrums or any outward sign that indicated he was an autistic. I concluded that music therapy was the answer to John's problem. The pressure involved in the activities I gave him eased every irregular brain-wave, that eventually must have corrected his pattern."

"This young autistic teenager was so moved by the sound of music, his developmental disability symptoms appeared to have vanished, at least for this moment."



"Peter's ability to learn was almost flawless. He learned to read and identify notes, reading them from the music sheet. He also learned to identify notes on the piano keyboard itself. That month of June, Peter's learning ability in the field of music had progressed marvelously."

"However, when it was time for our rhythmic band exercises, she took fancy of the lyre. The melodic sound seemed to please this young lady so much, retrieving it from her proved quite a difficult task. That everytime she would strum, I noticed a twinkle in Winnie's eyes. To me this was a breakthrough. I knew she at least, loved the sound of music, even from an instrument such as a lyre."

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the case studies these are the following recommendations:

1. Establish a Music Therapy Training Center for aspiring Music Therapist that could issue licensure to graduates of the school.
2. Music Therapy for autistic children should be applied with other contemporary Psychological and Psychiatric methods of treatment.
3. More research should be conducted on Music Therapy and autistic children.



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