

## Significance of Music Therapy for School Children with Disabilities and Adult Learners

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**Abstract:** Music therapy can play a helpful role in helping both children and adults who are going through different forms of psychological issues. The present review discusses the significance of music therapy for school children and adult learners. The authors explored relevant information in Cochrane Library, PubMed and Google scholar. There were no exclusion or inclusion standards for searching literatures online. Keywords used in searching information for this review included: “music therapy,” “music therapy for adults,” “music therapy for school children,” “relevance of music therapy” and “clinical usage of music therapy”. Based on the literatures reviewed, a lot of studies demonstrated the clinical efficacy of music therapy in treating patients with depression, autism, dementia, mechanically ventilated intensive care patients, among others. It is recommended that music therapy should be incorporated in more hospitals and schools so as to help the teeming number of children and adults in need of the treatment.

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## INTRODUCTION

With music therapy, a music therapist uses music and its components mental, social, physical, aesthetic, emotional and spiritual, to aid patients to improving and maintaining their health<sup>[1]</sup>. It is generally considered an expressive or active therapy. However, there is the receptive music therapy whose presumed instrument of action lies on the fact that various types of musical stimulus have direct induction of emotional and physical transformations. Receptive forms are more predisposed to domination by cognitive-behavioural or humanistic traditions and may entail an adjunctive activity done whilst listening to live or recorded music such as movement, reminiscing, relaxation, drawing or

meditation. Suggestions has been made that this form of music therapy can be effective in reducing stress, energize the body and sooth pain<sup>[2]</sup>. Time and again, a blend of different techniques is applied in the same therapy since the choice of approach depends more on the person's needs, the the context and therapist's training<sup>[3]</sup>.

The cognitive function, behavior and social skills, emotional and affective development, motor skills and quality of life of the patients are clinically confirmed to be enhanced through music therapy<sup>[4-6]</sup>. Music experiences of free improvisation, listening to the music, songwriting, singing and discussing music are thought to realize treatment goals and objectives. Music therapy has been deemed as both science and art. Music therapy is employed in some medical hospitals, alcohol and drug

recovery programs, schools, cancer centers, correctional facilities and psychiatric hospitals in the treatment of depression<sup>[1, 7]</sup>, autism<sup>[8-10]</sup>, dementia<sup>[11, 12]</sup>, mechanically ventilated intensive care patients<sup>[13]</sup> and a whole lot of maladies. However, exactly the level of its application across different age groups is fully unknown yet, so, therefore, the interest of the current study is to discuss the relevance of music therapy for school children and adult learners.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In this study, we assumed a short discussion approach. Information concerning the subject matter was sourced via. Cochrane Library, PubMed and Google scholar. There were no exclusion or inclusion standards for searching literatures online. Keywords used in searching information for this review included: “music therapy,” “music therapy for adults,” “music therapy for school children,” “relevance of music therapy” and “clinical usage of music therapy”.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Music therapy can be applied in all age groups as well as in the treatment of various diseases. In children, two regular approaches are often utilized: either as a one-on-one session or in a group setting. Music therapy can assist children with behavioral, motivation, attention and communication problems<sup>[14-16]</sup>. Therapy rooms should have a vast array of various instruments and the environment should be of colorful and different textural character. The specialist would usually either play a guitar or piano to keep everything in rhythm and grounded. The child should be given an instrument adapted to them as some of them will be able to handle an instrument while others cannot. Music therapy is considered effective in helping children with disabilities and the gap between the incidence of children with different disabilities and the proportion of articles in music therapy research is quite considerable and may reflect the types of work settings of music therapists and the populations they serve. Children with developmental disabilities frequently get services in separate classrooms while those with learning disabilities are tended to in general classrooms. Since, most music therapists work with children in separate classrooms and facilities, it is improbable that music therapists would offer direct services for children with disabilities in inclusive settings. Music educators who frequently work with children with disabilities and with music therapists as consultants would profit greatly from increased music therapy research considering this high occurrence population.

In adults, music therapy has been shown to be an effective therapy strategy for stroke patients. Music

affects different aspects of the brain. A fraction of this therapy is the ability of music to affect social interactions and emotions. It has been proven that music therapy is associated with a reduction in state anxiety, improved mood and decrease in depression<sup>[17, 18]</sup>. Music therapy can have a positive effect on behavioral and social outcomes as well as reassuring trends concerning mood among adults. The therapeutic instrument of music function by stimulating the singing pathway in the right side of both cerebral hemispheres or the speaking pathway in the left cerebral hemisphere<sup>[19, 20]</sup>. Reports has it that both cerebral hemispheres play a role in executing vocal cord production and controlling sensorimotor functions in both singing and speaking and that the left hemisphere is made use of more in speaking<sup>[21, 22]</sup>. Music therapy has been used as a tool for managing emotional distress in married people<sup>[23]</sup>.

## **CONCLUSION**

Music therapy may enhance physical and psychological conditions of school children and adults. Further research is necessary as there is an increase in the population of children with disabilities and adult learners whose conditions can be improved through music therapy.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that music therapy should be incorporated in more hospitals and schools, so as to help the teeming number of children and adults in need of the treatment.

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