



# Anderson Music Therapy Services

Facilitating Positive Change Through Music

## MUSIC THERAPY & ATTACHMENT

### *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. It is the structured use of music to assist people of all ages in times of need. A well-established, healthcare profession, music therapy uses carefully selected music and music interventions to address physical, emotional, cognitive and social needs. Music therapy can help children and adults in crisis learn and use positive coping skills and express difficult feelings and emotions. Because music therapy is a powerful and non-invasive medium, unique outcomes are possible. Everyone has the ability to respond to music, and music therapy uses this connection to facilitate positive changes in emotional wellbeing and communication through the engagement in live musical interaction between client and therapist. It can help develop and facilitate communication skills, improve self-confidence and independence, enhance self-awareness and awareness of others, improve concentration and attention skills.

### *How Does Music Therapy Make A Difference With Attachment?*

Over fifty years of practice and research in music therapy have demonstrated the impact of music therapy helping to cope with trauma. The directed use of music and music therapy is highly effective in developing coping strategies, including understanding and expressing feelings of anxiety and helplessness, supporting feelings of self confidence and security, and providing a safe or neutral environment for relaxation. Research results and clinical experiences attest to the viability of music. Music is a form of sensory stimulation, which provokes responses due to the familiarity, predictability, and feelings of security associated with it.

During the first year of life, babies typically begin to bond and attach to adult figures. There are several necessary facets for secure attachment:

- Interactional synchrony
- Regulation
- Reciprocal communication
- Joint attention

Music therapy addresses these foundational aspects in the development of bonding and attachment at a neurologic and physiological level. Research shows that children who do not form a secure attachment lack the proper connections in the limbic system within their brain. The limbic system is responsible for expression and processing emotions. Thus, because the child does not have the proper “brain connections” to self-regulate this results in meltdowns and rage. To improve attachment and regulation these neural connection need to be developed.

When used effectively music can help to reorganize the brain and create new neural pathways that improve attachment and self-regulation. Additionally, music “turns-on” the Social Engagement System which increases opportunities for positive and healing interactions. These interactions will begin to wire the brain for secure attachments.



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Music directly activates the limbic system and taps in to emotions. This is why we experience emotions while listening to music. Consequently, music therapy can be used to develop neural connections in the brain responsible for self-regulation. Music therapy also addresses key needs for children with a history of insecure attachments:

- Shared awareness, experience, and attention on an “emotionally charged” medium
- Music structure fosters expectations for shared give-and-take
- Rhythmic entrainment regulates physiological functions (heart-rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation)
- Rhythmic entrainment regulates emotional states

## ***How Does Music Therapy Support Healthy Attachment?***

Music therapy has been shown to have a significant effect on an individual’s relaxation, respiration rate, self-reported pain reduction, and behaviorally observed and self-reported anxiety levels. A coordinated program of music and music therapy interventions designed and implemented by a qualified music therapist, provides opportunities for:

- Non-verbal outlets for emotions associated with traumatic experiences
- Anxiety and stress reduction
- Positive changes in mood and emotional states
- Active and positive participant involvement in treatment
- Enhanced feelings of control, confidence, and empowerment
- Positive physiological changes, such as lower blood pressure, reduced heart rate, and relaxed muscle tension

In addition, music therapy may allow for:

- Emotional intimacy with peers, families, and caregivers
- Relaxation for family groups or other community and peer groups
- Meaningful time spent together in a positive and creative way

## ***What Do Music Therapists Do?***

Music therapists use music and music therapy interventions, both instrumental and vocal, designed to facilitate changes that are non-musical in nature. Music therapy programs are based on individual assessment, treatment planning, and ongoing program evaluation. The professionally trained music therapist utilizes individualized music experiences and interventions to assess, treat, and evaluate patients. Frequently functioning as members of an interdisciplinary team, music therapists implement programs with groups or individuals addressing a vast continuum of outcomes, including reduction of anxiety, stress management, communication, and emotional self-expression.



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## ***Who Is Qualified as a Music Therapist?***

Graduates of colleges or universities from more than 70 approved music therapy programs are eligible to take a national examination administered by the Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT), an independent, non-profit certifying agency fully accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies. After successful completion of the CBMT examination, graduates are issued the credential necessary for professional practice, Music Therapist-Board Certified (MT-BC). Any individual who does not have proper training and credentials is not qualified to provide music therapy services.

## ***Where Do Music Therapists Work?***

Music therapists offer services in medical hospitals, skilled and intermediate care facilities, rehabilitation hospitals, adult day care centers, senior centers, hospices, psychiatric treatment centers, drug and alcohol programs, schools and other facilities. In crisis situations, it is important for music therapy services to be available and accessible to the community in need. Music therapists mobilize to provide services locally, working in schools, hospitals, community centers, corporate offices, senior centers, universities and colleges, etc. Some music therapists are self-employed and work as independent contractors, while others may be full or part time employees.

## ***Background Facts***

Music therapy is documented and recognized in numerous places within the U.S. health care structure.

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recognizes music therapy. Music therapy is listed under the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) Code G0176 for billing Medicare in Partial Hospitalization Programs (PHP).
- Music therapy is listed on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) schedule under Professional and Allied Healthcare Staffing Services: 621-047 --- Counseling Related Services (Includes: Community Counselor; Marriage/Family Counselor/Therapist; Mental Health Counselor; Rehabilitation Counselor; Social Worker (BS); Social Worker (MS); Music Therapist; Art Therapist and Dance Therapist (Registered DTR).
- Music therapy has a Procedure Code of 93.84 in the International Classification of Diseases-9th Revision Manual (ICD-9) used in reimbursement and documentation.
- Music therapists are eligible to apply for the National Provider Identifier (NPI) system for billing under taxonomy code 225A00000X, which is included in the category of “Respiratory, Developmental, Rehabilitative and Restorative Service Providers”.
- Music therapy is a related service under IDEA and can be included on IEPs if found necessary for a child to benefit from his/her special education program.
- The Joint Commission and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) recognizes music therapists as qualified individuals who may provide services within accredited facilities.



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## ***What Research Backs Up Music Therapy?***

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## ***Want More Information? Contact me:***

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