



Pediatric Music Therapy

Fact Sheet

What is Music Therapy?

- Medical Music Therapy is an established healthcare profession that utilizes music and music interventions to address the biopsychosocial needs of patients in a hospital setting. Services are provided by a Board-Certified Music Therapist who has completed an approved music therapy program. Music therapy is used in pediatric treatment to address anxiety, trauma, and pain, as well as various developmental skills such as socialization, emotional expression/communication, and motor skills.

Music Therapy Interventions

1. Active Music Making

Participation in active music making activities such as instrument play, singing, and movement increase normalization of the hospital environment. The hospital can be an unfamiliar and potentially frightening place for children, but music helps to bring happiness and normalcy as well as provide opportunities for decision making.

2. Developmental Music Activities

Music interventions are used to address developmental skills including socialization, motor coordination, communication, and cognitive skills. Instrument play may be used to develop fine and gross motor skills as well as encourage socialization between the child and therapist, family, or staff. Toys such as scarves and puppets may be used to teach cognitive skills including colors and numbers.

3. Music for Distraction

Music can be used as a distraction to reduce anxiety in children. Patient-preferred music is provided live to encourage the child to interact and engage in a positive and success-oriented environment

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4. Music-Assisted Relaxation

Relaxing music may be used to decrease distress and induce sleep. A child may have a difficult time sleeping due to distress and anxiety from the unknown aspects of the hospital. Live music is provided to meet the child where they are at and move them into a more relaxed state.

5. Music-Assisted Relaxation

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6. Music for Procedural Support

Music can be provided to decrease noncompliant behavior during various procedures including echocardiograms, IV starts, and electroencephalograms (EEGs). Music may be used to encourage the child to go to sleep while the procedure is taking place. Alternate music engagement can be used to actively engage the child in music making in order to provide distraction and successful completion of the procedure. Instrument play, singing, and song books are used to engage and distract the child during procedures.

7. Music and Counseling

Music combined with counseling techniques can be used in the development of coping skills. Activities may include lyric analysis, song writing, and video production combined with discussion of stressors and appropriate coping strategies.

References

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