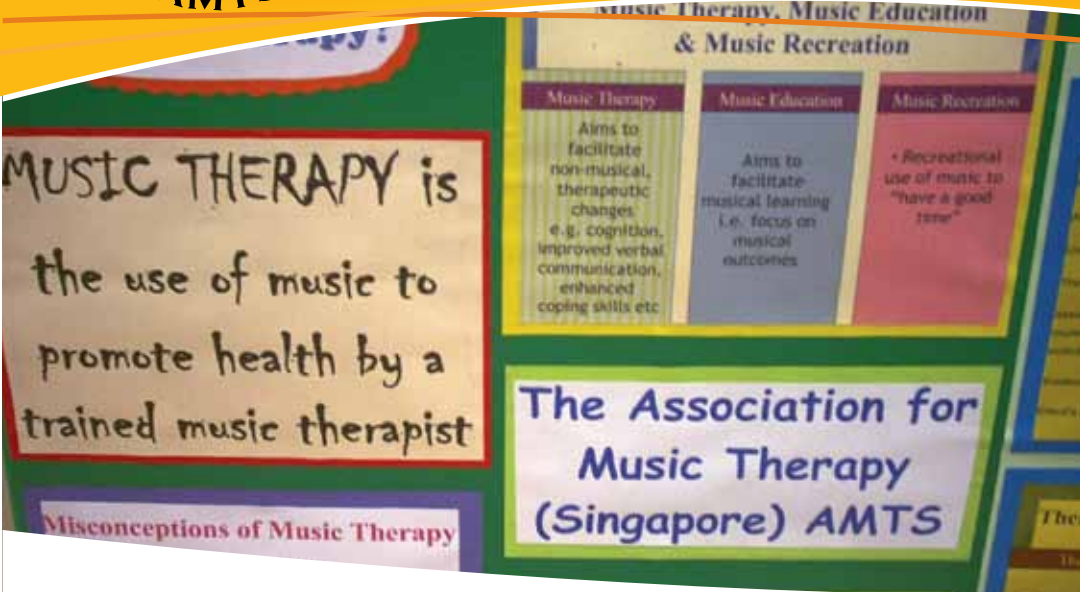




Music Therapy Times



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President's Note

The year 2010 has brought AMTS memorable moments and milestones: AMTS received the legendary Dr. Clive Robbins as our distinguished speaker for our 1st MT Day in April (it was such a pleasure and honour!); became a full organizational member of the World Federation of Music Therapy; advocated for MT to be included under the proposed Allied Health Professions Bill; and also welcomed five new professionals into our association!

AMTS is excited to announce that, with support from the Singapore Tourism Board, we are planning to bid to host the World Congress of Music Therapy (WCMT) in 2014 or 2017. In addition, we are planning for our 2nd Music Therapy Day (2nd weekend in April 2011). Our colleagues at the hospitals are also working hard to organize the first local Music Therapy Healthcare Symposium in July 2011. Focusing on the research foundation that informs the evidence basis of clinical Music Therapy in medical settings, American specialists will share about their internationally-renowned MT programmes and publications. More details will be announced on our blog.

Finally, we will soon be introducing our new executive committee, as committee members have served their three-year term. I would like to thank my dear friends and esteemed colleagues in AMTS for your drive and compassion, which made the difficult easy, and the impossible possible.

Peace sincerely,

Ng Wang Feng, MMT, MT-BC
AMTS President
Dec 2010



Editor's Note

As this issue marks the close of another year, I am compelled to take stock of the achievements and challenges that Music Therapy in Singapore has experienced this year. We Music Therapists have come far as a "band of brothers",

led by our out-going President Ng Wang Feng. Today, we have grown not only in membership, but also in the complexity of the challenges we face. One paramount challenge is the need for Music Therapy as a profession to establish its credibility as an evidence-based form of therapy. This issue highlights this challenge in the field of autism and early-intervention therapy and showcases how Music Therapists have responded to queries about the profession. In addition, I encourage you to read about the neurological roots of music perception in the brain in the "Research Nugget" section, which further supports the use of music in clinical settings. Finally, I would like to encourage all readers to connect with Music Therapy by attending or volunteering at Music Therapy events lined up for Singapore next year (e.g Music Therapy Day in April 2011 and the Music Therapy Healthcare Symposium in July 2011)!

I wish everyone a Happy 2011!

Charissa Tan, MA, MT-BC
Editor

Music Therapy Fundraiser



Music to the Ears – An Evening of Expression

Snapshots of the fundraising concert held at DBS Auditorium on 28th November 2010, organized by Singapore General Hospital and the Ballet & Music Company, to raise money for needy children with hearing-impairment to receive Music Therapy services at SGH.

Photo credit: Arthur Chan

Beneficiaries of the fundraiser, family members pose for group photo. Dr. Patsy Tan, AMTS professional member and SGH Music Therapist (second from left).

Why 10-10-10 was a field day for AMTS...

Reported by Ng Wang Feng, MMT, MT-BC



The day touted to be the “biggest day of the year to get hitched” is also known as World Mental Health Day. On 10/10/10, AMTS’ David Khlentzos and Ng Wang Feng were at the 8Q Museum@Singapore Art Museum sharing about music for wellness and Music Therapy at the

MIND PAINTERS Art Exhibition, organized by the Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH).

Wellbeing is not limited to physical wellness. Mental wellbeing is crucial to healthy functioning, and the arts play

an important role in helping us to begin the journey of healing towards health. Music Therapy is not about perfecting musical skills, just like Art Therapy is not about making aesthetically-pleasing artwork. Rather, it is the engaging in creative self-expression that targets functional goals.

David shared about the neurological basis of music’s efficacy as a therapeutic tool, and took the audience through a progressive muscle relaxation exercise accompanied by his beautiful live guitar-playing on his resonant Maton. Wang Feng updated the audience on the local music therapy scene and played various musical excerpts to drive home the point that there is no one “relaxing” music that works for everyone, and that classical music is not the most “therapeutic” for all.

Is *Music* Therapy recommended for children with ASD?

Reported by Loi Wei Ming, MA(MT), HPC-UK Registered Arts Therapist

In the recently published AMS-MOH *Clinical Practice Guidelines* (CPG), Music Therapy was not recommended in the “routine management of children with ASD [Autism Spectrum Disorder] because of inconclusive evidence” (MOH, 2010, p. 71).

A few of us at AMTS came together to review the literature on Music Therapy and children with ASD, and to craft a response based on the guidelines. We would like to share with all caregivers and parents the highlights below:

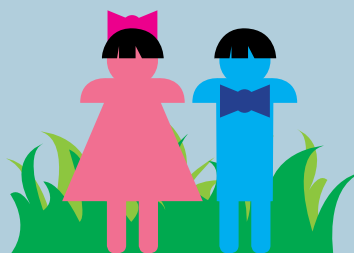
- Music Therapy was defined in the CPG as “a specific intervention using music communication and expression” (MOH, 2010, p. 70). Music Therapy is more than this. It is rooted in the therapeutic alliance between the therapist, the client and the client’s preferred music. In addition, Music Therapy is evidence-based and has measurable and observable outcomes. Music Therapy is also to be differentiated from sound therapy or Auditory Integration Therapy (AIT), where there is no emphasis on the therapeutic relationship or the use of the client’s preferred music in a live context.
- The CPG considered Music Therapy as a type of non-verbal and pre-verbal language training. In fact, Music Therapy goals for children with ASD target social, emotional, cognitive, and general domains as well. For example, ASD treatment outcomes such as increased attention, decreased self-stimulation, and enhanced auditory processing have also been summarized in factsheets published by the American Music Therapy Association¹.

- The CPG viewed improvisation as the lone approach used in Music Therapy. There are various approaches in Music Therapy beyond improvisational approaches. It is also important to note that “free” improvisation

encompasses various degrees of structure due to the inherent musical elements, e.g. cadences, dynamics. The Music Therapist decides on the amount and type of structure needed based on his/her assessment of the client’s needs.

- Music Therapy was marked down as an effective intervention due to the lack of Randomised Control Trials (RCTs) and case series presented. There are limitations in using RCTs as a valid method of enquiry to measure the effectiveness of Music Therapy in clients with ASD as Music Therapy is relationship-based, and music experiences are individualised based on client needs and preferences.
- We are happy to report at least three comprehensive reviews that rated Music Therapy as one of the promising potential treatment for children with ASD.

We agree that more empirical research is required in the field of Music Therapy for the improvement of services. It is also true that Music Therapy might not be suitable for every child with ASD. However, caregivers and families should not be discouraged from pursuing an assessment with a trained Music Therapist to evaluate suitability or benefit for the child with ASD.



Ministry of Health, Singapore. (March 2010). *Autism Spectrum Disorders in pre-school children: AMS-MOH Clinical Practice Guidelines 1/2010*. Ministry of Health, Singapore.

¹ <http://www.musictherapy.org/factsheets/MT%20Autism%202006.pdf>

Upcoming Music Therapy Events

Music Therapy Conference of the Boyer College of Music and Dance’s Arts and Quality of Life Research Center
The Music Therapy Tradition at Temple University
25 Feb 2011
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.
www.temple.edu/boyer/researchcenter

Great Lakes Region of the American Music Therapy Association Conference
Traditions with New Insights
23-27 March 2011
Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, U.S.A.
<http://www.glr-amta.org/Conference.html>

AMTS’ 2nd Music Therapy Day
Building Musical Bridges
2nd weekend of April, 2011
Library@Esplanade, Singapore
<http://singaporemusictherapy.wordpress.com>

Canadian Association for Music Therapy Conference 2011
Music Therapy: Return to the Centre
5-7 May 2011
University of Winnipeg
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
<http://www.musictherapy.ca/conference.htm>

Third International Music Therapy Research Conference
Improvisation – Exploring the Art & Science of Clinical Practice
Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
<http://www.musictherapyconference2011.org/>

XIII World Congress of Music Therapy
Music Therapy in Eastern and Western Philosophy
5-9 July 2011
Seoul, South Korea
http://www.wfmt.info/WFMT/World_Congress_2011.html

Music Therapy Healthcare Symposium
11-12 July, 2011
Singapore
Updates on <http://singaporemusictherapy.wordpress.com>

XIII Annual Conference of the American Music Therapy Association
AMTA in the ATL: Advocacy, Therapy, Leadership
16-20 November, 2011
Atlanta, Georgia
<http://musictherapy.org/conference/confindex.html>

Australian Music Therapy Association’s 37th National Conference
2011
Brisbane, Australia
<http://www.austmta.org.au/conf/>

Drop us a line at musictherapy.sg@gmail.com

Music and the Brain:

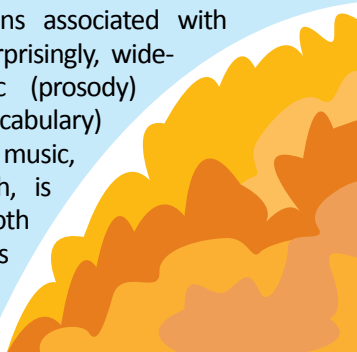
Why use music?

Reported by David Khlentzas, Bmus (MT, Hons.), RMT

*This column aims to highlight an interesting topic or question that has been partially or fully addressed by recent scientific research. Contributions by our readers are also welcome!**

As advancements in brain imaging technology are made over the coming decades, interest in determining neural patterns associated with musical processing are likely to increase (Levitin, 2009). This is as a result of music being a complex stimulant of brain activity. Indeed, Levitin (2009) – a prominent cognitive psychologist – noted recently that music involves virtually every cognitive function currently identified. For example, music can stimulate memory recall, emotional responses and regulation of attention. It can activate areas of motor planning and prediction through rhythmic elements and/or active music-making. It can develop or recover pathways of communication, whether verbal or non-verbal.

The brain regions associated with music are, unsurprisingly, wide-spread. Melodic (prosody) or lyrical (vocabulary) content in music, unlike in speech, is processed in both hemispheres of the brain (Levitin, 2009)



– supporting a variety of therapeutic uses. Also importantly, music shares functional and proximal links with the limbic system (Krout, 2006) – areas that are integral to emotion and memory functions among many others. Music can also inhibit the ‘adrenal cascade’ associated with stress, anxiety, and depression (Krout, 2006)-factors seen now as crucial to one’s quality of life.

Further music therapy research will continue to support further uses. As a therapist, it is my responsibility to utilize the important aspects of the brain’s processing of music to help those in need.

Krout, R.E. (2007). Music listening to facilitate relaxation and promote wellness: Integrated aspects of our neurophysiological responses to music. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 34, 134-141.*

Levitin, D. (2009). The neural correlates of temporal structure in music. *Music And Medicine, 1, 9-13.*

*Please note that AMTS reserves the right to publish or censure any comments contributed to the newsletter.



What is the Association for Music Therapy (Singapore) AMTS?

Formed in September 2007 by 11 professional Music Therapists, AMTS seeks to raise public awareness of Music Therapy in the community and serve as an organizational agency for locally-based Music Therapists. As of November 2010, we have 21 members who are all trained Music Therapists! **Feel free to contact us to verify credentials of Music Therapists at musictherapy.sg@gmail.com.**



Who can benefit from Music Therapy?

Music Therapy serves individuals and groups of various impairments and conditions at all ages, from neonates to the elderly. One does not need any music background to benefit from Music Therapy! However, Music Therapy is NOT a miracle cure-all. Only a Music Therapist can assess whether Music Therapy is suitable for the client.

Who are Music Therapists?

Persons who complete an approved college Music Therapy programme in the country of training. As credentials vary from country to country, the following are recognized: MTA (Canada), RMT (Australia), RMth (New Zealand), SRMT/HPC (U.K.), and MT-BC (U.S.A.).

What music do Music Therapists use?

Music Therapists use client-preferred music, so any type of music can be used in therapy. Music is usually provided live!

Can classical music increase IQ?

The idea that classical music can increase IQ is controversial. There is no music that can increase IQ. Yet.

<http://singaporemusictherapy.wordpress.com>

Music Therapy Day 2011



Building musical bridges

2nd weekend of April, 2011
Library@Esplanade

Explore • Communicate • Connect with Music Therapy

<http://singaporemusictherapy.wordpress.com/>

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