

Coombes, E. (2011). Project Bethlehem - Training Educators and Health Workers in the Therapeutic Use of Music in the West Bank. *Voices: A World Forum For Music Therapy*, 11(1). Retrieved February 16, 2011, from <https://normt.uib.no/index.php/voices/article/view/291/445>

APPENDIX B

MUSIC AS THERAPY

Trainee Handbook

SOS School and Village

Bethlehem 2009



By

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INTRODUCTION

We have devised this booklet to help you continue using **Music as Therapy**.

It covers everything we have worked on during the project, including:

- **Music as Therapy** principles
- **Music as Therapy** activities
- Suggested ways to support your **Music as Therapy** Teams
- Ideas as to how to develop this work

We have enjoyed working with all of you and very much look forward to hearing how your work using **Music as Therapy** develops.

Best Wishes,

Liz

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WHY MUSIC AS THERAPY?

“Music is the language of the soul.” This phrase was communicated to us in one of the first conversations we had here in Bethlehem, and it summarises perfectly the reasons for using this creative intervention here in Palestine.

The ability to respond to music is within us all. Everyone has the potential to be drawn into active music-making and therefore to experience a musical relationship with the therapist and others.

Through creative music-making and musical activities, shared experiences promote self-expression and social-skills.

Research has shown that positive changes in emotional health and behaviour can occur when children are engaged in therapeutic music sessions.

Here, at the SOS Children’s Village and School, we have worked with two teams to devise programmes of work that can support therapeutic aims relevant to the children and young people you have in your care.

PRINCIPLES OF MUSIC AS THERAPY

Music as Therapy is child centered

This means that the needs and wishes of the child are the focus of the sessions. To facilitate this, think about these words...

WAIT

WATCH

LISTEN

As you become more experienced you will be able to respond musically to these concepts by:

MATCHING

- Try to match the children's music.

DEVELOPING

- Try to develop the children's musical ideas.

Working in this way will create a therapeutic relationship and musical space where you can work with the children to achieve your therapeutic goals.

The sessions should always have consistency:

- SAME TIME
- SAME PLACE (make sure you have booked the room in advance if you need to).
- SAME INSTRUMENTS
- NO INTERRUPTIONS
- KEEP SOME ACTIVITIES THE SAME FROM WEEK TO WEEK
- INTRODUCE AND DEVELOP NEW ACTIVITIES TO MEET

YOUR THERAPEUTIC GOALS

Practical reminders to help you with your sessions:

Make sure that the musical instruments are accessible to you and that you have chosen which instruments you will use before the session starts.

A good idea is to have your chosen instruments in a box – this will make it easier to move them around and to put them away when the session is finished. Most importantly it will also help establish the boundaries of the session; for example, when you put the instruments back in the box the child will know when the sessions has finished.

If a child particularly likes a certain instrument, ensure you make it available to them.

Remembering these practicalities will ensure that Music as Therapy sessions provide a space where therapeutic goals can be achieved.

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Confidentiality:

Music as Therapy sessions are confidential. Of course, you can share aspects of this work as necessary with those involved professionally and personally with the child. However, please ensure any such discussions respect these professional boundaries.

THERAPEUTIC GOALS

When working with a child or group you may wish to select three goals and work with these initially. Keep it simple - choosing too many may confuse you!

Possible therapeutic goals:

- To increase self esteem and confidence
- To develop communication skills
- To develop social skills
- To explore and express emotion
- To develop creativity
- To interact with other people without being aggressive
- To help children understand boundaries

How do I select children to receive

Music as Therapy?

Consider the therapeutic goals we have suggested in this booklet and then **trust your instincts.**

The choices you all made regarding the children we have already worked with have been highly appropriate! If you use the same criteria as you did this time you will continue to work with children who will benefit from Music as Therapy.

Group or Individual?

Each Music as Therapy trainee has already worked with at least one group of children and one individual child.

In order to decide which form of therapy is appropriate for the child consider the therapeutic goals for that person.

As above, we suggest you **trust your instincts.**

MUSIC AS THERAPY SESSIONS

How long should a session last?

At the School, we initially worked with individuals and groups for forty minutes, the length of a school period. While this was suitable for groups, for some individuals this was too long. In their cases we made the sessions shorter so that the children could have a satisfying musical experience.

At the Village each session lasted for thirty minutes. Again this worked well for the groups however, was too long for some individuals. As above, sessions were then made shorter to suit the needs of the child.

Should I tell the children why they are coming to Music as Therapy sessions?

We have discussed this issue with you and decided that it is a good idea to explain to the children that making music together can help with things that may be difficult or scary. Particularly at the SOS School, we discussed asking the children what things are challenging for them at School. Most importantly keep things positive and make sure that the children do not feel they are receiving Music as Therapy sessions because they are bad or naughty.

How do I structure the Music as Therapy sessions?

It is a good idea to have an opening and a closing activity, such as **Say and Play** or **Follow me**. Some of you have used **Say and Play** to provide a space at the end of the session for discussion. You have learned a range of activities that you can use throughout the sessions. You have chosen when to use these based on the needs of the individual or group on that day. Continue working in this way – you are all on the right track. As you become more confident, you may feel able to ask the children what they would like to do in the group sessions.

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HELPFUL HINTS!

DON'T BE A TEACHER:

Music Therapy is not about teaching a child how to play music. Do not concentrate on teaching the child how to play the instruments, try and let them work it out for themselves.

SILENCE IS FINE:

Silence is an important part of music. Do not worry if the music stops for a while just wait and see what happens.

LISTEN:

Listen to the character of the music that the children are playing and try to match it.

SUPPORT THEIR MUSIC:

Try not to impose your own ideas or lead the music during **Solos**, **Duets** or **Free Play**. Allow it to develop and support the child's music.

Evaluating Your Music as Therapy Sessions

Making notes:

It is a good idea to get in the habit of keeping notes after every session. Overleaf is a form we have used to record the details of what happens in the work. You can use this if you wish or if you would prefer please find another way of keeping your notes.

Achieving your goals:

Check how those receiving Music as Therapy sessions are doing in classes, at home or in the village by communicating with families, teachers and other professionals involved in their care. This will help you to know whether progress is being made.

Music as Therapy Team Meetings:

Ensuring regular meetings for your teams at the School and Village take place will help you evaluate your work through discussion. This will also facilitate staff development and can boost your confidence as you share ideas.

Reviewing the Sessions:

Together, we devised a plan to evaluate the work empirically and through reports after six weeks. Following another four weeks work further evaluations that compare progress with the relevant therapeutic goals will help you decide how long to continue working with a child.

Ending Therapy:

It is important to give the children at least two weeks' notice that Music as Therapy sessions will finish. You felt this was manageable. It may be that you find this is not long enough and therefore four weeks needs to be considered as an appropriate length of time.

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SESSION EVALUATION FORM

Date:

Session Number	
Names of Participants (who attended the group/individual session)	
Description of activities used	
Evaluate the session – how did it go?	
Plans for the next session – What might you do next time? Keep it the same, change some things,	

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THE MUSICAL ACTIVITIES

SAY AND PLAY

WHY:

To create a clearly defined beginning and end of the session.

WHO:

Group and Individual sessions.

EQUIPMENT:

Singing bowl or rain stick. *See variations below.*

HOW:

Choose one instrument for this activity. Each person says their name, then plays the instrument. When the sound of the instrument has ended, the instrument can be passed to the next person.

VARIATIONS

The individual/group member could play the instrument in a way that expresses how they are feeling that day.

Each individual / group member chooses the instrument they want to play for this activity from a selection available.

When the group members are comfortable with each other, you can ask people to make a verbal statement of some kind, if this suits the therapeutic aims of the group/individual you

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are working with. For example, they could share with others something they did since the last session, or say how they feel on that day. The musical space you create by listening and waiting means that the individual/group members have a space they can use to express themselves verbally if they want to.

FOLLOW ME

WHY:

To develop listening and waiting skills and the ability to wait for your turn.

WHO:

Group and Individual sessions.

WHEN:

Near the beginning of the session as a warm-up.

HOW:

Using only parts of your body (hands, feet, etc) ask the group/individual to follow your movements and sounds. You can then ask the other group members/ individual, if they want to be the leader.

Variations

- When the individual/group is more confident, ask who would like to be the leader to start the activity. After leading, each child can then choose who will be the next leader.
- Use instruments instead of body percussion.
- Use vocal sounds instead of body percussion/instruments.

SOLOS

WHY:

To develop confidence and creativity in the player/s together with listening skills.

WHO:

Group and Individual sessions.

EQUIPMENT:

Windchimes or xylophone. *See variations below.*

HOW:

Choose an instrument and ask if the individual/anyone in the group would like to play a solo.

Variations

- Ask the child/children to choose an instrument
- If in a group, ask the person who has played a solo to choose who could play next.
- You could ask the rest of the group what they thought of the music they just heard, what it made them think about and how it made them feel.

DUETS

WHY:

To develop communication skills, waiting, listening and creativity.

WHO:

Group and Individual sessions.

EQUIPMENT:

Xylophone and wind chimes. *See variations below.*

HOW:

Version 1 - Ask a child choose an instrument and then the leader plays with the child.

Version 2 – Choose two instruments and ask 2 children to play together.

They listen to each other and improvise together. They can make up their own music; one does not need to copy the other.

Variations

FOR A GROUP SESSION:

- Ask a group member to choose who they would like to play with.
- Ask one group member to use voice, the other an instrument.
- Ask three people to play together.

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- Ask the group members what they thought of each other's music and perhaps what it made them think about.

PASS THE NOTE

WHY:

To develop creativity, listening skills, the ability to wait and take turns.

WHO:

Group sessions.

EQUIPMENT:

Chime bars and beaters.

HOW:

Give everyone a Chime Bar and a beater. Start by going round the group with each person playing one note in turn. Then, using gesture and eye contact pass the note randomly to others in the group. End the activity by gesture or by getting everyone to play together, then stopping with dynamic, a countdown or gesture.

Variations

- Play different patterns and develop listening skills by playing two, three or four notes at a time.
- Experiment with different dynamics by playing loud and soft notes.
- Use the castanets instead of the chime bars.
- Use vocal sounds as you pass the notes (zzzzzip, sshhhhh, toot etc)

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- Experiment with exaggerated facial expressions and body movement.
- Use your voices instead of instruments.

FREE PLAY

WHY:

To encourage free expression, a sense of self, a sense of being in a group and an understanding of the effect each person has on another.

WHO:

Group and Individual sessions.

WHEN:

When you think the group is ready to play freely together in the session.

HOW:

Offer the group/individual a selection of instruments. Explain that everyone will play music together. You may wish to tell the child/children that you will mark the end of the improvisation by giving a signal. This could be, for example, choosing an instrument you will play to signal the end of free play. When working with an individual, you may wish to allow them to decide when to end the music.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

Music as Therapy

www.musicasterapy.org

The Association for Professional Music Therapists:

www.apmt.org

CONTACT DETAILS

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Music as Therapy

The Co-op Centre

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London

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