



Goal Areas for Individuals With Autism

Music therapy can aid in the development of cognitive, language, behavioral, sensorimotor, and independent-living skills of children and adults with autism. Music therapy treatment utilizes a creative approach to integrating new abilities within a structured and predictable environment. This allows for people with autism to learn appropriate ways to interact with others, follow a personal schedule, adapt behaviors, and cope with situations in their daily living. Music therapy interventions can be used to address:

Language and Communication

Music Therapy can provide a structure for learning speech and language skills including:

- Acquisition of phonemes
- Increasing prosody (the “melody” and rhythm of speech)
- Increasing/decreasing speech volume
- Learning grammatical and syntactical rules of speech
- Learning functional sentences needed for every-day interactions

Social and Emotional

Music therapy interventions can be structured to:

- Create an environment for non-verbal interaction
- Learn non-verbal aspects of interaction (eye contact, take turns, listening)
- Encourage participation in social interactions
- Attach elements of affect to speech tone
- Learn how to be involved in an active communication exchange
- Express emotions verbally and non-verbally
- Learn coping skills that can be accessed when angry or frustrated

Cognitive Development

Structured music therapy interventions can be used to:

- Learn non-musical information
- Learn academic concepts such as telling time, counting, matching, or reading
- Maintain attention, eye contact, and other skills necessary for learning.

Sensorimotor Development

The multi-sensory aspects of music therapy treatment can aid in:

- Sensory integration
- Sensorimotor integration
- Increasing Coordination
- Decreasing self-stimulative behaviors
- Increasing/decreasing motor movement
- Creative exploration of environment