

Summary of potential Music Therapy Supports for specific disabilities as listed in AMTA's Monograph Series. These summaries are not intended to be complete, nor will each list apply entirely to each child with a specific disability.

### **Autism**

- Use of musical elements to support predictability and positive association
- Establish musical supports for beginnings, endings and changes
- Couple music with visual representation of commands, feelings, places, schedule sequences and social stories
- Use music to support generalization, functional use of skills, social give and take, and acceptance of change in least restrictive environment
- Support self organization, cooperation, sustained use of skills and social skills
- Support development of an expanded repertoire of expressive modes
- Use of variety of sound colors, textures and musical sensory experiences to needs

### **Mental Retardation**

- Use of live music prescriptively to stimulate multisensorial responses important in learning development
- Use of music to provide concrete supports and experiences for abstract concepts
- Provide repetition enhanced by musical variety and change to support self-motivation and interest
- Use of musical elements to provide immediate or simultaneous nonverbal positive reinforcement
- Prescribed use of music to improve learning, response time, accuracy, memory, cooperation, attention span and length of on-task behavior
- Use of music to create age-appropriate learning experiences and environments
- Therapeutic use of music to develop social skills, emotional management skills, and to elicit child's orientation to self, space, and time
- Use of music to support functional use of skills in least restrictive environment

### **Orthopedic Impairment**

- Use of specific properties of music to develop stamina, physical functioning and sensorimotor responses
- Provide music therapy experiences to elicit appropriate social skills and adaptive strategies
- Provide specially designed group music experiences to expose child's strengths to peer group
- Apply therapeutic music elements to support expanded expressive outlets, self-management, and access to academic curriculum

### **Speech or Language Impairment**

- Assess and apply specific musical elements, such as rhythm, cadence and pitch/melody to support remediation of speech/language skills
- Apply use of musical elements therapeutically to stimulate and give expressive meaning to cognitive functions through meaningful nonverbal media, use of music to support development of an expanded repertoire of expressive modes
- Provide experiences linking vocal/verbal and gestural expressions to meaningful language sequences and their functional applications
- Use of music to provide concrete supports and experiences for abstract concepts, couples music with visual representations of thoughts and feelings
- Therapeutically support active music engagement to stimulate the combined use of motor, thinking and social skills

## **Traumatic Brain Injury**

- Proved specially designed music experiences to expose child's strengths to self and peer groups
- Therapeutic use of music to develop social skills, emotional management skills, and to elicit child's orientation to self, space and time
- Prescriptive use of music to improve academic learning, response time, accuracy, memory attention span and length of on-task behavior
- Prescriptively apply the order of music to set behavioral expectations, provide reassurance, support the child in experiencing sustained use of skills in cooperative peer groups, and practice self organization
- Design music experiences to stimulate multiple senses to involve the child at many levels and to facilitate many developmental skills
- Apply specifically designed musical elements to motivate and or calm the child according to his/her immediate needs
- Use of music to provide concrete supports and experiences for abstract concepts, and to facilitate productive communication strategies

## **Deafness and Hearing Impairment**

- Use of music to support communication needs, especially in relation to language development
- Use of musical elements to prescriptively support development of good communication habits, including rhythm, intensity, duration, accents, pitch and intonation
- Use of musical engagement to mediate communication by organizing people into interactive behavior
- Adapts music therapy procedures to the learning characteristics and communication styles of the deaf and hard of hearing
- Use of music therapy techniques to support academic (including music education) motor, social, and emotional skills

## **Visual Impairment**

- Design music experiences to stimulate multiple senses to involve the child at many levels and to facilitate many developmental skills
- Apply specifically designed musical elements to support generalization of mobility, orientation, and adaptive skills
- Use of music to provide concrete supports and experiences to abstract concepts
- Design music and elemental supports to facilitate quality experiences in the structure and timing of social interaction
- Therapeutically support active music engagement to stimulate the combined use of motor, thinking and social skill
- Prescriptively apply the inherent order of music to set behavioral expectations, provide reassurance, support the child in experiencing sustained use of skills in cooperative peer groups, and practice self-organization
- Specifically designed music experiences to support development of strengths and weaknesses

## **Reference**

- American Music Therapy Association Monograph Series (2006). *Effective Clinical Practices in Music Therapy: Early Childhood and School Age Educational Settings* Humpal, Marcia Earl, MED, MT-BC and Colwell, Cynthia, PhD, MT-BC, American Music Therapy Association, Silver Springs, MD.

Please note that this summary is intended to be used as a reference when making appropriate referrals to Music Therapists for Music Therapy services. It is not intended to provide other professionals with methods and strategies for providing Music Therapy services.