



American Music Therapy Association

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Music Therapy in Substance Abuse Treatment: Evidence-Based Practice Support

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Description: Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program. The aim of music therapy is to provide individuals in substance abuse treatment the opportunity to address the physical, cognitive, emotional and spiritual aspects of recovery. In the early stages of recovery, music therapy interventions are used to help those in recovery: 1) manage symptoms of withdrawal, 2) develop new coping skills; 3) discover and explore thoughts and feelings underlying addiction; and 4) improve relationships with others. As recovery progresses, interventions focus on the emotional and spiritual aspects of recovery. Music therapists employ such techniques as songwriting, improvisation, song discussion, participatory music groups and music and imagery to address these goal areas. Music therapy is provided in both individual and group settings.

STANDARDIZATION: Music therapy goals, objectives and progress are documented in a treatment plan and delivered in accordance with the AMTA Standards of Clinical Practice. Music selections and certain active music-making activities are modified for client preferences and individualized needs (i.e., song selection and music may vary).

REPLICATION: Yes; has also been used with different providers and populations.

MEANINGFUL OUTCOMES: Global state, mental state, anxiety management, social and emotional functioning

SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:

Reduced muscle tension	Improved self-image/increased self-esteem
Decreased anxiety/agitation	Increased verbalization
Enhanced interpersonal relationships	Improved group cohesiveness
Increased motivation	Improve perception & differentiation of feelings
Promote self-expression and self-awareness	

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH

ADOLESCENTS

Doak, B. (2003). Relationships between adolescent psychiatric diagnoses, music preferences, and drug preferences. *Music Therapy Perspectives*, 21(2), 69–76.

Conclusions: A significant correlation between psychiatric diagnoses and music preference and diagnosis and drug preference was found. This may support the idea that adolescents may use drugs and music for similar purposes.

James, M. R. (1988). Adolescent values clarification: A positive influence on perceived locus of control. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 25, 206–215.

Conclusions: Lyric analysis focusing on values' clarification was shown to be an effective intervention for influencing an adolescent's perceived locus of control, and helping to develop a positive attitude towards self and recovery.

ADULTS

Abdollahnejad, M. R. (2006). Music therapy in the Tehran therapeutic community. *International Journal of Therapeutic Communities*, 27, 147–158.

Conclusions: Residents of the therapeutic community reported that lyric analysis and song sharing facilitated the expression of thoughts and feelings. Additionally, residents who listened to relaxing music before bedtime fell asleep quicker and reported improved mood on the following day.

Cevasco, A. M., Kennedy, R., & Generally, N. R. (2005). Comparison of movement-to-music, rhythmic activities, and competitive games on depression, stress, anxiety, and anger of females in substance abuse rehabilitation. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 42(1), 64–80.

Conclusions: Each of the three music therapy interventions were equally effective in decreasing depression, stress, anxiety and anger in females who were in substance abuse treatment.

Gallant, W., Holosko, M., Gorey, K. M., & Lesiuk, T. L. (1997). Music as a form of intervention with out-patient alcoholic couples: A quasi-experimental investigation. *Canadian Journal of Music Therapy*, 5(1), 67–84.

Conclusions: Couples who received both rehabilitation and music therapy significantly lowered scores on the Psychosocial Problem Inventory. Additionally, song discussions significantly improve the outcome measurement of loneliness in women.

Hammer, S. E. (1996). The effects of guided imagery through music on state and trait anxiety. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 33, 47–70.

Conclusions: Patients who received 10 group guided imagery through music sessions experienced a significant decrease in state anxiety as compared to the patients in the control group.

Jones, J. D. (2005). A comparison of songwriting and lyric analysis techniques to evoke emotional change in a single session with people who are chemically dependent. *Journal of Music Therapy, 42*(2), 94–110.

Conclusions: Song writing and lyric analysis were shown to significantly increasing feelings of acceptance and joy/happiness/enjoyment and significantly decrease feelings of guilty/regretful/blame and fear/distrust. Seventy-five percent of participants cited music therapy as a significant tool in their recovery.

Ross, S., Cidambi, I., Dermatis, H., Weinstein, J., Ziedonis, D., Roth, S., & Galanter, M. (in press). Music therapy: A novel motivational approach for dually diagnosed patients. *Journal of Addictive Diseases*.

Conclusions: Patients who attended more than 6 music therapy sessions had a significantly longer duration of treatment than those who attended 3-6 sessions. Music therapy group attendance during in-patient treatment was predictive of successful follow-up to the initial after-care appointment.

Silverman, M. J. (2003). Music therapy and clients who are chemically dependent: A review of literature and pilot study. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 30*, 273–281.

Conclusions: Patients in substance abuse treatment reported music therapy to be highly effective in increasing relaxation, and energy level and decreasing impulsiveness.

Ward, K. L. (1996). *The effects of music therapy with chemically dependent offenders in a women's prison*. Unpublished master's thesis, The Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL.

Conclusions: Women inmates participating in music therapy group were on task significantly longer than those in the non-music therapy group.

Winkelman, M. (2003). Complementary therapy for addiction: “Drumming out drugs.” *American Journal of Public Health, 93*, 647–651.

Conclusions: Drumming and drum circles can provide a complementary role to addiction treatment. Positive effects of drumming include increased sense of relaxation, restoration of the balance in the opioid and serotonergic neurotransmitter system, positive spiritual experiences, interpersonal support and connection to others.