

Reviewed
by: Play for Life (Summer 2013)

Jessica Kingsley Publishers

73 Collier Street, London N1 9BE Tel: 020 7833 2307 Fax: 020 7837 2917 website www.jkp.com

e-mail post@jkp.com VAT Reg. No: 455 2134 66 Reg. No: 2073602

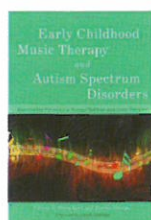


Early Childhood Music Therapy and
Autism Spectrum Disorders-
Developing Potential in Young
Children and their Families (2012)
Edited by Petra Kern and Marcia
Humpal

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Specialists in the field of music therapy have contributed to the making of this text, resulting in a excellent resource of evidence-based music therapy interventions. The book is divided into five sections, with each being well presented and offering an interesting read. Case studies and practical ideas and advice are provided throughout.

Part one presents an introduction to autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and reviews the main characteristics, research and theories on the causes, as well as reviewing the diagnostic techniques and intervention models

available. The need for music therapists to have evidence-based practice is discussed in order to identify the most suitable intervention to support the child with ASD. To conclude this opening section a meta-analysis reviewing the effectiveness of music therapy is presented, revealing music therapy as a effective treatment for young children with ASD.

Part two is dedicated to the assessment of children with ASD and presented a very comprehensive and full guide. Three possible music therapy assessment tools are offered for children with ASD, including the four-step assessment model which determines a child's eligibility for music therapy services. The Music Therapy-Music Related Behaviour assessment tool is then discussed which helps gain information on a child's musical behaviour and the therapists interpretation of this in relation to non music functioning. Finally the SCERTS Model is presented which is used to generate measurable and achievable goals for children with ASD. Practical advice and considerations are provided on administering all of these techniques and applied to music therapy.

Part three concentrated on ASD treatment approaches and strategies as applied in music therapy. Applied Behaviour Analysis is introduced and the author summarises the four main beliefs of the approach and emphasises three common treatment modalities which are used with individuals with ASD and discusses their significance and application to music therapy. Assistance is then given for devising a Social Story which is set to music, as research supports the view that this has been shown to help with behaviour modification. The principles of Nordoff-Robbins music therapy are then explored and it is suggested to combine this with the Floortime Model. To bring this section of the book to a close the authors explored strategies and techniques that are developmentally appropriate to meet each child's unique needs and addresses how they can be improved by using music therapy techniques.

Part four looked at collaborative working and provided a interesting case study about a four year old boy and how music therapy was integrated into his life to support him. Communication and language development and sensory processing in children with ASD is subsequently explored and the implications for music therapists is reviewed. A useful chapter for parents is then presented which reviewed how intervention strategies and techniques may be transferred into the child's home life, with tips and practical advice being given throughout. The final section of the book closed with a resource list which included details about websites, blogs and apps providing up to date information and support.

This text is a great resource for professionals and parents of children with ASD. It is very reader friendly, full of practical advice. Questions are presented at the end of each chapter to address the key points within the chapter. When looking at the applicability to play therapy elements from the text may be adapted, but much of the content comes from a more directive point of view. Nonetheless it is a interesting read and it would be useful to those who are working with children with ASD.