

ATTENTION DEFICIT/ HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

The child or adolescent who has attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder has cognitive, emotional and social challenges. It is difficult for him/her to pay attention, to remain focused on the task at hand, to follow instructions adequately and/or to interact with his/her environment in a level-headed manner due to verbal, motor and social impulsiveness. This can lead to loss of self-esteem, isolation, anxiety or behavioral problems.

Music therapy can make it easier for the young person to fit into his/her environment. Through an Initial Assessment, the music therapist first identifies the person's needs and strengths in socio-emotional, psychomotor and cognitive areas. It will also highlight his/her tendencies and musical preferences. An Individual Intervention Plan is then devised to include overall goals such as: strengthening his/her self-esteem, developing his/her attention span, gaining control over his/her verbal, motor and social impulses, acquiring communication strategies, etc. The young person then attends group or individual sessions according to his/her needs.

To attain these objectives, the music therapist employs a variety of methods and techniques that use music in all its forms. The communicative and creative properties of music are central to the client-therapist relationship and therapeutic interactions.

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The child or adolescent may be invited to express himself/herself in vocal or instrumental improvisations, to imitate or initiate rhythmic or melodic motifs to learn self-discipline, to share an instrument with a peer, to contribute to the words of a song, to discuss a chosen piece of music, or to create a musical story. A great variety of instruments (guitar, piano, percussion instruments to name a few) are incorporated into sessions in order to satisfy individual musical preferences and to offer a rich and meaningful experience. In short, music therapy is a useful means to reach a young person who has ADHD or hyperactivity by supporting his/her emotional, social and cognitive development.

For additional information about music therapy or if you wish to communicate with a music therapist:

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 **ASSOCIATION
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