



# HARMONY GARDEN

## MUSIC THERAPY

### MUSIC THERAPY AND CHILDREN

#### **What is Music Therapy?**

Music Therapy is the clinical and evidenced-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed MT-BC. Music therapy is a well-established allied health profession similar to speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy. It consists of using music therapeutically to address physical, psychological, cognitive, behavioral and/or social emotional functioning.

Because music therapy is a powerful and non-threatening medium, unique outcomes are possible. With young children, music therapy provides a unique variety of music experiences in an intentional and developmentally appropriate manner to effect changes in a child's behavior and facilitate development of his/her communication, social/emotional, sensorimotor, and/or cognitive skills.

#### **How Does Music Therapy Make a Difference with Children?**

- Music stimulates all of the senses and involves the child at many levels. This “multimodal approach” facilitates many developmental skills.
- Quality learning and maximum participation occur when children are permitted to experience the joy of play. Music therapy allows this play to occur naturally and frequently.
- Music is highly motivating, yet it can also have a calming and relaxing effect. Enjoyable music activities are designed to be success-oriented and make children feel better about themselves.
- Music therapy can help children process and express emotions associated with trauma and abuse, providing a safe environment that seems to naturally reinforce expression both verbally and non-verbally.
- Music therapy can help a child manage pain and stressful situations.
- Music can encourage socialization, self-expression, communication, and motor development.
- Because the brain processes music in both hemispheres, music can stimulate cognitive functioning and may be used for remediation of some speech/language skills.

#### **Why Music Therapy?**

Music therapy may address several needs simultaneously in a positive and exciting medium: it may provide pleasurable learning that promotes success. Furthermore, music therapy can greatly enhance the quality of life of the young child and his/her family. Music is often the first thing to which a child relates. It is a “universal language” that crosses all cultural lines. Music occurs naturally in our environment in many settings and is a socially appropriate activity and leisure skill. Most people, especially children, enjoy music – therefore, music therapy can be the therapy that reinforces all other therapies.