

**Music therapy is a valuable clinical intervention for people of all ages and abilities. It can work where other therapies cannot, making connections and providing vital support.**

We all relate to music because it connects with what it means to be human. Our bodies work to rhythms, our speech has the tones, rhythm and structure of music. Music offers a non-verbal means of communication which can prove very beneficial for young children who struggle to find the right words to express how they feel.

This unique, client-led clinical intervention is accessible to everyone as no pre-existing musical skills are required. It's not about being able to play an instrument or learning musical skills. It's about making a connection and enabling people to communicate.

**Every Day Harmony is the leading music therapy charity in Northern Ireland and has wide experience of providing music therapy for children and young people with emotional and behavioural needs, mental health diagnoses or learning disabilities. Music therapists are Allied Health Professionals and must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council.**

**Contact us to find out more.**

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**EVERY  
DAY  
HARMONY**  
MUSIC THERAPY

**Music Therapy  
for Children &  
Young People**

A music therapist is a trained professional who can guide a child by tailoring the music therapy sessions to their needs and facilitating their participation to help them get the greatest benefit. Music therapy sessions for children and young people offer a safe, therapeutic space where children can use music, song or voice as a means of self-expression, interaction and communication, providing the opportunity to be listened to, heard and supported. All carried out through the medium of music which is inherently motivating, engaging, playful and fun.

## The therapist will identify areas for development and music and musical activities to achieve outcomes such as:

- Enhanced cognitive skills such as concentration and attention
- Improved emotional state through enhanced self-expression, using music therapy to improve communication via musical improvisation and song-writing
- Increasing appropriate behaviours through the opportunity to safely express and manage negative and destructive emotions and beliefs
- Improved levels of self-confidence and self-esteem
- Enhanced interaction and communication skills, thus improving relationships

Ten-Year-old Macey was referred to music therapy by her teacher. The teacher felt it necessary to encourage Macey's creativity as a means to explore issues with self-esteem and foster self-confidence

Within the initial three assessment sessions, Macey's engagement in musical activities indicated that she was quite withdrawn, appearing anxious. From the music therapy assessment, the therapist made the following recommendations.

- (1) To encourage and develop Macey's expressive communication skills.
- (2) To support Macey's self-esteem and self-confidence through the mastery of a skill.
- (3) To encourage sustained interaction through creative music making within a positive setting.

These goals were encouraged through: the use of free musical improvisation, allowing the pupil to explore and lead interactively; Improvising around selected themes or emotions; song writing.

Macey was able to identify and work towards the musical objectives. She was able to develop creative ideas in a safe environment, affording her the opportunity to express herself and explore her own self-identity. Macey was given a copy a DVD recording of her performance of the song, which may provide her with a valuable reference, offering further insight and support in the coming years.

***"...explore issues with self-esteem and foster self-confidence"***



***"...opportunity to express herself and explore her own self-identity"***