

# **Music therapy & ADHD**

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# **Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)**

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- Neurobehavioral disorder in childhood and adolescence and can persist into adulthood**
- It is characterised by *inattention, impulsivity, & hyperactivity***
- The maladaptive behaviours are inconsistent with age and developmental level and interferes with the child's ability to function within school and social situations**
- Behaviours are severe and persistent lasting more than six months & present in more than one setting (example: home and school)**
- Impairment in the neurotransmitter systems (dopamine and norepinephrine)**



# Common symptoms of ADHD

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- Trouble holding attention on activities
- Does not pay attention to details
- Has trouble finishing tasks and activities
- Trouble staying seated
- Fidgets, taps hands and feet
- Has trouble listening and responding and trouble waiting for his/her turn
- Interrupts/intrudes others
- Anxiety, anger, boredom, mood swings



# **ADHD untreated can lead to....**

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- Educational underachievement**
- Difficulty maintaining relationships**
- Increased anti social, delinquent activity & criminal activity**
- Increased risk of substance abuse**
- Decreased vocational opportunities**
- ADHD can occur with anxiety, OCD, learning disabilities, fine and gross motor movement**



# **Rationale for using music with ADHD symptoms**

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- Musical experiences can impact brain function with regards to attention, motivation, activity levels, social behaviour and learning**
- The structure inherent in musical experiences has the potential to create a sense of organisation in the ADHD mind. Beats, rhythm, melody and movement can refocus the restless and agitated mind and encourage improved physical and mental organisation.**
- Music and visual cues can increase information retention, auditory perception and language skills, facilitating learning**
- Research suggests that there is a link between impaired timing and impulsive behaviour**



# Music therapy methods

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- Music and movement
- Instrumental improvisation/musical play therapy
- Group singing
- Music assisted relaxation
- Instructional musical play

**All methods are designed to meet cognitive, behavioural and psychosocial symptoms of ADHD**



# References

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