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Publication date:
2014

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Gottfried, T., Thompson, G., Geretsegger, M., Oldfield, A., Elefant, C., Carpente, J., & Gold, C. (2014). WORLD-WIDE PERSPECTIVES ON IMPROVISATIONAL MUSIC THERAPY FROM THE TIME-A PROJECT. Paper presented at 14th World Congress for Music therapy, Krems, Austria.

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WORLD-WIDE PERSPECTIVES ON IMPROVISATIONAL MUSIC THERAPY FROM THE TIME-A PROJECT.

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Background

Improvisational music therapy methods have been viewed as a valuable way of working with children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) since the pioneering efforts of Alvin and Nordoff and Robbins (Alvin, 1978; Nordoff & Robbins, 1977). The TIME-A project is a unique international collaboration targeted at investigating the effectiveness of improvisational music therapy (IMT) (Geretsegger, Holck, & Gold, 2012; Wigram, 2004) for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Within this project, an international “consensus model” for IMT has been developed by drawing on the world-wide perspectives of the international collaborators.

World Wide Perspectives on Improvisational Music Therapy with Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Clinicians from 4 continents around the world presented examples of clinical work highlighting an aspect of working improvisationally in their local context. The overarching principles of the “consensus model” developed within this project were explored across the presentations, particularly those aspects of IMT that are

categorized as unique, essential and acceptable within the model. Clinical examples focused on how IMT is adapted to different contexts and why IMT is useful with children with ASD (Oldfield, 2006). The clinical examples also examined the range of characteristics of the children in the study, including those who are: high functioning and verbal; low functioning and non-verbal; younger (4 years old); older (7 years old); and receiving IMT in natural settings such as the home (Thompson, 2012).

Conclusions

The global perspectives provided in this round table provided an opportunity for a round table discussion that will help to explore and deepen our professional understanding of an important music therapy method within the field of ASD (Gold, 2011).

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