

Music as Therapy

Supporting children and young people with disabilities



Supporting our children and young people

In youth centres and centres for young people with disabilities here in Rwanda, we meet young people seriously affected by stigmatization and rejection from their families and local communities. They are left living with fear, anxiety and social isolation. Children and young people may struggle socially, emotionally, psychologically and physically. They may have additional difficulties which are emotional, behavioural, cognitive, sensory and/or physical, which can significantly impair their communication skills and capacity to build relationships.

How music can help

Music therapy is increasingly recognised as an effective form of treatment and intervention. It can help:

- Improve cognitive skills
- Improve communication, including receptive & expressive language skills and the production of words
- Increase attention span/attention to task
- Improve awareness of the surroundings and increase reality orientation
- Address sensory difficulties and provide sensory opportunities
- Reinforce pre-academic and academic skills
- Address physical difficulties and develop gross and fine motor skills
- Improve general stamina and endurance
- Muscle strength, muscle tone, breath capacity, etc.
- Increase relaxation, reduce stress and elevate mood
- Increase emotional awareness and develop self-regulation
- Address issues relating to distress, trauma and fear
- Increase motivation, initiation and participation
- Improve self-esteem and self-image
- Develop self-awareness and decrease inappropriate behaviours
- Build confidence and resilience through promoting independence, security and achievement, and developing coping strategies
- Foster creativity and imagination
- Develop relationships, strengthen peer interaction, strategies for conflict resolution and a sense of belonging
- Develop non-verbal communication skills (including eye contact, response to non-verbal cues)
- Practise social skills (including sharing, turn-taking, and working in a group)

Music as Therapy Training

Our training can be designed to suit your needs and focus on how music can address the specific difficulties of the children and young people you work with. Typically the training includes:

- An Introduction to Music as Therapy, including reasons for its use
- Needs and challenges of disabilities
- Basic principles of interactive music-making
- Examples of therapeutic objectives
- How to deliver an Individual Session
- How to deliver a Group session
- Simple activity ideas, including songs
- Example of referral and evaluation forms
- Practicalities and advice

Teaching methods include interactive music workshops, opportunities to experience music as therapy methods for yourself, watching a training DVD to see music sessions in action, learning from each other's experiences and discussion.

About our Trainers

Our team of Trainers were initiated in ways of using music by British music therapists from the charity Music as Therapy International, who continue to provide supervision and support today.



Audace Musoni works as the Coordinator at Rusizi Youth Centre and has been using music since 2009. Audace has extensive experience working with young people and young people with disabilities since 2006.



Alphonsine Musabyemariya works at Alivera Centre, working with children and young people with disabilities since 2007. She has been using music in her work since 2009.



Fidele Nshimiye works at the Urugwiro Centre with children with disabilities and has been using music in his work since 2016. Fidele also has experience of working with people with mental health problems in the Republic Democratic of Congo.

Please turn over to find out how to receive music as therapy training.

How to receive Music as Therapy Training

Training costs vary depending on the number of training days, and the number of trainers required, which is usually determined by how many people will participate in the training. Please contact us so we can create a training package tailored to what you need, and inform you of the price.

To really make the most of our training you will need to have musical instruments available for you to use with the children and young people in your centre. We can advise on what musical instruments may be useful and where you can buy them, but you may want to consider the additional cost of buying musical instruments for your centre.

To find out more and discuss your training needs, please contact:

Audace Musoni: Tel: +250781512948;

Email: musictherap19@gmail.com, or musauda@gmail.com

Fidele Nshimiye: Tel: +250787499625



"It was amazing!! It was very productive. Music Therapy is very important in people with disabilities' lives and that we need to implement it. We need to be facilitators instead of being teachers; this can encourage our people with disabilities to have creativity and self-confidence." (Feedback from Theophile Nzabahimana, Country Director of The Gallagher Trust)

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