

7-2017

Intergenerational music therapy : bridging the generational gap through community-based music making.

Michael R. Detmer
University of Louisville

Petra Kern
University of Louisville

Jill Jacobi-Vessels
University of Louisville

Kristi M. King
University of Louisville

Follow this and additional works at: <http://ir.library.louisville.edu/faculty>

 Part of the [Community Health and Preventive Medicine Commons](#), and the [Music Therapy Commons](#)

Original Publication Information

Detmer, M. R., Kern, P., Jacobi-Vessels, J, & King, K. M. "Intergenerational Music Therapy: Bridging the Generational Gap Through Community-Based Music Making." 2017. Proceedings of the 15th Annual World Congress of Music Therapy. Special issue of *Music Therapy Today*, 13(1): 219-220.
<http://musictherapytoday.wfmt.info>.

ThinkIR Citation

Detmer, Michael R.; Kern, Petra; Jacobi-Vessels, Jill; and King, Kristi M., "Intergenerational music therapy : bridging the generational gap through community-based music making." (2017). *Faculty Scholarship*. 327.
<http://ir.library.louisville.edu/faculty/327>

INTERGENERATIONAL MUSIC THERAPY: BRIDGING THE GENERATIONAL GAP THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED MUSIC MAKING

Michael R. Detmer

University of Louisville, Norton Women's and Children's Hospital, USA

Petra Kern

University of Louisville, Music Therapy Consulting, USA

Jill Jacobi-Vessels

University of Louisville, Early Learning Campus, USA

Kristi M. King

University of Louisville, Department of Health and Sport Sciences, USA

Introduction

Intergenerational programming is mutually beneficial for participating generation groups. Children and older adults involved in intergenerational activities demonstrate improved attitudes toward, and interaction with the opposite age group (Belgrave, 2011; Isaki & Harmon, 2015). Older adults also demonstrate increased physical activity/function, intellectual ability, and improvements in areas related to quality of life (Sakurai et al., 2016). Despite these documented benefits, there is a large gap in intergenerational research due to a limited number of studies that examine effects across multiple domain areas, and even fewer that are music-based. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the effects of an intergenerational music therapy program on children's literacy, older adults' physical functioning and self-worth, and interactions between the two age groups.

Method

Participants of this study are three-year-old children from a university-based child care setting and older adults from a senior living facility, some of whom have cognitive impairments such as Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and Parkinson's disease. The experimental group will participate in 30-minute, semi-weekly music therapy sessions following a consistent format:

1. A gathering activity (10 minutes) using an original transition song to orient the participants,
2. A signature greeting song (3 minutes) to promote intergenerational interaction,
3. Non-locomotor and locomotor movement (5 minutes) to improve adults' physical functioning,
4. Instrument Play (5 minutes) to promote intergenerational interaction,
5. Storybook singing (5 minutes) correspon-

- ding to the storybook of the day to improve children's literacy skills,
6. Storybook reading (5 minutes) to improve children's literacy skills (see Figure 1), and a
 7. Closing/goodbye activity (7 minutes) using a signature "goodbye" song to promote intergenerational interaction.

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at the researchers' university.



Figure 1. Storybook reading.

Results

Preliminary results, a program evaluation, and future recommendations will be shared during the 15th World Congress of Music Therapy in Tsukuba, Japan.

References

- Belgrave, M. (2011). The effect of a music-based intergenerational program on children and older adults' intergenerational interactions, cross-age attitudes, and older adults' psychosocial well-being. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 48(4), 486-508.

Isaki, E., & Harmon, M. T. (2015). Children and adults reading interactively: The social benefits of an exploratory intergenerational program. *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, 36(2), 90-101.

Sakurai, R., Yasunaga, M., Murayama, Y., Ohba, H., Nonaka, K., Suzuki, H., . . . Fujiwara, Y. (2016). Long-term effects of an intergenerational program on functional capacity in older adults: Results from a seven-year follow-up of the REPRINTS study. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, 64, 13-20.

About the Authors

Michael R. Detmer, MME, MT-BC is a music therapist, instructor, and clinical supervisor at University of Louisville and Norton Women's and Children's Hospital in Louisville, KY. Email: michael.detmer@louisville.edu

Petra Kern, Ph.D., MT-BC, MTA, DMtG, owner of Music Therapy Consulting, adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Louisville, and Editor-in-Chief of *Imagine* is former WFMT President and recipient of the 2014 WFMT Service Award.

Jill Jacobi-Vessels, Ph.D. is the Director of the Early Learning Campus and is a faculty member in Early Childhood Education at the University of Louisville in Louisville, KY.

Kristi M. King, Ph.D., CHES is an associate professor in Exercise Physiology and Community Health in the Department of Health and Sport Sciences at the University of Louisville.