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

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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

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