



Welcome to our second quarterly newsletter!

In this newsletter we will be introducing new partners to our network, celebrating our established members and offering ideas, resources and talking points to inspire you in your music sessions. Read on to find out about support available to you and how you could win a slit drum worth £145...

Introducing the MacIntyre Team:

MacIntyre is a national charity, whose No Limits programme is one of the charity's outreach services, providing alternative learning opportunities for young people who struggle to engage in a conventional school setting. Jethro, Tamas, Sarah, Claire, Liz and Hugh work with young people with autism, learning disabilities and other additional needs. They completed training with us at the start of the year, led by Music Therapist Susie Bajali. Read Susie's blogs [here](#) and Charity Today's coverage of the project [here](#).



New activity idea!

...Our thanks to Susanna Bajali for this activity to try with your MasT egg shakers!




Goodnight Little Egg

Aims: To encourage vocalisation, to develop focus and attention, to develop symbolic thinking.


Description: The leader takes an egg shaker and explains that it has gone to sleep and must not be woken up. The leader whispers "goodnight little egg" to the shaker and passes it to the next person. Each member whispers "goodnight" to the egg and passes it on to the next person in the circle. The last person can put the egg 'to bed' in an upturned tambourine.

Celebrating our Ballachulish Partners

"At some point during the session every resident will respond in some way, whether it is singing, or playing a small percussion instrument or tapping his/her foot....It may be the only connection they can share with somebody during that day." 

Bev, Jesse and their colleagues at Abbeyfield Care Home in the Scottish Highlands have been running music sessions for older people including those living with dementia since 2017. They have been recognised as Superstars for achievements by Music for Dementia 2020 ([Read the article here](#), and explore their great resources on the [campaign site](#)).



Do you know any superstars? Email us to tell us about them so we can celebrate their commitment to working with music. 

Support available: As our MacIntyre No Limits Partners reminded us, key to your work with music is perseverance. But all sorts of challenges can crop up. This is why we are offering a range of different types of support to you. At any point you can:

- Request a Support Visit from a music therapist.
- Request supervision, or advice concerning a specific service user or aspects of your music session.
- Send a specific question to music therapists, to be answered in the newsletter.
- Browse our Online Resources (in development!)

Find out more and access support here. *There may be costs associated with some of the above, but financial assistance is available so don't be put off. We never want cost to be a barrier to access.*

Win a slit drum!

Just send in a question for our music therapists, and some background on yourself with a photo. All entries will be featured in the next newsletter and you'll be entered into a draw to win a slit drum worth £145...



A traditional african idiophone, this 'drum' uses vibration to make sound - a typical percussion instrument requiring a beater.

Why use Music?

As our MacIntyre No Limits Partners reminded us there are so many benefits music can have and there is research to prove this. This evidence can help your colleagues, employers and commissioners understand why you are running your music sessions and why they are important. It can also remind us why we are doing what we are doing when things are tough, and inspire us to consider new aims and benefits for our session participants.

We have put together summaries of the research and evidence underpinning music therapy practice – and informing your music sessions – which you can find on our UK Resources page and download or share with others.



This month our focus is on **The Role of Music for People Living with Dementia.**

Did you know, music therapy is one of just two forms of [non-pharmacological] intervention for which there is convincing evidence of effective reduction of the behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia?

Coming soon: *The Role of Music for Young Children and The Role of Music for Adults with Learning Disabilities.*

Top Tips from our Partners at MacIntyre:

Don't take music at face value - there are so many benefits that music can have, it's the thinking behind it all.

Don't put too much pressure on yourself. Leave your expectations behind and go with the flow...

Take a step back and let the learners take the lead. Wait and don't worry about silence...

Don't worry about singing - if Bob Dylan made a successful career out of singing you can do it!

You can use anything to create sounds!

Persevere and keep at it!

Question Corner

In this issue Music Therapists Alexia Quin and Caroline Anderson consider the question:



How do I stop my music sessions going stale?



Think about leadership: If you have been leading an activity which everyone now know, might your group members be ready to try taking the lead?



Think about aims: What were your aims for each group member at the start? Have these been achieved and if so, what might your new aims be? Will new activities give new ways to work towards these new aims?



Get creative with your instruments: Egg shakers can be shaken, knocked together, rolled on the ground, rolled on the body, balanced on a tambourine, counted, hidden, held silent, passed around the group, played as a solo or played as a group. How many different ways can your group use different instruments?"



Think of an element of music and experiment with it: e.g. tempo (play things at different speeds) or timbre (sing a familiar songs in different 'voices' – maybe an opera style, or sheep etc.) This is also a great choir warm up!



Do less, try and let your clients do more: they will come up with new ideas and be empowered by taking more ownership of the music.



Play in contrasting ways: e.g. sustained vs staccato playing, or wooden vs metal instruments.



Feature music in line with current events: This could be songs for adults or children on these subjects (e.g. the seasons and the weather), or improvise, make a sound landscape on these themes.

To receive your own pair of **egg shakers**, and a newsletter addressed directly to you (via post or email), let us know your preferred means of receiving the newsletter and address by sending us an email:

freitagibbs@musicastherapy.org