Welcome to Summer! MMTS has been “out on the town” the first part of this year getting the word out about the benefits of music therapy in a variety of settings. We are proud to now be members of the Auburn, CA Chamber of Commerce, the eWomenNetwork, as well as the Sutter Centers for Integrative and Holistic Health. This past year we’ve also expanded our service area as well as the services we offer. Did you know our geographic area now reaches from So. Sacramento County to Truckee and over to Placerville? Our range of services now include:

- **Rhythmic Body Alive! - Rhythmic Auditory Stimulation (RAS)** treatment for Parkinson's Disease and movement/gait issues.
- **Inpatient Psychiatric Hospital** groups for children and adults
- **HealthRhythms** facilitated drumming for Corporate Wellness, Stress Management and Team Building through evidence-based curriculum.
- We continue to provide music therapy services to the inpatient units of Sutter Cancer Center - Sacramento and Sutter Center for Psychiatry, IEP-driven Special Education services to school districts, and informational seminars to various support groups.
- We provide community-based music therapy services to person of all ages to address cognitive, communication, and sensorimotor needs.

Professional Development Grant awarded to MMTS for “Development of NMT Services to Stroke, Parkinson’s and TBI Patients.”

In April of this year, MMTS was awarded the Professional Development Grant for 2010 from the Western Region Chapter of the AMTA. The grant allowed MMTS to purchase the Superscope recording equipment specifically for Neurologic Music Therapy (NMT) treatment. This device creates live real-time recordings directly to CD, as well as alters the given tempo and pitch of any audio file.
Neurologic Music Therapy (NMT) and Parkinson’s Disease

“It makes you feel alive again…”
79 year old patient with PD

Even though I’ve been aboard certified music therapist for nearly a decade and a half now, when people ask me what music therapy is, I still go back to my earliest and easiest answer….music therapy uses music to reach non-musical goals. From the beginning of our profession’s history in the 1940s, this has meant using music to improve mood and behavior, increase motivation to complete difficult cognitive or motor tasks, and to increase speech production. I have yet to meet someone who doesn’t enjoy music or use it in some way for recreation or to make them feel better when they’ve had a bad day. The difference between recreational music and music therapy is the specific use of music to address a specific clinical outcome.

As our understanding of the brain has grown by leaps and bounds in the last 20 years, an advanced form of music therapy has emerged - Neurologic Music Therapy (NMT). NMT grew out of improved imaging of the brain in real time. This opened the door to a truly scientific model for music in therapy and medicine. As a result of our increased knowledge in how the brain works, and how the healthy and diseased brain processes music differently, we’ve been able to develop treatments using music to target specific areas of need.

This is really exciting! While we have much to learn, finally we are starting to be able to understand why music is so powerful, and how it moves us. But even more exciting is how we can harness that power to improve the quality of life for people with a variety of diseases including PD. As a result of this scientific model, NMT is naturally divided into 3 treatment domains: SensoriMotor, Speech and Language, and Cognition. How appropriately this aligns with the 3 main issues that come with PD: walking, talking and thinking!

One of the NMT treatments most relevant to PD is Rhythmic Auditory Stimulation (RAS). RAS has been proven to improve walking and balance for individuals with PD. It is one of the six recognized forms of gait (walking) therapy in the world by the World Federation of NeuroRehabilitation. It works by tapping into that powerful pull to rhythm we’ve all felt and where our bodies just want to move.

Frequently, the patient and a facilitator (caregiver or other therapist) implement a home program designed by the therapist. As a result, less frequent visits by the therapist are necessary, making it incredibly cost effective.

NMT treatments are effective for other issues that come with PD: memory; sequencing information; reaching and hand use; poor vocal volume; articulation and speed of speech. Of course, there are also significant benefits with traditional MT in the small group or individual setting for improving mood, coping abilities, emotional expression, pain management and for caregiver support.

So what can music therapy do for you or someone you love? For more information, including research references, please contact our main office, or visit our table at one of the upcoming Parkinson Association Resource Fairs at a city near you.

McConnell Music Therapy Services presents
“Neurologic Music Therapy and PD” at the Parkinson’s Disease Conferences and Resource Fairs throughout Northern California 2010-2011

Please stop by our table or come to our session at the following PANC events:

- June 26 - Sacramento
- Aug 28 - San Jose
- Oct 23 - San Francisco
- Nov 13 - Santa Rosa
- Jan 22 - Berkeley
- Feb 26 - Fresno

For Registration Information
Click on the link below
Parkinson’s Association Northern California
Intuit’s “Love A Local Business” Grant Update!

McConnell Music Therapy Wins $1500 and still in the running for the $30K Grand Prize! VOTE TODAY! CONTEST ENDS JUNE 30th!

In March this past Spring I was simply surfing the internet looking for information on Small Business grants and support for very small local businesses when I came across this contest by Intuit. I nominated myself and told a few friends and then realized I’d won $500. The next month I told a few more people and clients and was literally blown away by the wonderful comments people were writing in the nomination. I soon won another $1000 grant. With the previous grants we were able to purchase new logo artwork, business cards, a large vinyl sign and professional printing.

This is where WE NEED YOUR HELP!! We’re still in the running for the $30,000 Grant Prize grant and they are specifically looking at businesses that make a difference in the community and impact the lives of people. You can nominate MMTS by searching for our business name and submitting a comment.

LOVE A LOCAL BUSINESS - CLICK HERE http://lovealocalbusiness.intuit.com/fan

Recent comments:

“Tara McConnell demonstrates a strong commitment to providing quality music therapy services in her community. She is a valued member of the American Music Therapy Association and actively contributes to the growth of MT in California.” - Judy Simpson, AMTA

Meet the Staff

Rachel Firchau, MT-BC, NMT- fellow (Contractor) is a board certified music therapist and has been a Neurologic Music Therapy Fellow since 2002. She began her career in 1998 but for the last 8 years has worked primarily in the NeuroRehabilitation and Rehabilitation settings with a variety of ages and populations. A recent addition to the MMTS team, she brings a wealth of knowledge and NMT experience, with her focus being adults with stroke, Parkinson’s and traumatic brain injury who could benefit from NMT treatments. Rachel has served as a board member of the Western Region Chapter of the American Music Therapy Association, as the Government Relations Representative since 2005. She continues to play organ professionally.

“Rise to the occasion of each and every client, each and every moment, each and every day.” - Tara

“I was told by a child once that I was a music scientist that uses music to rescue people...what a profound comment and something I strive to be everyday” - Rachel

Tara McConnell, MT-BC, NMT, (Owner) established McConnell Music Therapy Services in 2002. She has been practicing Music Therapy since 1995 and has experience working with a wide range of clients of all ages in a range of clinical settings. She enjoys collaborating with other disciplines to create optimal results for clients. Her passion is sharing and educating new audiences about the benefits of music therapy. Tara enjoys playing bass professionally and spending time with her husband and two small children in Auburn, CA.

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Aben Vincent, MT-BC, NMT, (Employee) is a board certified music therapist with advanced training in Neurologic Music Therapy at the Colorado State’s Center for Biomedical Research in Music in Ft. Collins, CO. His caseload projects include providing inpatient music therapy services to the Sutter Cancer Center in Sacramento, CA, group music therapy at the Sutter Center for Psychiatry and IEP-based services to Sacramento Unified School District. Aben brings with him a lifetime of percussion and drumming talent, using his love for drumming also as a Remo HealthRhythms certified drum circle facilitator.

Estelle Kinsella, MT-BC, MFT, (Contractor) has been a Board Certified Music Therapist for 25 years. She has also been a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist since 1994. She specializes in the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music. Ms. Kinsella’s experience comes from a variety of settings including private practice, community service agencies, public schools and impatient mental health. Her passion is to companion children and adults as they work through their grief regarding issues of trauma, abuse and life changing illnesses. She is a contractor of MMTS and currently provides inpatient hospital services at the Sutter Cancer Center in Sacramento, CA. When she is not working she enjoys being with her family, spending time outdoors, swimming and singing.

Tara McConnell uses live music listening and vibrotactile stimulation to help Chris P. process the sensations of his environment.

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