



## **WESLEY SPECTRUM FAMILY & CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER MUSIC THERAPY**

Children and families with education, mental health and family support needs are searching for a better quality of life. Wesley Spectrum Services helps them to become independent, responsible and caring members of the community by providing an array of high quality special education, mental health and family services. These services give children and families the strength to learn, to live and to love, resulting in stronger families and stronger communities.

### **Philosophy and Purpose**

Children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or other special needs can have tremendous potential to learn and grow. This is often masked because he or she may develop differently from other children and may not thrive in traditional public school settings. The Wesley Spectrum Family & Child Development Center uses Music Therapy to address behavioral, social, psychological, communication, physical, sensory-motor and or cognitive functioning issues for these children to help them reach their highest level of independence.

### **Eligibility**

We offer music therapy through various group and individual opportunities, Monday through Sunday in the Penn Hills and North Hills locations of the Wesley Spectrum Family & Child Development Center. Children between the ages of 12 months to 15 years old can participate. Parents and other individuals involved in the child's treatment are welcome to observe and/or assist during sessions, based upon the child's needs. We have specialized groups for preschool-aged children, Down Syndrome children, siblings and families, and home-schooled children.

### **Availability**

When we are operating at capacity, a space may not be immediately available. Families can choose to wait or we will refer them to other programs. All eligible children and families are treated equitably without favoritism. All children are welcome from many geographic area.

### **Referral**

No referrals are needed. Families have direct access to the service.

### **Intake**

Parents and treatment team members who are interested in Music Therapy should contact Wesley Spectrum for details about which group would be suitable for their child. We will be happy to discuss areas of interests, times, dates and locations.

### **Funding**

The music therapy program costs vary depending on whether the session is in a group, arranged for an individual, or held privately in the home. This program is private pay. A payment agreement, which establishes the fee amount and the payment schedule, is completed during the intake process. Federal funding assistance can be provided.

### **Treatment Approach**

Wesley Spectrum Family & Child Development Center achieves the best outcomes by basing our decisions – every step of the way – on what is best for this individual child. We call this Kid-Centered Decision Making and it encompasses Kid-Centered Planning, Kid-Centered Environment and Kid-Centered Measurement.

The Wesley Spectrum Family & Child Development Center uses Music Therapy to provide concrete, auditory, visual and tactile stimulation to motivate children to engage in constructive tasks and enhance their developmental growth. Katie Harrill, MT-BC, a certified Music Therapist, has extensive experience in the benefits of Music Therapy for special needs children.

Music is one of a wide range of sensory experiences that is part of our Kid-Centered Environment — unique to Wesley Spectrum — in each child can completely relax, or interact with and control a variety of elements. This environment helps children become more aware of sensory preferences, descriptions and expressions.

### **Services**

By responding to or making music, a child with ASD or other development disabilities may become a better learner. Children may play instruments, sing and/or vocalize, listen, create music, respond and move to music. The therapy is guided by an educated, experienced and board-certified music therapist, who helps children increase their self-expression, develop and improve their self-concepts, and help them reach their greatest potential.

Music therapy helps each child to perform at his or her own pace, to build self-esteem, refine auditory, speech, social, coping and fine motor skills, and decrease inappropriate behaviors. This may give a



## *Strength to learn, to live, to love*

child additional capacity for learning and help him or her to be able to function better in the community.

Children may also enroll in Piano Instruction, providing the structural regularity that children with ASD may need. Within that structure, it is possible to expand a child's repertoire of functioning, which includes refining the development of the brain, and the entire neuromuscular system. Playing the piano can give children a way to express emotional thoughts and longing.

### **Outcomes**

Research has shown that music fosters positive attitudes toward school, lowers absenteeism, contributes to creativity, and enhances social and intellectual development. This encourages special needs children to develop as independent adults and contribute to their communities.

### **Discharge**

Participation in music therapy is open-ended. The families, therapists and treatment team will collaborate to determine appropriate length of services.

### **Contact Information**

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