

Music Strategies to improve your health at home: Tips from Music Therapists

Music Therapy is an interactive and shared relationship between the music therapist, patient and music. Music therapists are trained to provide music interventions to appropriately address the functional or emotional needs of our patients. At KKH, the music therapists are part of the Psychosocial and Supportive Care Programme (PSCP).

By engaging both the mind and body, music can be an important and useful resource when the child and family are coping with challenging experiences and difficult feelings in hospital. Music therapists can use music to facilitate opportunities for active movement to maintain abilities for activities of daily living. Music therapists can also apply music to support a space of comfort, expression and escape from the jarring sounds of machines and overload of information while inpatient.

But how can music continue to be used effectively for health when your music therapist is not around? Read on to find out what age-appropriate music strategies can continue to be used at home.

Music Strategies to be used at Home:



Infants, toddlers and young children (Ages 5 and under):

Listening to music together

- Pick a song that is meaningful to you and your family
- You can listen and sing along to that song for or together with your child



Playing together with musical toys

- Select musical toys that are pleasing to your ears
- Creating music freely with no expectations can be a fun and freeing experience

Example of singing with your child: Routine of Bath Time

(Tune of BINGO)

There was a boy/girl
Had a bath and bath time was
his/her favourite
Bath, bath it's bath time (x3)
Yes, bath time was his/her
favourite!



Singing to/with your child

- Singing can be great for bonding!
- Singing to your child can help bring intention and context to tasks that are being carried out (e.g. changing diapers, drinking milk)



School-Aged Children (Ages 6 to 10)

Music Activities can create a safe, engaging and fun environment to address your child's physical, cognitive and socio-emotional needs. Music-making allows your child to express thoughts and feelings that may be difficult to put into words.



Listening to music and deep breathing

- Pick a song that you and your child enjoy
- Identify the beat of the music and breathe in and out at a comfortable pace together with the music
- This breathing with music exercise may help you feel more grounded and relaxed by the end of the song

Remember to pick a song that is not too fast when you do this!

Music and movement

- Pick a song that you and your child like and put it on
- Go ahead and dance to the music. Swinging side to side is a good start!
- Expressing yourself with your body helps to ease the tension. Moving to the beat can not only make you feel good but also help to keep your joints and muscles supple.



Tweens and Teens (Ages 11 to 19)

Music can be an important source of comfort for teenagers. Listening or creating music can provide them a safe and appropriate outlet to share or express current emotions. You can encourage your teen to try these strategies out!



Choose a song that you like and sing along to it

- Singing can make us feel good!

Learn an instrument

- Gaining a new skill like learning to play the guitar can help to boost self-esteem

Do take note of why the song is important to you and acknowledge that be it good or bad, it is okay to feel the way you do! However, if the song reminds you of difficult emotions, remember not to play it on repeat to avoid spiraling down those difficult feelings. Instead, play that song once, and intentionally change songs to something that can gradually help lighten your mood!

Enjoy your musical moments that can help to lead to a healthier you together with your family!

