



Clinical Application of Assessment of Parenting Competencies (APC)

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Project description

The project is focused on the clinical application of a new observational music therapy assessment tool developed within the field of families at risk and child protection. The tool assesses parenting competencies and parent-child interaction.

Aim

The field of music therapy does not yet have standardized assessment tools, even though music therapy assessment often is highly valued also by other professions (Jacobsen, 2012; Wigram & Wosch, 2007). Examining the clinical application of a new assessment tool with good psychometric properties is important in order to further strengthen and validate the tool and is considered to contribute to the general field of music therapy assessment.

It is not an easy task to assess parenting competencies and parent-child interaction and APC was developed to aid this process. The APC was designed to be performed by a trained music therapist and to assist social services in evaluating parental capacity and parent-child interaction. Working within a multidisciplinary team of a psychologist, social workers, psychiatrists, and pedagogues, the APC may be of high valuable. With its focus on parent-child interaction, it can guide professionals as well as music therapists effectively and accurately in these areas as to how to approach the family and to build on the strengths of the family. Furthermore, the vulnerable families seem to participate in the music therapy assessment sessions with ease and enjoyment. However, these clinical application aspects have not yet been investigated either for families at risk or other areas of music therapist working with families.

Project title;
Clinical Application of
„Assessment of
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Dansk titel;
Klinisk
Anvendelighed af
”Assessment of
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Main research questionn

How is the Assessment of Parenting Competencies (APC) applicable within the field of families at risk, psychiatric units for families and other clinical areas with music therapy and families?

How can music therapists, other professions, and clinical families benefit from music therapists using the APC?

Design & Method

In an explorative research design the study investigates the usage and clinical application of APC both from the perspective of the music therapist and the clients. Enrolled international music therapists working within the field of music therapy with families will be asked to sign a contract of cooperation. It is estimated that 5-10 music therapist will provide data from 5-10 families over a period of 1½ year. This means that approximately 25-100 families (dyads of parent and child) will contribute to the data collection. The participating music therapists are requested to become certified in Assessment of Parenting Competencies (APC) for research purposes including a week-course at Aalborg University and further training with 5 non-clinical families.

The certified music therapists will collect APC data along with additional info including questionnaire on the clinical application of APC as part of their clinical practice and with clients they already work with. Some music therapists will be interviewed in-depth by the principal researcher or a research assistant

The music therapist identifies the possible participating clinical families at their own workplace. When permission has been given from the employer of the therapist, the clinical family is introduced to the study in an informal meeting with the family and the

certified music therapist. In order to take part in the study, the parent will be asked to sign an informed consent and a consent form on use of video recordings in the session in order for the family to participate. The child participating in the session will not be asked to sign but to provide an oral approval. The children will be introduced to the study in a way appropriate to their individual ages, and the welfare of the child is the music therapist's and the staff's responsibility.

The participating clinical families will engage in 2x25min video recorded music therapy assessment sessions. Furthermore, the clinical families will fill out questionnaires on parenting for comparison and to further validate the tool including the Parenting Stress Index and Parent-Child Relational Inventory. The clinical families will also fill out a short questionnaire on the experience of the assessment sessions. Some families might also be interviewed on their experience of the music therapy assessment sessions by the main researcher or a research assistant.

Analysis

APC video recordings will be analyzed by the certified APC music therapists. This raw APC data together with all questionnaire data will be forwarded to the main researcher who will analyze and compare all data. In-depth interviews of either music therapist or participating clinical family will be conducted by the main researcher or a research assistant.

Ethics

All data will be coded, which means the principal researcher does not know the real identity of the participating families og music therapists.

The data will be maintained 5 years after the project is completed and will be deleted afterwards. Certified music therapists will sign a contract of cooperation and participating clinical families will sign an informed consent and approval of video recordings. The study is being supervised by Professor Hanne Mette Ridder, Head of the Doctoral Programme in Music Therapy, Aalborg University.

The study is currently being reviewed for ethical approval by the Human Research Ethics Board, Faculty of Humanities, at Aalborg University in Denmark. All certified therapist participating in the research will get a copy of the approved ethics protocol and will be made aware of their responsibilities.

Completion

The certified music therapist participants will receive a report at the end of the project and the families can receive a condensed report on request. The completed project will be published in international relevant journals and presented at conferences possible with one or two of the certified APC music therapist as 2nd authors or in co-authorship.

References

Jacobsen, S. (2012). Music therapy assessment and development of parental competences in families with children who have experienced emotional neglect: Unpublished PhD Thesis, Aalborg, Denmark: Aalborg University. Available at http://www.mt-phd.aau.dk/digitalAssets/42/42798_jacobsen2012.pdf

Wigram, T., & Wosch, T (2007). Microanalysis in music therapy: A comparison of different models and methods and their application in clinical practice, research and teaching music therapy. In T. Wosch, & T. Wigram (Eds.), Microanalysis in music therapy (pp. 298–315). London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

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