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WORKING WITH PARENTS AND THEIR EMOTIONALLY NEGLECTED
CHILDREN. BEING A FACILITATOR AND A ROLE MODEL.

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Abstract: This paper is part of a symposium with Amelia Oldfield as Chair. It revolves around how to approach and intervene with at risk families in music therapy specifically emotionally neglected children and their parents. In improving parent-child interaction, these families often need clear role modelling for them to try out new ways of communicating. For any therapist working in this area, it can be difficult to combine role modelling with being a facilitator for the parent-child relationship. The family needs to see and experience how they might change without the disadvantages of the therapist forming an alliance with either child or parent. To help the family as much as possible in developing new ways of interacting and breaking inappropriate interaction patterns, the therapist must show the family how without doing it for them. The presentation has its focus on how music therapy can contribute to this particular dilemma including both receptive and active techniques. The flexibility and structure of music and its ability to contain strong emotional material within this particular population will be elaborated upon. The paper includes results from a randomised controlled study on the effect of music therapy with parents and their emotionally neglected children.

Requirements: The presenter brings her own laptop and makes a power-point presentation. To illustrate change over time in parent-child interaction there is a need for enhancing the audio sound from video excerpts coming from the laptop.

References: Jacobsen, Stine & Wigram, Tony (2007). Music Therapy for the Assessment of Parental Competencies for Children in need of care. In: Nordic Journal of Music Therapy, 16(2) 2007, pp. 129-143.

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Biographical details: Stine Lindahl Jacobsen finished her MA in 2006 at Aalborg University, Denmark. She was employed as a clinically working music therapist at a family care centre in Aalborg Municipal from 2005-2007. Jacobsen started her PhD study in December 2007 and aims to defend it in April 2012. She teaches at the MA-Programme of Music Therapy, Aalborg University. Jacobsen is also board member of the Danish Association of Music Therapists, (MTL).

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