

Dance Massage

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What is Dance Massage?

Dance Massage uses music as it's main focus.

Listen and interpret the music as you would if you were dancing but instead of using your whole body, channel the dance into your upper body and hands, describing the music on your partner's skin.

How does music help deaf children communicate?

Helps children realise:

Sound exists. Contrast sound with silence.
Music is more accessible than
speech.

Sound has meaning. It has a source
People respond to different
sounds in different ways

Can be a shared experience.

Music can be used to stimulate communication.

Communication skills such as vocalising, turn-taking, echoing, offering variations, can carry over into everyday communication.

Why Use Massage

Multisensory Massage
Flo Longhorn

Massage can enable the first steps of response as indicated by responses:

creating a feeling of body awareness,

enhancing the senses,
giving a feeling of well being and self-worth,
building a sensory relationship with another,
alleviating stress and tension,
encouraging non-verbal communication,
increasing toleration of handling,
slowing of mood and tempo,
building of personal relationships,
emotionally bonding to another,
establishing self-esteem,
increasing concentration,
finding of real enjoyment,
reflecting on quiet moments in the hubbub of life.

Physical Benefits may include

relaxation or stimulation,
release of tension and stress,
increased supply of nutrients to the muscles,
improvement of blood vessels to improve circulation,
passive exercise,
elimination of toxins and waste by flushing the lymphatic system.

In the area of pre-requisites to learning, massage can help by:

- encouraging non-verbal communication,
- beginning learning at the level of the child,
- working at different levels and paces - no rushing, forcing, failing, or pressuring
- increasing toleration of day to day handling,
- providing equality of opportunity,
- encouraging decision making,
- breaking through behavioural barriers such as:
 - hyperventilation,
 - hyperactivity,
 - self-mutilation,
 - encouraging eye contact,
 - eliciting spontaneous or controlled movements.

Benefits of Dance Massage.

All the above benefits AND

Develops residual hearing

Gives a dance experience to the giver and the receiver.

The music is made more explicit.

Gives an opportunity for the child to notice the music, tune in and listen.

The child can enjoy the music and realise it's worth listening to and has some kind of meaning.

It encourages a response

That response should be picked up by the masseur and reciprocated

There is carry over into everyday communication and listening skills.

Protocol for Massage

You must get permission from parents / guardians

Find out if there is any medical reason why they should not have massage

Spot test any lotions or oils on the child and look for any signs of redness.

Grapeseed oil is very safe.

Discuss concerns about body privacy, intimacy or anything that makes you or the parents uncomfortable concerning massage.

Never impose massage. If the child is not enjoying the massage, stop. Change what you are doing – child's position, body part, lighten or deepen pressure. Change the music and revert back to one of the introductory activities. Usually you can get back on track but if the child is not very well or wants to be very active, stop.

Don't worry, try again another time.

Environment

- Warm and comfy?
- Some fresh air ?
- Quiet ? Turn off noisy equipment
- Put 'DO NOT DISTURB' sign on the door
- Put music into machine ready and remote in plastic bag
- Cut out / down visual distractions
- Towels and oils at hand
- Vibrating Soundbed or cushion for profoundly deaf children

Introductory Activities.

- Swaying or rocking : Lycraloop is great for a group starting a Dance Massage session. Patting
- Dancing arms or legs or fingers
- Stroking face or arm.
- Stroking with a range of textures: explore some of these in pairs

Prepare Yourself

- Turn on music. During first track...
- Take off watch, bracelets, rings
- Wash hands
- Rub arms, hands, fingers and give them a flick - shake out any tension
- Try to leave behind whatever is in your head
- Listen to the music and get the feel of it

Prepare the Child

- Talk about what you are doing and what is going to happen.
- Use an Object of Reference, sign, or symbol for massage
- Hearing aids checked and on
- Undress - as appropriate
- Position the child so they will be comfortable
- Rub loads of oil onto your hands

- Lay your hands gently on the child for about half a minute

Let the music into your head

Channel your dance into your hands

Let it be intuitive and free

Let the music be the dominant force dictating the massage

Follow the rhythm or melody or both.

Be very sensitive to your partner's responses

Encourage interactions while maintaining the massage

Learn different strokes and percussive techniques to incorporate

Interpret the music with emotion in your strokes and pressure variations

Enjoy!

Enjoy the music

Enjoy your creative expression of it

Enjoy the touch

Enjoy the close contact

Enjoy the communication with your partner.

Encouraging children to make choices.

Body part?

What music?

What position they want to be in?

Oil on skin or simply through clothes?

Pats or strokes?

They may want to massage you or each other.

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What kind of music should I use?

Anything with good strong rhythm or melody or both.

Avoid ambient music.

Avoid very fast music – too frantic

Avoid very slow music – too sleepy

Use pop, classical, African South American, Reggae... anything that you and your partner likes.

If you are not sure if a piece of music is suitable, listen to it and rest your hands over your face. Let the music in and interpret it with your hands. Tune into the feeling of your hands stroking your own face. You will then find out if it is too manic or too sleepy.

Finishing the Dance Massage session choose an activity that is calming, like wafting with silky material, infused with nice smells or if you need the children to be up and active finish by getting up and dancing.

If you like the idea of Dance Massage but don't have the confidence to get started on your own, I can come to your school and give a workshop with you and your class.

Visit my website www.naomirosenberg.co.uk for further information and to contact me.