



## Developmental music therapy programming for extremely low and low birth weight premature infants

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### Abstract:

Premature infants in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) are exposed to loud noises, bright lights, and medical procedures that inhibit necessary sleep for neurological growth and development. Since the 1990s, researchers found that music assists in pacifying infants. The purpose of this presentation is two-fold: 1) to describe evidence-based music therapy protocols that are designed to meet the developmental needs of premature infants in the NICU and provide positive outcomes, and 2) to describe the outcomes of a research study involving a developmental music therapy program, based on existing protocols, to enhance and expand music therapy services for infants in the NICU. This study was especially novel in that infants

as young as 25 weeks post corrected age (PCA) received live music, recorded music was utilized once infants were 30 weeks and older, and music and multimodal stimulation (MMS) was implemented for infants once they were 32 weeks and older. Infants in the experimental group went home earlier 3.6 days sooner than infants in the control group; experimental infants weighing less than 1500 gram went home 13 days earlier than those in the control group. Analysis of oxygen saturation levels and heart rate prior to, during, and post music therapy indicate positive trends. Special emphasis will be placed on how music therapist can meet the needs of very low and extremely low birth weight infants.

### Biography:

Andrea Cevasco-Trotter is the Director of Music Therapy and an Associate Professor at The University of Alabama. She researches the effects of developmental music therapy interventions on premature infants' physiological and behavioral parameters. Dr. Cevasco's work has been published in the Journal of Music Therapy, Music Therapy Perspectives, and Pediatric Nursing; recently, she has published several textbook chapters. She serves as a member of the Editorial Committee for the Journal of Music Therapy and Music Therapy Perspectives as well as on the Board of Directors for the Certification Board for Music Therapists