



## Early Childhood Newsletter

Volume 3

Fall, 1997

Another summer has passed by and autumn is upon us. As you compile your schedules for the next few months, block out the dates of NAMT's upcoming conference to be held in Los Angeles, CA. Ronna Davis and I are pleased to announce that we have been asked to chair an **Institute on Implications for Music Therapy in Early Childhood: Promising Practices, Programs and Possibilities** on November 19th from 4:00 - 11:00 p.m. We are thrilled with the response we have received for this event. Several well-known speakers from music therapy, music education, medical and research circles will join us. In addition, plan to attend the **Early Childhood Roundtable** on November 21st at 3:45. Our national organization is definitely recognizing the importance of music therapy service delivery within early childhood settings. Bring activities, ideas, concerns, and success stories to share. Please continue to send me tidbits, inquiries and articles for this newsletter. Look for the next edition during the winter months.

Hoping to see you in California,

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### Two Tried and True!

by J. Craig Williams, RMT-BC

I would like to speak about two instruments that for many have been the foundation of their percussion kit bag. These are the maraca and the tambourine. I will be the first to admit that I am not a great fan of the traditional maraca and calf-skin tambourine. There are too many other instruments that produce similar sounds and require similar gross/fine movement to activate them: multiple metal shakers of various sizes, tamboraccas, jingle sticks, frame and buffalo drums...the list is as long as it is varied. Because of the wealth of instruments that are now available, our trusted friends, the traditional maraca and tambourine, often remain dormant most of the time in our sessions. So, to relieve the guilt of negligence that burdens my therapeutic soul, I have begun to use these friends again...but in different roles and in different ways.

#### *The Tambourine*

- The calf-skin tambourine has become a serving tray from which my egg shakers can be passed around and collected.
- By using a drum stick or rhythm stick and hitting the head at the junction of the calf-skin and wood frame (rim), a wonderful wooden snare drum sound can be produced -- one that is sharp and "crackly".

- My favorite use is to turn the tambourine into a bass drum. I place the tambourine on the ground, skin down. I place my foot in the tambourine ring, wedging the tips of my shoes against the jingles and placing my heel on the opposite side of the frame. Now all you have to do is tap your foot and the tambourine acts like a foot peddle and bass drum. When I need an added sound color, and rhythm for my guitar playing, I place the tambourine on the floor and go for it. Besides sounding good and accompanying my guitar playing, the tambourine adds a strong visual element to your activity. The kids love it!

#### *The Maracas*

- I turn the maraca around and use the obello as the handle. This frees up the real handle which can be used as a drum stick or a rhythm stick/clave, producing compound sounds. It is possible to do varied and compound rhythms between the attack of the handles and the hand motions that activate the maraca sound. Try this inverted grasp against the rim of the tambourine.

Stay tuned for our next issue when I will focus on the guitar and how familiar classical/flamenco percussion techniques can refocus the attention of the children and add emphasis to target objectives.

*(Ed.'s Note: Craig has recently established his own agency, "Music Therapy Services of Texas" as a combined effort with Bill Everitt of*



Brook Mays Music Company. Contact Craig at 7716 Deaver Dr., North Richland Hills, TX - 76180 or [jcwilliams@aol.com](mailto:jcwilliams@aol.com) for more information.)

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### **Of Interest to Our "Net" Users ....**

Log onto the web site of Kathleen Coleman's and Betsy Brunk's company (Prelude) for several interesting links, tips on using music in therapy and their product line:

[Http://home.att.net/~bkbrunk/index.html](http://home.att.net/~bkbrunk/index.html)

From this page you can link to sites such as the Center for the Study of Autism, A Guide to Speech-Language Disorders, NAMT, West Music, etc.

If you have developed a site, let us know!!!

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### **Self-Employment Spotlight:**

**Playful Harmonies, Inc.**

**Opportunities for Music Therapists Just Keep Growing...and Growing...and Growing...**

*Patricia R. Keefe, RMT, President*

PLAYFUL HARMONIES is an early childhood music enrichment program developed by Pat Keefe, RMT, in 1988. Incorporating basic music therapy concepts and techniques, it teaches and supports delayed and emerging developmental and social skills in children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years. Only about 10 years ahead of its time, PLAYFUL HARMONIES was using music as a learning and brain development tool long before the recent scientific revelations about its importance. Because of its long track record, the company is now poised to help music therapy take the world by storm.

"Whoa!" you say. "Pretty big talk for such a young company." Well, that may have been the case as little as two years ago, but today there are several employment and business opportunities for music therapists that will help bring music therapy the recognition it deserves.

- PLAYFUL HARMONIES Franchises
- PLAYFUL HARMONIES Program Licensing
- PLAYFUL HARMONIES Instrument Consultant

As blatantly commercial as this all sounds, Pat notes that these opportunities are the perfect way to bring music therapy to the masses and get involved with her program. Many music therapists have shown a keen interest in her programs and company. There are currently 6 program locations in 2 states, but Pat feels that a lack of music therapy awareness continues to be the primary obstacle to rapid expansion. Before national acceptance is possible, some industry-wide things need to happen:

- More music therapists need to be working with the

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**Consider spot-lighting your work, research, or products at a ROUNDTABLE DISPLAY at the EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTITUTE!**

(see Pre-Conference/Institute Information for details)

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early childhood population (with clients both with and without special needs).

- Music therapists need to be recognized and visible in their communities.

- Community music therapy needs to combat the stigma attached to "therapy" by showing its educational, developmental, social and intervention benefits for everybody.

- Music therapists need the financial and community support to take on a private sector business and be successful.

Pat states that PLAYFUL HARMONIES decided to do its part by giving music therapists an affordable "foot in the door" of their community. For an initial investment, Instrument Consultants will have the tools to demonstrate how families can enrich and enhance their children's educations and social development using music. As practicing music therapists, these consultants will be able to educate parents on the use of age-appropriate music, activities, instruments and interactive materials and share the ground-breaking information on why music truly is *brainfood for kids*.

Additional detailed information, applications, and order forms are available by contacting Pat at:

Playful Harmonies, Inc.  
710 A South Main Street  
Troy, Illinois 62294

or

[playhinc@apci.net](mailto:playhinc@apci.net)

(Ed.'s Note: Pat has recently

produced a video "Sing and Clap with Teacher Pat".)

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### **Check It Out...**

- The Summer, 1997 edition of *Early Childhood Connections, the Journal of Music and Movement Based Learning* is devoted entirely to topics about children at play. An excellent article by Gordon L. Shaw et al describes research conducted with preschool children who were given piano keyboard lessons and subsequently improved dramatically on spatial-temporal reasoning tests. Dr. Shaw plans to be a part of the Early Childhood Institute at the November NAMT Conference.

- *What Will We Play Today (Vol.2)* by Larkin and Suthers (1997, Pandemelon Press) is a book containing songs and activities with an international flavor for children ages birth to five.

- For the full texts of President and Mrs. Clinton's April 17, 1997 speeches to the White House's Early Childhood Development and Learning Conference, log onto <<http://w.w.w.whitehouse.gov/WH/New/ECDC>>

- MENC announces its 1998 *Music and Young Children Conference* to be held April 18, 1998 at Phoenix, AZ.