

# Chile

Paulina Alejandra  
Hernandez Quezada

Music Therapist  
Chilean Association of Music Therapy  
Santiago, Chile

## Snapshot

### Area

756,102 square kilometer; Chile is located in Southern South America, bordering the South Pacific Ocean, between Argentina and Peru.

### Population

17,067,369 (July 2011 est.)

### Official Language

The official language is Spanish. Mapudungun, German, and English are also spoken.

### Ethnic Groups

White and white-Amerindian 95.4%, Mapuche 4%, other indigenous groups 0.6% (2002 census)

### Median Age

32.1 years (2011 est.)

### Children under 5

Unknown

### Source

The World Factbook  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ci.html>



**“Child, bluish from cold fingers, how you come and do not cover you, Oh my God!  
Child, suffering two jewels, fingers how pass without seeing you people!”  
– Gabriela Mistral**

## Demographics

In Chile, music therapy is a young discipline and currently gaining recognition. Since 1999, the Universidad de Chile has offered a graduate training program in art therapies with a specialization in music therapy. The program was founded by Susanne Bauer, Patricia Lallana, and Patricia Ubilla, who all studied music therapy abroad. Eighty-three music therapists have graduated since then and about 50% are actively practicing music therapy.

Within the last few years, Chilean colleagues have studied music therapy in Argentina, USA, Spain, and Austria. Thus, there is a growing number of theoretical approaches in the field.

The Chilean Association of Music Therapists (ACHIM, [www.achim.cl](http://www.achim.cl)) was founded in 2005 and currently has 34 members. Forty percent of them work with young children.

## Background Information

Music therapy with young children is a subset of the larger field. Music therapists may work with individuals, groups, or families.

Music therapists provide services in

rehabilitation centers for children recovering from burns, special education settings, “play schools” for families at social risk, children’s hospitals, rehabilitation centers for physical disabilities, centers for children who are deaf or hearing-impaired, homes for adolescent mothers and their infants, schools for language impairments, autism spectrum disorders centers, and in private practice. As the profession grows, more music therapist hold permanent part time positions and become part of educational or healthcare teams.

## Common Approaches

In Chile, the theoretical frameworks and approaches applied with young children are diverse and depend on the context, goals, and objectives of the clients as well as the training of the music therapist.

Due to the graduate training program at the Universidad de Chile, the most common music therapy technique is improvisation (i.e., free and thematic improvisation) provided within a one-on-one, group, or family session. In general, the voice and the body are considered the main instruments in music therapy with young children. The guitar is seen as a vital instrument in music therapy as it has a central role in Chilean folklore and culture. Songs for children and improvised exploration of music, instruments, and the voice are central to

music therapy with young children in Chile.

Other approaches applied are the "plurimodal approach" (after Diego Schapira) the "sound bath," musical games as well as role play with hand puppets (after Lisa Sokolov).

## Prominent Publications

- Gauna, Gustavo D. (2009). Diagnóstico y abordaje musicoterapéutico en la infancia y la niñez. La musicoterapia en los actuales contextos de la salud y la educación. La clínica con niños Buenos Aires: Koyatun Editorial.
- Gonzalez, M. (2011). Music therapy in the comprehensive rehabilitation of the burned child. Gallery Psychologica, Santo Tomas University.
- Mayer, P. (2012). Music therapy in child physical rehabilitation. National Institute of Rehabilitation, Pedro Aguirre Cerda Hospital.
- Silvia Andreu, S. (n.d.). Growing with children: Music Therapy for children with hearing loss.

## About the Author



Paulina Alejandra Hernandez Quezada, credentials is a graduate from the Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2007. She has specialized in the plurimodal approach in music therapy and in palliative pediatric care. In 2009, she returned to Chile, and presently she works in rehabilitation of children with burn symptoms as well as with individuals on the autism spectrum. Ms. Hernandez Quezada is the currently President of the Chilean Music Therapy Association (ACHIM).

Contact:  
paulimusicoterapia@gmail.com