

Japan

Kumi Sato, MS, BA

Music Therapist
Fukushima, Japan

Snapshot

Area

377,914 square kilometers

Population

127,692,000 (2008 estimate)

Official Language

Japanese

Ethnic Groups

98.3% Japanese, 1.7% others

Median Age

43.3 years old (2006 estimate)

Children under 5

6,520,000 (2008) *This is about 5.1% of the total population

Source

The Statistics Bureau and the Director-General for Policy Planning (<http://www.stat.go.jp/index.htm>)



"Children with difficulties have chosen their parents. "

- Unknown

Demographics

There are currently more than 1300 music therapists certified by the Japanese Music Therapy Association (JMTA). Although more professionals in related fields are interested in music therapy, many music therapists are working part time or as volunteers.

Music therapists provide services for children with special needs, adults with mental disabilities, elderly, and clients receiving terminal care. Since 22% of the total population is 65 years old or older, a large number of music therapists work at nursing homes or welfare centers. One of the other reasons why there are fewer opportunities to work with young children is that early intervention is not widely recognized yet in Japan.

Background Information

The JMTA, the largest music therapy organization in Japan, has approximately 6,500 members at this time. The organization holds national conferences and publishes academic journals to establish the status of music therapy as a profession as well as to create a national license.

Music therapists are encouraged to complete an education program

approved by the JMTA plus three years of clinical experience under supervision to be certified. The approved education programs are provided at 15 colleges and three special training schools. There is no music therapy training program at the Master's level.

In the past, it also was possible to be certified by attending lectures and having a certain amount of clinical experiences. However, starting in 2011, the JMTA will require music therapists to complete an education program approved by the organization. This change will improve music therapy education programs and will help demonstrate the importance of education to *self-trained* music therapists.

Common Approaches

The music therapy approaches practiced include behavioral, client-centered, and other specific models such as Nordoff-Robbins Creative Music Therapy. The techniques used are music listening, singing, instrument playing, improvisation, music and movement, and recreational music.

Prominent Publications

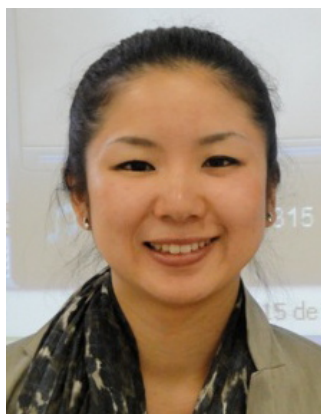
Nakayama, A., Futamata, I., & Takeuchi, K. (2006). *Ongaku Ryohoshi no Tame no ABA Nyumon* [Introduction to ABA music therapy for children with developmental disabilities]. Tokyo: Syunjusha.

The JMTA journals

<http://www.jmta.jp/index.html>

Music Therapy

This is a non-academic music therapy magazine, published by Ongakunotomoshu, for professional music therapists and other people who are interested in music therapy. It provides information about the current status of music therapy, effective techniques, case studies, interviews with experienced music therapists, other professionals in related fields, and music therapy students, and information about upcoming events including lectures or seminars.



About the Author

Kumi Sato, MS, BA, graduated from the Master's program in music therapy at the State University of New York at New Paltz in December 2009. She has worked with children who have emotional disturbances and is planning to continue working with children in Japan.

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