

The effect of behavioral music therapy on the generalization of interpersonal skills from sessions to the classroom by emotionally handicapped middle school students.

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The Effect of Behavioral Music Therapy on the Generalization of Interpersonal Skills From Sessions to the Classroom by Emotionally Handicapped Middle School Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of a behavioral music therapy treatment program on student interpersonal behavior demonstrated in group sessions and in classrooms. Subjects included 25 emotionally handicapped middle school students ages 11 to 16 ($M = 13.1$). Three subject groups were compared: (a) subjects receiving music therapy structured to target selected behaviors, (b) subjects receiving general music therapy, and (c) subjects in a no-contact control classroom. A changing criterion design was developed based on the selected behavior taught, monitored, and reinforced. A token economy system was established to reinforce students for demonstrating that week's targeted behavior in the classroom and in music therapy sessions. During each group's final session, students used tokens to purchase preferred roles in a music video. Experimental subject scores for classroom behavior were almost twice as stable as scores for control subjects.

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