Family-centered Music Therapy to Promote Social Engagement in Young Children with Severe Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Randomized Controlled Study (Grace Thompson, Ph.D.)

Limited capacity for social engagement is a core feature of autism spectrum disorder. Social skills are difficult to train in traditional therapy contexts, and so family-centered programs are steadily becoming best practice in supporting social communication development in young children with ASD. Family-centered music therapy has the potential to support both the skill development of the child and the quality of the parent-child relationship. A randomized controlled study with 23 children was conducted. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Parents reported improvements in their child's social interactions, and experienced a strengthened relationship with their child.