

The Power of Music for People with Dementia and their Carers

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Music and Dementia

- Music affects us all.(babies)
- It affects people with dementia as well ...of course.
- Music and words to songs stay when speech and other skills have gone

Music Stays When Speech and Other Skills Have Gone.

‘Musical perception , sensibility, emotion and musical memory can survive long after other forms of memory have disappeared’

(Sachs 2008)

SO....

- Play to strengths.
- Even at , and perhaps, especially at end stage.

Research Findings

Music is effective in decreasing a range of challenging behaviours

- **Aggression** (Thomas, Heitman & Alexander,)..... Sing at bath times!
- **Agitation** (Denney Gerdner, Howe & Remington,Calming music
- **Wandering** (Groene,)reduces agitation and need to leave or go home.
- **Repetitive vocalizations** (Casby &Holm),
distracts and engages , reduces anxiety.

- **Increases time spent at meals and so more eaten**
(Ragneskog et al.)
- **Irritability** (Ragneskog et al.). Calms the troubled breast
- **Social behaviour** (Lord & Garner,)
- **Helps alleviate pain** (Kerr et al)
- **Increases reality orientation scores** (Smith-Marchese,
- **Improves engagement and participation** (Clair)

Music is good ,
singing even better
and singing in a
group better still

‘Singing groups’

Music is good

Singing even better

Singing with others better still

Some reasons for the group

- Social activity (counteract isolation and feeling alone)
- Helps communication (baking lady)
- Gives emotional expression (sing songs with meaning)
- Evokes associations (Andrews sisters)

Some reasons for the group

- Provides diversion (Forget worries)
- Alleviates pain (helps relaxation)
- Cares meet others (not alone)
- Gives joy and pleasure (S)

Aspects of group

- Warm up
- La de da de da
- Songs chosen by members
- Unison
- Rounds, activity songs, partner songs, call and response
- Walking/dancing
- Same start and finish songs

Variety of formats

- Rounds and canons :(frere Jacques)
- Action songs: (My bonny lies over the ocean)
- Partner songs: (Swing low and When the saints)
- Call and response :(Gilly Gilly Ossenfeffer)
- Divide men and women (Daisy Daisy)
- Songs to walk and dance to (I love to go wandering)

Do-a deer

- Do- a deer, a female deer
Re- a drop of golden sun
Mi- a name I call myself
Fa- a long long way to run
So- a needle pulling thread
La- a note to follow so
Te- a drink with jam and bread
that will bring us back to do oh oh oh

Ma, he's making eyes at me

Ma, he's making eyes at me

Ma, he's awful nice to me

Ma, he's almost breaking my heart

I'm beside him

Mercy! Let his conscience guide him!

Ma, he wants to marry me

Be my honey bee

Every minute he gets bolder

Now he's leaning on my shoulder Ma, he's kissing me

Ma, he's making eyes at me

Ma, he's making eyes at me

Ma, he's awful nice to me

Ma, he's almost breaking my heart

If you peek in, can't you see I'm goin' to weaken

Ma, he wants to marry me,

Be my honey bee

**Ma I'm meeting with resistance I shall holler for
assistance**

Ma, he's kissing me

Partner songs

Swing low sweet chariot coming for to carry
me home.

Swing low sweet chariot , coming for to carry
me home.

Partner Song

When the saints, go marching in. When the
saints go marching in.

I want to be in that number, when the saints
go marching in.

Together

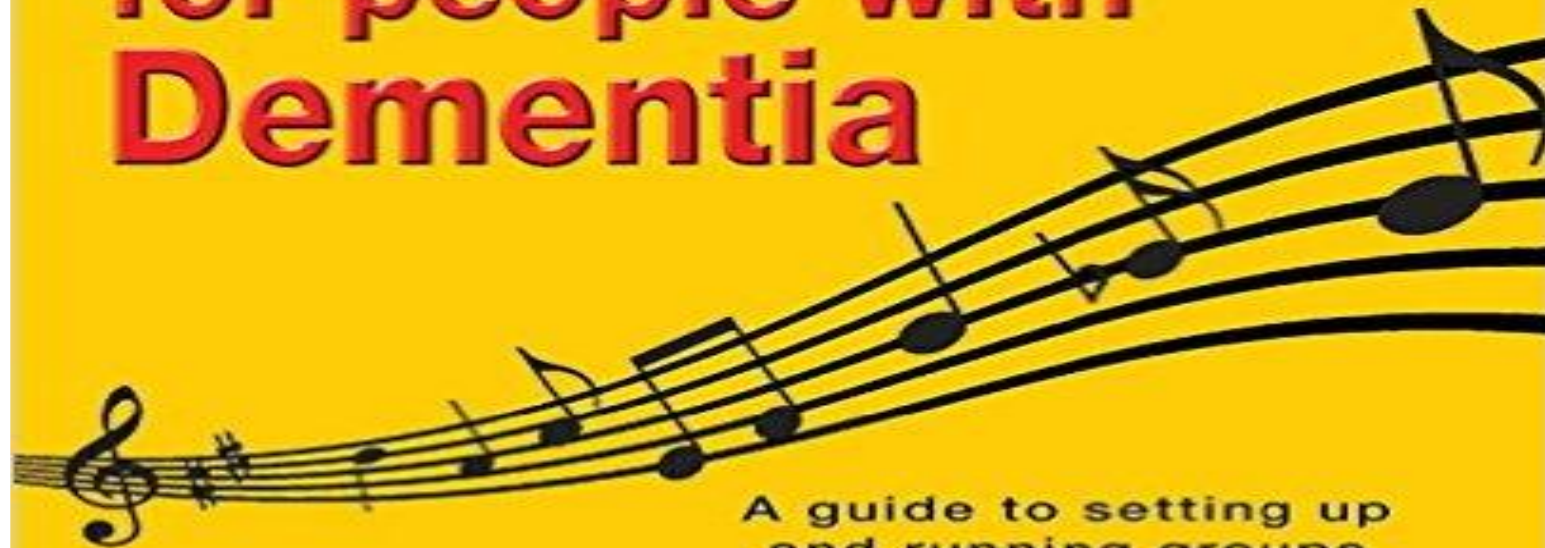
Swing low sweet
chariot coming for to
carry me home.

Swing low sweet
chariot , coming for
to carry me home.

When the saints, go
marching in. When
the saints go
marching in.

I want to be in that
number, when the
saints go marching in.

Singing Groups for people with Dementia



A guide to setting up
and running groups
in community and
residential settings

Diana Kerr

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