



# American Music Therapy Association

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Dear Member of Congress:

The American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) is proud to serve as a **National Co-Sponsor of Arts Advocacy Day 2009**. Representing over 5,000 professionally trained music therapists, AMTA is committed to the mission of advancing public awareness of music therapy benefits and increasing access to quality music therapy services. Music therapists work in many different settings including public and private schools, general and psychiatric hospitals, VA facilities, physical rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, mental health agencies, substance abuse programs, forensic facilities, hospice programs, and day care facilities.

With over 60 years of clinical practice in the United States, music therapy is one of the oldest examples of utilizing the creative arts in healthcare. From our beginnings during World War II providing individualized treatment for U.S. veterans to current cost-saving techniques in Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs), music therapy addresses physical, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and social needs of individuals of all ages, achieving a vast continuum of outcomes. Research also supports the effectiveness of music therapy interventions in special education, especially for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders to improve speech, enhance behavior and promote learning and skill acquisition.

Consideration of cost effective treatment options, such as music therapy and other creative arts in healthcare programs, could have a positive impact on our nation as it responds to economic challenges. To facilitate this process, we request your support of the following:

- Request the Government Accountability Office (GAO) conduct a study to assess the current status of federal support of creative arts therapies and other arts in healthcare programs to improve the quality of healthcare services.
- Fund research to increase access to creative arts therapies and other arts in healthcare programs addressing older Americans, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, autism and others through federal health programs.
- Appropriate \$53 million for the Arts in Education programs in the FY 2010 Labor-HHS Education appropriations bill.
- Support maintaining the arts as a core academic subject within NCLB reauthorization.

Thank you for your support of all Arts programs in America, and especially for those programs and services which enhance the quality of life for persons with illnesses and disabilities.

Sincerely,

Andrea Farbman, Ed.D.  
Executive Director

Judy Simpson, MHP, MT-BC  
Director of Government Relations