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Functional music therapy and learning challenges in school

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Functional music therapy, or shortly FMT, is a form of therapy used in medical rehabilitation. It is a neuro-muscular motion therapy aiming to develop the brain by stimuli from muscles and nerves. FMT is used in a large spectrum of disabilities and brain damages but also as a support method for children with learning challenges in reading, writing and mathematics and concentration problems. The music consists of custom composed melodies, a.k.a. musical codes, guiding the client in his/her playing. The therapist plays an acoustic piano and the client is offered a flexible array of percussion instruments, mainly drums and cymbals and some wind instruments. Functional music therapy addresses human primary functions based on perception, breathing and body control. It is a non-verbal treatment where the musical codes facilitate, activate and substantiate the person's actions and enhance desirable motion patterns. The individual spontaneous movements give direct access to senso-motorical areas in the brain, circumventing any verbal or intellectual processing. The goal with FMT is to raise a person's level of functionality by creating possibilities for his/her own reaction, action, thought and planning. A child's development is intimately connected to movements and motion. I also wish to establish which basic functions and motion patterns are important to have obtained in order to achieve school maturity.

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Common risk factors associated with excessive computer use in Singaporean students

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Objective: Internet Gaming Disorder has been identified by the American Psychiatric Association as a new and upcoming phenomenon that may result in clinically significant impairment of functioning in various aspects of a person's life. The objective of this investigation was to identify common risk factors amongst Singaporean students who were referred for excessive computer use (ECU) and who were at risk of developing the disorder.

Methods: A qualitative thematic analysis was conducted based on existing case files of students who were referred to a community-based child and adolescent mental health team, REACH (West), in Singapore.

Results: 32 cases were identified as presenting with ECU since the conception of the team, all of whom were male, age 11-17 at the point of referral. 17 (53%) were diagnosed with comorbid Axis 1 mental health disorders in addition to ECU. 5 main themes were extracted from the analysis, namely: Problems within the family, Parenting styles, Poor emotional regulation, School-related difficulties, and Difficulties in self-expression.

Conclusion: The themes identified were consistent with existing literature, which highlights experiences of negative emotional symptoms as a significant risk factor for developing Internet Gaming Disorder. In our sample, having parents who displayed a combination of permissive parenting and punitive punishment stood out as a unique feature of students who present with ECU. Clinical implications, particularly regarding interventions for excessive computer or gaming use, are discussed..

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