



# Tablet Engagement

## Enriching Lives with Everyday Technology



### **ABOUT THIS GUIDE**

This guide is intended to help you make a persuasive case to bring the Music & Memory program to your organization. For questions regarding this process, email [info@musicandmemory.org](mailto:info@musicandmemory.org).

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## Our Story



Since 2010, Music & Memory has trained thousands of healthcare professionals working in a wide range of healthcare organizations on how to create personalized music playlists for those in their care. We use digital music devices, such as iPods, MP3 players, and tablets to deliver the personalized music playlists. Musical favorites can provide relief in many different forms for residents participating

in the program. For instance, music that is personal to an individual can help them access memories not lost to dementia, reawakening residents so they may communicate and feel like themselves again.

Our goal is to connect and bring joy into the lives of people living with a wide range of cognitive and physical challenges. Through access and education, and creating a network of Music & Memory certified organizations, we have worked for years to make this form of personalized therapeutic music a standard of care throughout healthcare services. For more information, visit our website [musicandmemory.org](http://musicandmemory.org).

## The Music-Brain Connection

As we all have experienced, hearing the songs associated with a first love or a favorite movie causes a rush of emotions and memories. Music is profoundly linked to our personal history. In fact, our brains are hard-wired to connect music with long-term memory.

Even for persons with severe dementia, music can tap deep emotional recall. For individuals living with Alzheimer's or other related dementias, recent memory for names, places, and facts may be compromised, but memory from their teenage years is well-preserved.

Favorite music or songs associated with important personal events can trigger memories of lyrics and the experience connected to the music. Beloved music calms chaotic brain activity and enables the listener to focus on the present moment, regaining a connection to themselves and others.

## How Personalized Music Can Transform Lives

Grounded in extensive neuroscience research, tested and proven in thousands of Music & Memory certified organizations, our personalized music program has provided therapeutic benefits for thousands of individuals, clients and the staff who care for them. Again and again, health care professionals tell us our program is often life-changing for everyone involved:

***"The Music and Memory program has been one of the best initiatives for nursing home quality improvement I have seen. Homes that embrace the program and implement fully have seen great results. We hope to continue to grow this program to where all homes in Texas offer Music and Memory."***

Michelle Dionne-Vahalik, MSN, RN, Quality Monitoring Program and Initiatives,  
Director, Texas Health and Human Services

***"This is a program that should be in every single long-term care community. When we know of something that can positively impact the quality of life for the residents, we have an obligation to bring that program to the residents. Music & Memory will impact so many lives in such a profound way!"***

Mary Brinkley, Executive Director, Leading Age Oklahoma

***"Despite the enormous sums of money spent on mood- and behavior-altering medications that are often not particularly effective, nothing compares to personalized music when it comes to improving quality of life."***

Tony Lewis, Former President and CEO, Cobble Hill LifeCare, Brooklyn, N.Y.

***"Music & Memory is one of the most effective programs I have seen in my 20+ year career."***

Edward J. Smith, NFA, FACHE Quality Improvement Manager Louisiana  
Department of Health

## Getting Started

Armed with the facts about Music & Memory and how personalized music can make a difference in someone's life, you're now ready to start thinking about which tablet is right for you and the person in your care.

## Introduction to Tablets

A tablet is a compact device that in many ways functions as a mobile computer/laptop. Today, tablets are growing in popularity because of their ease of use, portability, and features.

Tablets allow for video conferencing, making them a great choice for connecting remotely with family and friends. Now more than ever, there are families that live at a distance, and tablets can make it easier to stay connected and provide genuine communication. Tablets are also wonderful tools for sharing music, including personalized playlists, allowing families to connect through their shared musical history.



If you're buying a new device there are a number of considerations, including price, battery life, charge time, and support quality. If you're using an existing device, just make sure it's internet ready and powerful enough to run a music library or a cloud-based music library App. Most tablets, even older models, are able to do this just fine.

Here are our top three tablet companies and product recommendations:

### Apple

Apple offers a number of tablet models, including the iPad, iPad Pro, iPad Mini, and iPad Air. Each offers similar features, with the main differences being screen size and storage capability. Sizes range from 8 x 5 inches (iPad Mini) to 13 x 11 inches (iPad Pro).



**iPad Pro**

Starting at \$799



**iPad Air**

Starting at \$499



**iPad**

Starting at \$329



**iPad mini**

Starting at \$399

Learn more: [www.apple.com/ipad](http://www.apple.com/ipad)

**PROS** Longer battery life relative to other products. Large screen for easy viewing. Access to iTunes/Apple Music, Facetime, and music streaming services like Spotify.

**CONS** Larger Apple iPads can be pricey. You'd also need a headphone adaptor for any wired or non-Apple headphones.

## Amazon

Amazon tablets include the Fire 7, Fire HD 8 Plus, Fire HD 10 Plus. Similar to Apple, the main difference between Amazon tablets is screen size and storage capability. The cheapest and smallest device is the Fire 7 while the Fire HD 10 is the largest and most expensive.

Note: Amazon Fire products also come in Kids editions which are more durable and user friendly. Screen sizes are roughly the same and the price is slightly more.



**Fire 7**



**Fire HD 8**



**Fire HD 8 Plus**



**Fire HD 10**

From: **\$49.99**

From: **\$89.99**

From: **\$109.99**

From: **\$149.99**

Learn more: [www.amazon.com/tablet](http://www.amazon.com/tablet)

**PROS** Long battery life for extended use. Large screen. More affordable than Apple products. Access to Amazon Music and Spotify Available.

**CONS** No iTunes or Apple Music availability.

## Windows

Microsoft Surface Go and Microsoft Surface Pro offer excellent computing performance, a large display and face-recognition camera with 1080p quality, and long battery life, making both a solid choice if you're looking to video chat. The Surface Go (9 x 6 inches) is less expensive than the Surface Pro (11 x 8 inches). Note: There are newer models available for both products with much greater capabilities and price tags associated.



Surface Go  
Starting at \$399.99



Surface Pro (5th Gen)  
Starting at \$749.00\*

Learn more: [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

**PROS** Long battery life. Large screens. Face-recognition camera with 1080p quality. iTunes/Apple Music, Amazon and Spotify Available.

**CONS** Pricey.

## Other Necessary Equipment

**Headphones** In addition to your tablet, you'll need a set of headphones - the goal is to find a pair that is comfortable, durable and inexpensive. For that reason, we recommend the Koss UR Series, which is available at a discount via the [Music & Memory Care Community](#). If you wish to purchase on the open market, you can find

good, reasonably priced equipment at Target, Best Buy or order online from Amazon. Expect to spend about \$20 for wired headphones, and about \$30-60 for wireless headphones.

**Wireless:** If you're interested in using wireless headphones, make sure to check with the manufacturer to ensure they can pair with the tablet of your choosing. Not all wireless headphones will pair with every device, particularly older models.



**Splitters** Purchasing an additional headphone splitter cable is a great way of sharing the music with the listener. They are generally inexpensive, ranging from \$2-5. Make sure it's a stereo splitter so you can hear both left and right channels.

NOTE: If you're purchasing a tablet and/or any additional equipment from Amazon, please consider using Smile.Amazon.com and choosing Music & Memory as the nonprofit you support - it's a great way to get what you need and support the use of personalized music!

## Tablet Operation Basics

Getting to know a new tablet can be pretty exciting, especially if this is your first one. The key is to start with the basics and take it one step at a time so you don't get overwhelmed.

First, charge the tablet and turn it on. In most cases, the tablet will take you through a startup exercise, which generally includes choosing a password for the device and basic usage preferences. Make sure to follow the instructions provided by the manufacturer when making these choices.



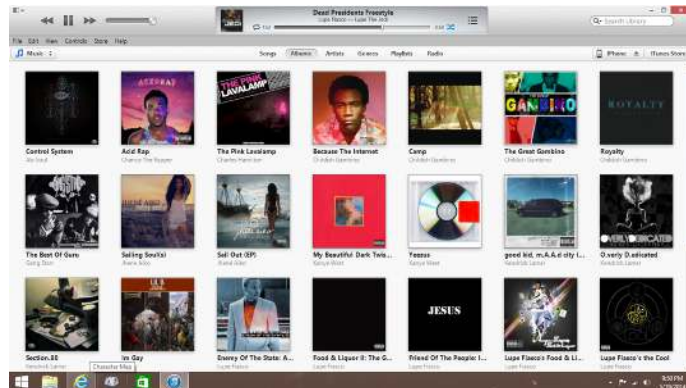
Next, make sure you're comfortable with the interface, including the screen, some of the built-in apps, and the various gestures you'll use to get around. Then you can move on to some other fundamental tasks, like connecting to the Internet using Wi-Fi.



Finally, take some time to get to know the tablet's features. If you're interested in making your tablet more accessible, try increasing the font size and display to make reading easier. You can also add captions to your videos, and customize how the captioning appears.

## Create Your Music Library

Once your tablet is set up and you're comfortable using it, it's time to create your music library and begin filling it with music. Since each tablet is different, it's important to consider which music library is best for you. If you're working with an Apple iPad, then the easiest solution is to use iTunes, which you can easily download for free from the



App Store. iTunes is an easy to use music library that allows for purchased mp3's as well as streaming audio. If you're using a Microsoft or any android based tablet (essentially, anything other than an iPad), then you have other options in addition to iTunes. If you're using a Microsoft tablet, then Windows Media Player is an option for you, and it may already be installed on your tablet (and it's a free download if it isn't). If you're using an Amazon tablet, you won't be able to use iTunes because it isn't compatible, but that's ok because you can still purchase music through Amazon Music or stream playlists by creating an account on Amazon.

**Streaming vs Non-Streaming:** If you're wondering whether or not to go with streaming music, here are some things to consider:

**PROS** Music streaming, which is essentially songs stored *online* that you access from any web-enabled music player, is now a very popular means for enjoying music for a number of reasons. Since songs are stored online by streaming providers, there's no need for purchasing mp3s or downloading them to your computer to create your own music library - *it's all there for you to curate online*, and this is an enormous time saver since purchasing songs individually and amassing a library on your computer is one of the most time consuming aspects of offering music by means of a non-streaming music library.

**CONS** But the convenience of streaming also comes with additional cost; all streaming

providers charge a monthly fee for their services, which you would need to carry for as long as you wish to provide music.

Whichever equipment option you choose, we're here to answer any questions you have about our process, please feel free to contact us: [info@musicandmemory.org](mailto:info@musicandmemory.org).

## Start Discovering Their Favorite Music

Once you have your equipment together, you're ready to start discovering the music that is most meaningful to the person in your care. This is a process we call *Becoming a Music Detective*, and it is at the heart of the Music & Memory program.

So what's your favorite music? Seems like a simple enough question. But when working with someone living with Alzheimer's and dementia, or some other cognitive condition, the answers aren't always obvious, and sometimes they're downright hard to get, especially when the person you're asking cannot articulate—or if they simply have trouble explaining what they're remembering.

This is the time for you to become a music detective, working one-to-one with the listener to discover their musical preferences, favorite pieces and performing artists.

## Start Slow

Take your time with this process - your goal is to create a playlist of their most beloved songs and compositions. Start a conversation about musical preferences and spend about 30 minutes to an hour recording their responses. Remember, what you're looking for is the listeners absolute favorite music from their formative years, ages 10 to 25.



Here are some questions to get the conversation started:

- What music did you listen to when you were in school?
- Did you sing at religious services? What were your favorite hymns or other religious music?
- Did you enjoy going to Broadway shows or musicals? Which ones?

- Do you still have any records or tapes that were favorites? What are they? Where can I find them?
- Who was your favorite performer, group, band or orchestra?
- Who was your favorite classical composer?
- Can you hum any of your favorites?
- What songs did you dance to at your wedding? high school prom?
- Were you in the military?

Perhaps you've already got a sense for their favorite music. If that's the case, you can also start the process by playing songs from within their favorite genres. To be clear, a genre-based playlist is not a substitute for a personalized playlist, but they do make for a solid starting point and something to build from during the music discovery process. Use them as conversation starters to maximize results!

To download any of our free sample playlists, visit [musicandmemory.org](http://musicandmemory.org).

## Keep the Conversation Going



As you hone in on musical favorites, keep sampling music and asking questions, and note the listener's reaction. Responses can be immediate and may include tapping fingers, making eye contact, talking and laughing.

For the uncommunicative, your best bet is to observe their body language as you sample songs, and find out as much as you can from other sources, particularly family and friends. In addition to age, find out where they were born, where they lived over the course of their life, and their first language.

You may be able to find out about favorite hobbies, sports and other pastimes that could suggest a starting point. What radio station do family members recall them listening to? What TV shows? Were they musical? Did they play an instrument or sing in a choir? All of this information can help you solve the musical favorites mystery.

Being a successful music detective requires patience and persistence, as well as some intuition and luck. But the journey is deeply rewarding.

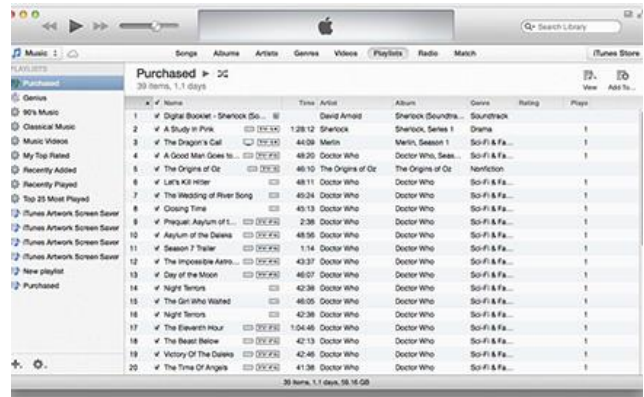
You will learn more about the person in your care, and seeing that face light up when you uncover the right music makes all that effort worthwhile.

## Create a Playlist

Ultimately, your goal is to create a 20-40 song playlist, but focus on quality over quantity, in the same way we select music for ourselves.

Aim for 5-7 songs from each artist in your music library, and include the best three to four songs from that artist on the listener's playlist. Remember, it's important to avoid "filler" music, and only include songs that are the most popular or requested.

Most tablets have plenty of storage, so you can expand your range of selections as you develop various additional playlists over time. One thing you might consider is creating two playlists - one that is upbeat for daytime, and one that includes quieter music for nighttime listening. This will give you (and the listener) more options for enjoying the right music at the right time. Our experience is that a nighttime playlist can really help someone transition to sleep.



Don't forget, you'll need to update the listener's playlists from time to time. This is an important part of keeping the music fresh and engaging for them, which will yield the best results. Try to make changes quarterly or as requested.

## Help Them Use the Device



Once you have a playlist, you're ready to start offering music! But you may find it necessary to first help the listener to use the music device. If this is the case, tailor your approach to accommodate their ability. For example, if she or he can use a TV remote, then chances are they will be able to use a music player

independently. We've found, however, that many elders need partial or total assistance. Be patient. Expect the process to take time and repetition as you introduce the device and teach how to operate it.

First, plug in the headphones and adjust them to a comfortable position. Set the volume on low and test the headphones yourself to make sure the volume is appropriate. Carefully place the headphones on the listener's head, making sure to note any reaction. Be sure to place the headphones so L is on the left ear and R is on the right to ensure that they are comfortable and the listener can hear the music properly.

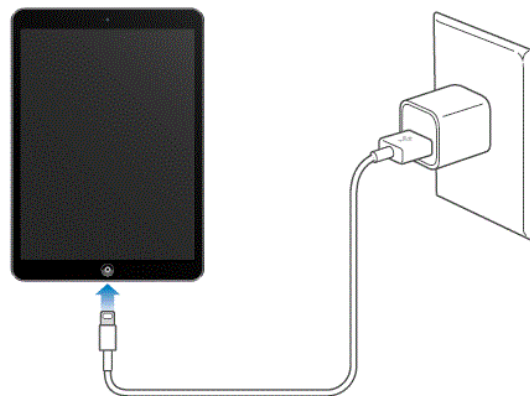
**If the person uses hearing aids**, test the headphones to see if they fit easily over the hearing aids. We've found that it may take some experimentation to see if the listener is comfortable listening through the combination of hearing aids and headphones. If there is any concern about their ability to do this, consult with an audiologist.

Once the headphones are in place, ask if the music is loud enough, making changes as requested. Practice placing the headphones a few times, so the listener gains confidence and you're sure they understand what to do. If possible, teach how to skip to the next song, so that he or she will have more control over choices.

Depending on the device, you can set the music to run through the playlist in the order that the songs were loaded or to automatically shuffle the songs to vary the listening experience. Experiment with the listener to see which they prefer.

## Storing the Equipment

It's important to keep the tablet charged so it can be ready to offer when needed or requested, and so that the battery never runs out in the middle of a session. Store the device in an easy to remember location, and make sure to keep it charging when not in use. Most tablets will last a long time between charges - some more than others - but you will invariably be glad of the habit once established. One of the most common complaints we hear is 'the device doesn't work,' but this is often due to a drained battery when the person falls asleep listening to the music.



If there are other caregivers involved, be sure to set up a plan for continued use of the equipment. You may want to set a schedule, such as three 30-minute listening sessions -- morning, afternoon and evening. Having everyone aware of the device

requirements will help keep things running smoothly, especially in the beginning.

## Personalized Playlist and Alzheimer's

For those living with Alzheimer's, personalized music can be particularly beneficial if applied correctly. Here are a few pointers to keep in mind:

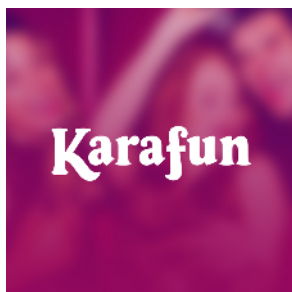
- Timing is very important, so think proactively. Personalized music activates cognition and can, for a short period of time, allow the person to be themselves again. Try offering the music thirty minutes before sitting down to a meal, attending a family event or medical visit.
- The listener will likely be more alert, engaged and talkative if they listen to their personalized playlist regularly, week after week, and month after month.
- Listening to favorite music will help the listener feel better, be more social and cooperative, giving you and other caregivers much needed respite.

**A few more things to remember:** Everyone is different. While there is no guarantee that personalized music will work for every individual, we know that it will help to improve quality of life for most. Best of all, there are no adverse affects - so there is no downside to trying and everything to gain.

## Recommended Music Apps

Once you've gotten into the habit of offering personalized music playlists, you can begin to look at other ways that music can engage and provide moments of joy. Here are a few great apps that we recommend:

### KaraFun



KaraFun Player is a free karaoke player that can provide hours of engagement and relaxation for anyone who loves to sing. The player allows you to play your own karaoke files as well as the songs found in the KaraFun Online karaoke catalog. Though you may subscribe to [KaraFun Online](#) to enjoy the complete online features, [KaraFun Player](#) is completely free and can be used with your own karaoke files without any charge.

## Smule



[Smule](#) is a fun music making app you can sing along with, record, mix and share with others. Not as user friendly as KaraFun, Smule lets people sing their version of a [song](#) with lyrics and tempo provided. The participant can sing solo or have their video merged to perform a duet which makes this app great for families to use when they cannot visit their loved one in person.

## Suzie Q Sing Along



Youtube is an excellent source for music and videos, and these are conveniently organized into 'channels' for providing topical information. Susan McAllister-Bee, better known online as "Suzie Q", offers a channel that focuses on senior music resources. Suzie performs sing-alongs at nursing homes, hospitals, and adult day programs across Ontario, CA. She's recorded more than 200 songs of various styles with large on-screen lyrics to make it easy for everyone to sing and follow along, all of which are available for free on her [Youtube Channel](#). Suzie also offers a number of DVDs

for sale for \$29 on her [website](#), such as 50's Fun, America Sings, Hymns and Harmony, and Happy Days.

Sing Along with Susie Q music is a great music resource for seniors in long term care facilities, day programs, and hospitals. Ideal for interaction with dementia residents as well. Visit [www.beemusicstudios.com](http://www.beemusicstudios.com) for more information.

## SingFit



An award-winning therapeutic music solution, [SingFit PRIME](#) is created specifically for older adults in senior-living communities, adult day programs, and skilled-nursing facilities. The unique Lyric Coach means even those with dementia can joyfully take part in SingFit PRIME sessions. It allows even those with no musical experience to facilitate [therapeutic](#) group activities, tailored specifically for their participants' age and musical tastes as well as cognitive and physical health. There's a \$4.99/month subscription **fee** for unlimited access to their song library.

## Piano with Songs



[Piano with Songs](#) is a very user friendly piano playing app with a large catalog of songs to choose from. One of the best features of the app is being able to choose the tempo to play along with, which makes this app great for piano players of all skill levels. Additionally users can change colors and backgrounds before a song starts which makes this app fun for people of all cognitive levels. This app is free with in-app purchases available for additional content.

## Recommended Social Engagement Apps



In addition to music apps, there are many ways to use your tablet to help those in your care to stay connected with loved ones. Here are a few recommendations:

### Facetime



Facetime is an easy to use way to connect with others by video chat. It is only available on Apple devices which means both parties need to have an Apple device in order to connect using Facetime. Beyond that, you will need an internet connection and an Apple ID in order to make and receive calls through the FaceTime app. The app is preprogrammed on the device so you do not need to download it from the app store in order to use it.

To make a call via FaceTime simply follow the two steps below.

1. In the FaceTime app, tap + at the top of the screen.
2. Type the name or number you want to call in the entry field at the top, then tap Video  to make a video call or tap Audio  to make a FaceTime audio call

**Tip:** To see more during a FaceTime video call, rotate iPad to use landscape orientation

### Skype

Skype is a terrific user friendly telecommunication app that can be used on all computers, tablets and mobile devices, and it has a free version. The caller and the receiver need to have a Skype account in order to connect via video chat or audio chat.





Skype also provides instant messaging services. Users may transmit text, video, audio and images. Skype allows video conference calls.

Follow the steps below to connect using Skype:

1. Download Skype on your tablet via app store
2. Open the app and create an account
3. Add contacts and names to the account by selecting the + and typing in the name or number of the person you want to add
4. Select the name of the person you want to reach and choose video call or voice call. You can also select IM to send the contact a written message.

## **A Special Note for You**

On behalf of all of us at Music & Memory, thank you for everything that you're doing to keep people living with Alzheimer's and dementia, and other cognitive conditions connected to the joy of favorite music. All of our success is due to passionate individuals like you who believe wholeheartedly in the power of music to help others. Thank you for helping to make a difference.

We look forward to hearing from you and helping you to succeed. Please [contact us](#) through our website if you have questions.

Thanks again for your help, and good luck!

Music & Memory

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How does Music & Memory work?

Music & Memory trains care staff to work with people living with Alzheimer's and dementia to discover their favorite songs from when they were a teenager. These songs are then compiled to create a 20-40 song personalized music playlist, which is then offered to the individual with comfortable headphones as needed, usually for 30-minutes at a time, and used proactively such as before medical or family visits. The results of this simple process can be astounding.

## What are some of the benefits of personalized music?

Each year, we learn more and more about the therapeutic uses of personalized music. Here are some examples:

### Nutritional and Hydration Issues

- Because music activates cognition and speech, it helps residents recognize food, follow cues, chew and swallow.
- Calming music can relieve anxiety generated by the eating experience.

[Learn more](#)

### Agitation and Anxiety

- Music focuses a person's attention on something recognizable, which reduces the feeling of being overwhelmed and confused.
- It connects the person with positive memories, which has a soothing effect.
- Music stimulates movement, a positive outlet for restlessness.

NOTE: the improved cognition and mood continue after the person stops listening to music.

[Learn more](#)

### Pain Relief

- Music brings pleasure, releasing opioids in the brain.
- Happy memories distract from the pain.
- Recipients move to the music. This relieves pain from stiffness and tightened muscles.

NOTE: Pain is a common reason for rejection of care and having music relieve or distract from pain can help residents be receptive to care, although always consult a physician if the pain is chronic.

[Learn more](#)

## **Rejection of Care**

- Helps people relax, experience pleasure, connect to positive memories, improve their cognition and communication.
- Music improves the duration and intensity of concentration.
- People are better able to follow cues, understand what is happening, relate to their care-giver, and feel safe.

[Learn more](#)

## **Sleep**

- Music helps relax tense muscles
- It tunes one's mind to positive memories and emotions providing soothing comfort
- Decreases production of cortisol, a hormone that can contribute to feelings of stress and anxiety
- Reduces sympathetic nervous system activity, decreases anxiety, blood pressure, heart and respiratory rate

[Learn more](#)

## **Mood and Depression**

- Neurologist Oliver Sacks said that, "Music evokes emotion, and emotion can bring with it memory... it brings back the feeling of life when nothing else can."
- Music is pleasurable
- It brings warm memories and connections, and self-efficacy.
- It generates movement, engagement, cognition, and awareness.

[Learn more](#)

## **Occupational, Speech and Physical Therapy**

- Music before a therapy session activates cognition, communication, and auditory and visual perception, making it easier to follow cues and engage in therapy activities.
- Singing uses consonants and vowels, activating speech.
- Musical rhythm generates body movement, reduces muscle tension and improves coordination.

## **Active Dying**

- Hearing remains during active dying.
- Music connects people to their identity, emotions, auditory and visual perception.
- Music is a help to families as well.

## **Is there research around how personalized music helps participants and their caregivers?**

Listening to music often results in decreases in agitation, anxiety, sleeplessness and

depression. Personalized music can prevent distress, aid in the reduction in the use of antipsychotic medications and even improve swallowing. Caregivers and family members enjoy more meaningful relationships with those in their care and use the music as a tool to ease transitions, avoid challenging behaviors and save time. Visit [musicandmemory.org/research](http://musicandmemory.org/research) to learn more.

### **How does personalized music help memory loss? What does it mean for my loved one who suffers from Alzheimer's or other types of dementia?**

The part of the brain that processes music and memory is the last part of the brain to be affected by Alzheimer's, which is why people with this disease are unable to recollect what happened in the last hour but can remember the words to their favorite songs from childhood.

In fact, the part of the brain that holds memories of familiar music is co-located with the part of the brain that stores autobiographical memory. So playing familiar music will spark those associated memories, "awakening" the individual, even if it's for a short moment. Research indicates that although this is no cure for Alzheimer's, regular listeners of personalized music will be more alert, engaged and conversant. Personalized music offers many benefits for its listeners.

### **Does this always work?**

Personalized music does not always generate these results, but it does work most of the time. Success depends on identifying someone's favorite music from their youth. It's also worth trying at different times of day or week and around different activities.

### **How else can I help?**

Please visit the Music & Memory website [www.musicandmemory.org](http://www.musicandmemory.org) for more information on how you can support efforts to make access to personalized music a standard of health care.