

How do Berard AIT and Music Therapy Differ?

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Sometimes parents and professionals are confused about Berard AIT and Music Therapy. Because both programs involve use of music, some may believe that they are both forms of music therapy. This is not the case. There are many important differences between these two programs.

Berard Auditory Integration Training (AIT) follows a specific protocol developed by Dr. Guy Berard. Professionals who qualify for training as a Berard practitioner must participate in a comprehensive seminar, which includes exams to assure understanding, and an internship to assist with practical application of the method. These seminars are provided by an approved Berard AIT instructor and must be successfully completed in order to be eligible to purchase the approved device (currently the Earducator) used for this method. The Berard method is widely used internationally.

There are many differences between Berard AIT and Music Therapy. The criteria and use of Music Therapy does not meet the protocol for Berard AIT in several ways.

1. A music therapist must complete a specific, approved music therapist training program to become a music therapist. A Berard AIT practitioner must complete a different, specific, approved training program to become a Berard AIT practitioner.
2. A music therapist may take the Berard AIT seminar and become a Berard practitioner, but the training as a music therapist does not qualify that person as a Berard practitioner unless they have successfully completed the Berard training seminar. Similarly, Berard AIT certification does not qualify a person as a music therapist.
3. The approach to intervention is quite different. Music therapists assess emotional well-being, physical health, social functioning, communication abilities, and cognitive skills through musical responses. Music therapy sessions are much more interactive, with the therapist facilitating a response from the client through musical activities. Berard AIT sessions do not require and do not attempt to engage the client in interactions during the listening sessions. In fact, it is recommended that the listener sit quietly and listen rather than engage in interpersonal or cognitive activities during the 30-minute sessions of auditory integration training.
4. The objectives of each of these programs are different. For example, music therapy goals for a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) support skill development in areas such as communication, academic learning, daily living *skills*, motor functioning, social *skills*, behavior, and mental health. With Berard AIT, the listener is in a training program for the auditory system, designed to enhance quality and function within this system. The theory is that it will improve sensory input. If

this is achieved, there can be noticeable improvement in a variety of abilities and skills because the individual's system is functioning more effectively.

The information provided here is based on the music therapy information according to <https://www.musictherapy.org/about/>.