

Supporting Mental Health for New Mothers Using the Power of Song

Presenter

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The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND
ACCEPTING OF
DIVERSE CULTURES,
GENDERS,
PERSPECTIVES,
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED AND
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH
OUR ACTIONS,
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS



Supporting Mental Health for New Mothers Using the Power of Song

Objective: Explore singing and song as a simple, free, and effective pathway to foster mental health for mothers with perinatal depression

The Influence of Music

Mood

Emotions

Body

- ✓ Stimulate
- ✓ Tranquilize
- ✓ Enhance understanding
- ✓ Alter perception of pain
- ✓ Reduce stress & tension
- ✓ ...

The Influence of Songs

Songs are part of our lives from a very early age



Sounds become fundamental elements of our understanding of the world and of relationships

Singing – from psychological standpoint

Singing → mental health

- Promoting integration
- Enabling communication
- Revealing your identity
- Enabling self-awareness
- Expressing creativity



Maternal Singing

Research in the 90's

Psychology, Pediatrics, Nursing, Psychiatry, Midwifery, Music therapy...

- **Parenting resource**
- **Improved bonding**
- **Decrease stress**
- **Reduce infant crying**
- **Growing evidence of health benefits**

Brisola & Cury, 2018; Brisola et al. 2019; De L'Etoile, 2012; Edwards, 2011; Perkins et al., 2018; Persico, 2017; Reagon et al., 2016; Reilly et al., 2019



Maternal Singing and Mental Health



 **Themes** addressed by current research:



1. ASPECTS of maternal singing and mental health



- Bonding
- Emotion Expression
- Mnemonic Channel
- Practical Resource
- Self-esteem



2. GROUP singing and mental health



- Social “duets”
- Parenting “repertoires”
- Changing their “tempo”



3. Singing and PERINATAL DEPRESSION



1. Aspects of maternal singing and mental health

- Bonding
- Emotion Expression
- Mnemonic Channel
- Practical Resource
- Self-esteem



Blom, 2015; Bonnár, 2014; Brisola, 2017; Carolan et al., 2012;
Creighton et al., 2015; Fancourt & Perkins, 2018; Ilari et al., 2013;
Perkins et al., 2018; Persico et al., 2017; Pixley, 2015; Punamäki et al., 2020



2. Group singing and maternal mental health

- ❑ Social “duets”
- ❑ Parenting “repertoires”
- ❑ Changing their “tempo”





3. Singing and perinatal depression

- ❖ Higher levels of mother (and infant) wellbeing
- ❖ Less anxiety
- ❖ Sense of belonging
- ❖ Competency “I can do it!”
- ❖ Relief from depression symptoms

Examples



Adding Singing to your Toolkit



- ✓ Take care of themselves
- ✓ Routines
- ✓ Pleasant activities
- ✓ Viable activities
- ✓ Relaxing activities
- ✓ Imagination



Singing → checks all of these boxes

“Coda”: additional reflections



- ❖ Not everyone enjoys singing
- ❖ There are different levels of involvement in singing
- ❖ Culture plays an important part in recovery
 - Mothers “sing their culture and story”
 - Continuing culture and adding their own voice
- ❖ Singing during pregnancy
 - “Something to do when you don’t know what to do”
 - “Sense of continuation” after birth

Sing!



Questions and Comments



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MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Post-event survey

<https://ttc-gpra.org/P?s=966575>

The purpose of the MHTTC Network is technology transfer - disseminating and implementing evidence-based practices for mental disorders into the field.

Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the MHTTC Network includes 10 Regional Centers, a National American Indian and Alaska Native Center, a National Hispanic and Latino Center, and a Network Coordinating Office.

Our collaborative network supports resource development and dissemination, training and technical assistance, and workforce development for the mental health field. We work with systems, organizations, and treatment practitioners involved in the delivery of mental health services to strengthen their capacity to deliver effective evidence-based practices to individuals. Our services cover the full continuum spanning mental illness prevention, treatment, and recovery support.

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