

# Ukulele Kids Club and Berklee College of Music Unite to Deliver Music Therapy to Medically Fragile Children at Home

*Part of the Innovative, Free “UKC At Home” Program to Promote Wellness for*

*Children Using Music and a Ukulele of Their Own*

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- Sharing a passion for music and children’s welfare, [Ukulele Kids Club, Inc. \(UKC\)](#) and the Berklee College of Music Music Therapy Department announced a new partnership to create music therapy

support groups for children and adolescents. Led by clinical music therapy experts, and using ukuleles provided by the UKC, the initiative will help improve the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of children who participate. The therapy groups and instruments will be provided to children at no cost, and are open to all children with chronic health conditions or other well-

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*Joy Allen, Berklee College of Music*



being challenges, who would benefit from continued clinical music therapy. The initiative is part of the UKC’s new “UKC At Home” program which attempts to provide a continuum of care for medically fragile children in their own homes. The partnership was announced today by Marlén Rodriguez-Wolfe, M.M., CEO of UKC.

“As we have seen, equity in access to proper mental health and therapy services are common barriers for many people, especially families who are struggling with chronic illness,” said Mrs. Rodriguez-Wolfe. “Because of this, our partners at Berklee College of Music were very receptive to

the opportunity to create an accessible program at no cost to participating families. Leveraging

the resources of both of our teams, these music therapy groups will help children and families continue their wellness journey using music as a way to cope and heal, and reduce the obstacles in continuing therapy services.”

The Music Therapy groups, slated to run during Berklee’s academic year, specifically target children living with chronic disease that receive UKC ukuleles, as well as children around the Berklee community who could benefit from engaging in wellbeing practices. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 27% of children in the U.S. suffer from a chronic health condition, which can have a negative impact on their physical, emotional, and mental well-being, and that of their families. To support these children and families, Berklee and UKC will provide qualified, trained music therapy professionals to manage and facilitate virtual, music therapy sessions, with support provided by Berklee music therapy students as a part of their academic training. The College will fund costs related to the therapy sessions, with UKC providing the materials needed, including instruments. Children and teens participating in the groups will also have access to additional support and resources through the other support elements of the UKC at Home program.

“This initiative directly aligns with our mission to foster students’ passion and skills to work with and advocate for individuals in diverse clinical and community-based settings. As a department staffed by leading experts in the field, we are committed to providing unique learning experiences, while simultaneously serving communities who have limited access to services due to economic, health, or other resource deficits,” said Joy Allen, chair of Berklee’s Music Therapy Department, “We believe the world is the greatest classroom, so we’ll be able to expose our emerging music therapists to a broad base of clinical experiences beyond our immediate vicinity. We are gratified to help UKC in its mission to transform lives through music and assist in the continuum of care that is so needed for chronically ill children once they leave the hospital.”

Because of UKC’s affiliation with more than 220 music therapy programs, a significant number of children and adolescents will have access to the groups from the start. Berklee will also take the lead on recruiting additional children living with conditions who would benefit from clinical music therapy sessions. Any child living with a physical, mental, or emotional health condition will be eligible to participate in the program, regardless of admission to an inpatient or outpatient medical facility. As organizations committed to increasing equity, access and participation of all children in music, UKC and Berklee strive to support the well-being of children regardless of socio-economic status, country of origin, race, sexual identity, and other demographic markers.

Since 2013, UKC has donated more than 10,000 ukuleles to music therapy programs at children’s hospitals in the U.S. and internationally. The UKC has expanded its support of hospital-based music therapy programs through a growing network of more than 220 hospitals, including such leading children’s hospitals as Boston Children’s Hospital, Mattel UCLA Children’s Hospital in Los Angeles, Texas Children’s Hospital, Nationwide Children’s Hospital, Riley Children’s Health in Indianapolis, and Cardinal Glennon Children’s Hospital in St. Louis. Working under the guidance

of board-certified music therapists, children use the ukuleles as part of their therapy during their hospitalizations, and may keep the instruments when they return home. Once back home, children can use the ukulele to pursue a love of music as well as long-term mental and behavioral health goals through the new UKC At Home program.

Music therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions. Board-certified music therapists create therapy plans designed for each patient, based on individualized needs and goals. Among the goals of music therapy interventions are: engaging in wellness habits, stress management, pain reduction, physical rehabilitation, enhanced cognition, and many other individualized therapeutic goals.

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