



Raukatauri
Music Therapy Centre

The Raukatauri Music Therapy Trust

“Enrich and develop lives through music.” That is the vision of registered charity, The Raukatauri Music Therapy Trust (CC24774).

The Raukatauri Music Therapy Trust (the Trust) was established in 2004 with the aim of using music to promote the healing and personal growth of people with emotional, intellectual, physical or social challenges.

The Trust works with approximately 460 clients per week. They support people with a range of challenges including: cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, mental health disorders, bereavement, dementia, exposure to family violence and neglect, refugee-related trauma, and poor community engagement due to socioeconomic challenges. There are no limits on who music therapy can help.

The majority of the Trust’s clients cannot participate in community activities such as sport, music lessons, drama, and art due to their physical, cognitive and behavioural challenges. “Music therapy provides them with the chance to express themselves, develop independence, engage with their community, and develop meaningful relationships,” Jen Ryckaert, the Trust’s Clinical and Centre Director says.

When Aotearoa moved into lockdown, the Trust worried about how their clients would face the stress and uncertainty of isolation. The Trust recognised that more than ever, their clients relied on their services. Music therapy was vital for the Trust’s clients to provide reassurance and stimulation during this upheaval in their lives.



On April 1, the Trust moved their music therapy sessions online, offering individual and group sessions to over 120 clients. The Trust’s registered music therapists also created customised music therapy videos that they sent to residential facilities, schools and families to use at home. On top of this, the Trust started QuaranTunes, a private Facebook group of over 200 families that offered free, interactive music-making videos from music therapists. A normal day on QuaranTunes started with a live streamed ‘Mōrena session’ and finished with an evening bedtime video, while also featuring four or five themed musical videos throughout the day.



QuaranTunes gave structure to clients who were at a loss for how to fill their days in isolation. It also gave clients a vital sense of connection, so they felt like part of a community. Victoria, a mother of one client using QuaranTunes says, “Being in lockdown has been really confusing for my son Alex. Thankfully, Raukatauri started QuaranTunes which filled our days with music, happiness and, importantly, a new reliable routine. This has been hugely calming for the whole family.”

Despite the challenges of operating a charity during lockdown, this experience has taught the Trust many things. Moving sessions online has improved the Trust’s connection with clients and music therapists across Aotearoa. During lockdown, staff and clients based outside of Auckland felt more connected than ever because of increased online communication. Families in different regions were also able to connect with each other on the QuaranTunes page.

This has shown the Trust just how important connection is. To keep this up post-lockdown they’re bringing QuaranTunes back during the July school holidays at the request of many of their families (although it’s just Raukatauri Tunes this time around). They’re also offering special sessions for the whole whānau to enjoy. The Trust will also continue to provide online sessions for those clients who are unable to make it to a Centre.

“We are very excited to be returning to providing direct music therapy and so happy to be back with most of our clients,” says Jen. “Nothing beats making music together!” You can find out more about the Raukatauri Music Therapy Trust on their [website](#) and on their [Facebook page](#).

