

# REMIX toolkit

Rights-based,  
Engaging  
Music  
Interventions and  
Xperiences


# Introduction



The REMIX toolkit (Rights-based, Engaging Music Interventions and Xperiences) is a collection of music-based activities that embodies the knowledge and learnings from the project “Bringing Communities and Care Together”.\* The toolkit brings to life ideas that were co-designed with residents, staff and volunteers and offers activities to support how music can be used in a care home context. The REMIX toolkit aims to grow over time through exploration by other care homes and organisations who can refine and add to the collection of music activities.

The REMIX toolkit is a rights-based resource which has been designed to specifically engage with article 8 of the Human Rights Act (1998): “The concept of private life also covers your right to develop your personal identity and to forge friendships and other relationships. This includes a right to participate in essential economic, social, cultural and leisure activities”. The co-design process that led to the creation of this toolkit has embedded a rights-based approach which means it included the voices of the people that directly engaged in the activities.

The format of the toolkit has been developed in collaboration with an Activity Coordinator in order to support this type of role within a care home. The REMIX toolkit enables those involved in organising care home activities to increase and enhance community connections through music.



\* For more information about the project and to share feedback about your experiences of using this toolkit please visit:  
<https://futurehealthandwellbeing.org/bringing-communities-and-care-together>

# Health and Social Care Standards

The person-centred, music-based interventions in the REMIX toolkit support residents to develop their personal identity, relationships and friendships, and wider social support. This approach is in line with the principles of the Health and Social Care Standards (2017) to ensure that those who participate feel respected, are met with compassion, are involved in the process and supported to participate, and finally that their wellbeing is protected and promoted in an ethical manner. The standards that relate to the music activities are:

1. I experience high quality care and support that is right for me
3. I have confidence in the people who support and care for me
4. I have confidence in the organisation providing my care and support
5. I experience a high quality environment if the organisation provides the premises

Overall, the following standard should be aimed for when organising these activities:

- 1.6 I get the most out of life because the people and organisation who support and care for me have an enabling attitude and believe in my potential.

The following standards relate to each activity:

- Music and Me



Personal music session

- 1.9 I am recognised as an expert in my own experiences, needs and wishes.
- 3.8 I can build a trusting relationship with the person supporting and caring for me in a way that we both feel comfortable with.

- Music Album
- Music in Units



Small group activity

- 5.6 If I experience care and support in a group, I experience a homely environment and can use a comfortable area with soft furnishings to relax.

- Making music across generations (1 and 2)
- A choir in a Care Home
- Music movie night
- Musical Bingo



Community group activity

- 1.10 I am supported to participate fully as a citizen in my local community in the way I want.
- 1.25 I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors.

# Music and Me

Almost everyone has a personal song that represents key moments in their life. Music is a way to get to know each other and share stories and memories related to specific songs. This tool supports staff and volunteers to build relationships with residents by having a conversation about what music means in their life. Using this tool can help staff and volunteers to build empathy and understand someone's background and life story.

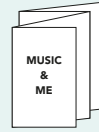
The tool is designed to guide staff and volunteers through conversations and provide space to capture responses that provides a physical record for the resident. With the resident's permission this can be shared with other staff and can be used to inform more personalised interactions and activities.

This tool can be used when someone first comes to live in a care home and can be revisited at different times. The tool can be used by staff or volunteers with residents on a one-to-one basis or with residents and a family member together.



Personal music session

### What will I need?



- A printed A3 copy of “Music and Me”
- A music player with a speaker
- Access to an online music database e.g. iTunes, YouTube, Deezer
- A quiet and comfortable setting
- A pen to write down the answers
- Percussion instruments

### How long will this activity take?

Approx. 30 – 45 minutes

### Tips for using this tool

- When inviting residents to be involved in this activity we recommend giving residents some time to think about songs as it is sometimes hard to think about these in the moment. They may also wish to chat about it with a family member who can help them to think about songs that have meaning to them.
- Take time to listen and be in the moment together when the music is playing and be aware of how the resident is reacting. Don't be shy to actively participate either through singing or moving.
- You can add percussion instruments to the session that the resident and you can play when listening/singing to the music.

# Music Album

Many people have their own personal music collections that provide a soundtrack to their life. For example, you can think of songs from your favourite childhood idol, your wedding song or songs that keep you motivated when exercising. As previous cards already suggest, music is a great way in getting to know people's life stories, helps to build relationships and supports empathy.

This tool can be used as a fun, relationship building activity for people to get to know each other in small groups through music. The tool is designed as an LP and album cover which supports residents to think about and share a song/artist that reminds them of a specific moment in their life. It provides space to capture the memory related to the song, how it makes the resident feel and overall what music means in their life.

Residents can keep adding their personal songs by filling in more round LP's, which can be stored together. The collection of LPs and albums can then be used in a more interactive music session (in the units for example) where residents can randomly pick an album cover/LP from the box and listen and discuss these songs together.



Small group activity

### What will I need?

- The LP printed on A3 coloured paper (preferably thick paper e.g. 300 gr.), cut out, fold it in half and glued together
- The album cover printed on A3 coloured paper (preferably thick paper e.g. 300 gr.), cut out, fold it and glue corners together
- A pen to write down the answers
- Access to an online playlist connected to a stereo when listening to specific songs together.

### How long will this activity take?

Approx. 30 min depending on the size of the group.

### Tips for using this tool

- We would suggest to have a big table where people can sit around and make the albums together. The albums and LP materials could also be pre-made prior to the session if you are short of time.
- Try to engage the whole group as much as possible by asking them about the story and memories related to that specific song. Give people a moment to think about what they want to share and write on their personal album.
- When using the collection of albums in small group listening sessions, you can create a digital collection of all of the songs beforehand. Try and support the group to share their stories in this session and ask if anyone else has a story or connection to the song they would like to share.



## Music in units

Contrasting to the more intimate one to one music sessions you can organise smaller group music listening in the care home units. Creating a playlist through musical storytelling sessions like this supports social interaction and engagement between residents and staff rather than individual listening.

This smaller group activity enables staff and residents to build connections with each other through music in a safe and comfortable environment. The activity provides a way for residents and staff to listen to each others favourite pieces of music and uncover similar music preferences or be introduced to new songs.

The activity can be organised at any time, it can help to create different ambiances depending on how residents are feeling and it can stimulate more physical interactions between residents and staff e.g. through dancing, clapping along or adding percussion instruments.

*"You could see residents reacting on the words of the song. When they were singing '4 o'clock rock' a resident would like at her watch and say 'no it's not'.*



Small group activity

### What will I need?

- Access to an online playlist (e.g. iTunes, Deezer, YouTube) connected to a sound system or stereo.
- Position everyone in a big circle where people can dance in the middle
- Percussion instruments
- Staff/volunteers to support residents

### How long will this activity take?

Approx. 45 minutes

### Tips for using this tool

- Inform the unit about the planned music session so that residents can be informed and invited to join or have the option to sit somewhere more quiet if they prefer not to join.
- Create a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere and prompt residents with questions or examples of what they would like to listen to that would encourage them to participate.
- Residents might have different emotional responses when listening to certain songs so it is important to be aware of this and be able to provide support to comfort them.
- Try to keep a list of the songs that are played as this can become a growing playlist linked to individual residents, the units or the care home as a whole - if possible write the memory or reason why this song was important.

# Making music across generations (1)

It is becoming more common to invite younger children to a care home as they bring lots of joy and unfiltered emotions. However, only bringing generations together is not enough as they could feel uncomfortable and unfamiliar with each other. Therefore, it is important to stimulate and support more meaningful engagement and interactions between the generations to build relationships over time.

This activity involves crafting together to make percussion instruments that can be used for future music sessions and support interactions in small groups. By making something physical together enables both generations to interact with each other in a playful yet meaningful manner. It also allows residents and children to share stories, experiences and skills.

The instruments created can then be used in a follow up music activity where residents and children can improvise and play together along with their favourite songs.



Community group activity

### What will I need?

- Shakers: Empty plastic bottles half filled with rice, lentils, peas (a funnel would avoid any spilling)
- Drums: Large empty tub, again can be filled with lentils or leave it empty. Extra materials could be used for decorating the drums or for making different tactile textures.
- Guitar: wrapping elastic bands on empty boxes which can also be decorated
- Drum Beaters/Maracas: Wooden spoons can be painted and decorated. A string with buttons or colourful beads could be added to the head of the spoon.

### How long will this activity take?

Approx. 1 hour

### Tips for using this tool

- Be conscious when positioning the resident and child, side by side would encourage more engagement.
- Make the activities very simple. Some residents might not be able to make things with their hands, however it is important to still acknowledge their voice. You can do this by asking what colour they would like to choose or what instrument they would like to make.
- Think about how to encourage interactions once instruments are made. For example you could ask each other questions related to numbers (e.g. age) and 'play' the answer using the instrument.

## Making music across generations (2)

Percussion instruments are a great way to encourage people to actively be involved with music. You could use existing percussion instruments or let the residents and children make the instruments together (see previous card).

The facilitators and volunteers can already make an inventarisation of songs before the activity that they could bring to the session. When everyone comes in to get a seat it is important to mix the generations together and provide everyone with an instrument.

As an ice breaker the children can bring a basket with different figures or icons that each represent a song (and rehearsed these beforehand with the children / residents). Each child can walk around and choose a particular resident to let them choose a figure out of the basket. The activity coordinator can explain which song relates to figure. The group can sing the related song to the object or figure together with their percussion instruments. This enables both children (choose a person to approach) and residents (picking out a figure) to have a choice.



Community group activity

### What will I need?

- Percussion instruments
- Access to an online playlist (e.g. iTunes, Deezer, YouTube) connected to a sound system or stereo.
- A basket with different figures
- Position everyone in a big circle where people can dance in the middle

### How long will this activity take?

Approx. 45 minutes

### Tips for using this tool

- Think beforehand about the specific engagement you would like to achieve between the generations which can encourage spontaneous interactions.
- Coming in regularly with the same people, where younger and older people are teamed up would support building relationships by making them familiar with each other. This allows both generations to get to know each other.
- Encourage choices within the activity as this enables both generations to get familiar with each other in a playful and comfortable setting.

# Musical Bingo

Bingo is a popular activity in care homes. It is a great way to bring residents, relatives and the wider community together to socialise and have fun, especially when there are interesting prizes to win! We would encourage you to make it a celebration and fun moment where people of all ages can participate. This involves a bit of planning and preparation as it requires different roles: the bingo caller, the person playing the music, someone controlling the numbers, have volunteers walking around to help and support residents when filling in the bingo cards. Having the different roles means that people can choose to get involved in different ways than simply attending and playing the game. For example, residents and members of the community may choose to take on the role of the bingo caller.

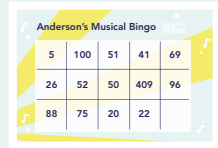
In musical bingo, the numbers on the bingo card relate to the numbers that are contained in different songs for example, 'Summer of 69'. This adds another dimension to bingo where people can sing along, reminisce and share stories of the songs that are played.

*"Good fun, lovely  
experience, laughter  
and chat with everyone.  
Would recommend it"*



Community group activity

## What will I need?



- Bingo Cards (100x) printed on A5 in colour
- Counters (15 for each card)
- Music playlist of songs only with numbers connected to a stereo
- Option: Visual slides showing the number on a big screen and a recording sheet to score down the numbers.
- A microphone linked to a speaker system
- Prizes for each round (approx. 15 if there are multiple winners)
- A spacious room and tables with snacks, fake candles, flowers
- Fundraising pot if choosing to make this a fundraising activity

## How long will this activity take?

Each game (2 lines, 1 house) takes approx. 30 minutes

## Tips for using this tool

- Make sure the sound system is at an appropriate volume as some people might have difficulty hearing the music. The additional presentation slides can support the music by providing a visual reference for people to see the number.
- Involve the wider community when organising the musical bingo to take on different roles (e.g. bingo caller) and support residents to play. It is a great way to introduce people to the care home as a social community hub where generations can come together.
- Invite the public on time by sharing a flyer on- and offline



# A choir in a Care Home

Singing together is an activity that can bring many benefits to those who are involved. People talk about the 'feel good' factor and also the way in which being in a choir can create a sense of belonging and social support. Having 'a choir in a care home' is a way to bring together residents, staff, families, the community, involving people of all ages. It can support interaction among these groups to bring fun, joy and laughter. Not only does it bring social and emotional benefits, singing is a physical activity that involves breathing, posture and of course smiling!

Some people are not always keen to sing and it can take a lot of encouragement and support to enable people to feel confident to make a sound. Singing together in a group can help with this as it allows people to blend their voices together. Singing in harmony can create special moments and adds to the magic of singing together.

*"Look at the choir this morning, it was juuust... wonderful"*



Community group activity

### What will I need?

- Simple choir songs or any song that people would like to learn and sing
- Large board or screen with the words on it (or words typed out on paper for people to read)
- Connect music to a stereo or, even better, try to recruit a volunteer to play along on the piano or guitar
- Someone to lead the singing group

### How long will this activity take?

Approx. 1 hour with a break for refreshments in between

### Tips for using this tool

- Make sure you choose a space that is large enough for everyone to sit comfortably together, ideally in a choir formation. Allow plenty of time to bring everyone together and help the residents to a comfortable chair
- When searching for songs, try and find 'partner songs' where one group in the choir can learn one song, the other group learn a different song and then bring these together, or where one group starts the song and then the other group joins in after (e.g. Frere Jacques)
- Upbeat, familiar songs work best with a good tempo that keeps everyone going
- Always do a warm up which can involve stretching, clapping, vowel sounds and other simple vocal exercises.

# Music Movie night

Screening movies is an easy way to bring communities and care homes together. If your care home has access to a large screen and projector then organising a “night at the movies” can be a fun activity for residents, staff, families, volunteers and wider community members. There are already movies of musicals that can be shown in the care home e.g. Mamma Mia, Walk the line, Cats etc. However, there is also an opportunity to use a movie night to bring together people with a mutual interest in a topic. Documentaries with an educational purposes about a specific theme can support staff, volunteers and relatives to discuss about this topic e.g. music and dementia, on a global level.

With good organisation, this can become a monthly public event that supports the care home to have meaningful discussions about specific topics to raise social awareness. The volunteer or activity coordinator who is creating the programme can base this on ideas that come from their network through conversations about topics that people would like to explore.



Community group activity

### What will I need?

- A big screen and a projector connected to a stereo
- Enough space for people so sit
- A laptop connected to the screen (with Wifi) or DVD player
- Refreshments and snacks

### How long will this activity take?


Approx. 1 - 1.5 hours

### Tips for using this tool

- Some topics might be sensitive for some people therefore it is important to inform them about the movie/documentary and to be aware of the audience you want to invite.
- Start with a short welcome and introduce the movie/documentary. Provide everyone with a cup of popcorn to give visitors a cinema experience and have a interval with refreshments halfway through the movie.
- When the movie/documentary is finished allow some time for discussion (documentary) or for participants to review the movie (e.g. give it a star rating)

## General tips and tricks for the care home staff

- Staff, volunteers and relatives are very valuable to the residents when it comes to encouraging and supporting them to engage in the activity. Participating in activities such as music and singing also promotes equality amongst the group.
- As a facilitator of each activity we would encourage people to ask questions, to prompt residents with reactions and engage the whole group as much as possible.
- After or during each activity we would also suggest providing refreshments that allows some breathing space and supports the group to informally socialise.
- Depending on the size of the activity we would encourage the involvement of volunteers from the community to join and support the activity coordinator.
- When organising events residents can take part in crafting activities to create decorations or things to use during the activity e.g. for the musical bingo residents could make large circle bingo numbers to decorate the hall.
- When people from the community come in to give a performance in the care home it is important to try and make this meaningful. Encourage performers to consider playing resident's favourite songs or interact with residents to share stories linked to the songs and ask questions. This can support residents to feel more included.



This toolkit was designed by The Innovation School, The Glasgow School of Art and is produced in collaboration with Anderson's Care Home in Elgin.

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