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**UNDERSTANDING AND ARTICULATING
THE PROCESS AND MEANING
OF COLLABORATION
IN
PARTICIPATORY MUSIC PROJECTS
WITH MARGINALISED YOUNG PEOPLE
AND THEIR SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES**

LUCY BOLGER

**Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

September 2013

**Faculty of VCA and MCM
University of Melbourne**

Declaration

This is to certify that:

- The thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD,
- Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,
- The thesis is fewer than 100 000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Signed:  _____

Name: Lucy Elizabeth Bolger

Date: February 12, 2014

Abstract

Participatory approaches are increasingly emphasised in music therapy, advocating collaboration with participants for empowerment and social change. Participatory philosophy underpins Community Music Therapy (CoMT) and is the theoretical framework for the study presented in this thesis. To date, CoMT theorists have advocated strongly for participatory approaches in music therapy to promote health and wellbeing in communities (Stige, Andsell, Elefant & Pavlicevic, 2010; Stige & Aaro, 2012), and a growing number of case study examples offer contextual examples of participatory practice in music therapy.

Whilst collaboration is frequently referred to as an underlying principle and feature of participatory music therapy practice, there is a notable lack of literature that practically examines the process of collaboration with communities beyond single case examples, or the meaning of that collaboration for the community participants themselves. Rolvsjord (2010) has identified collaboration in music therapy as a shared, dialogic process of negotiation between music therapist and participants that is characterised by equality, mutuality and active participation in decision-making. In CoMT projects that are, by nature, outwards-facing and ecologically focussed, engaging in a genuinely shared and dialogic collaboration with community participants can be complex and challenging. This thesis describes a study that aimed to describe this challenge.

In this thesis I present learnings from an action research project in Melbourne, Australia. Three communities supporting marginalised young people engaged in participatory music projects with a music therapist. In repeating cycles of action and reflection, community participants and I worked together to plan, develop and implement their music projects. Alongside this practical decision-making, we reflected periodically on the process of collaborating together and the meaning of the process for the participants involved. Throughout the process, these reflections with individual communities were combined and shared to develop an overall understanding of collaborative process between the three groups.

Comparative analysis of the process of collaboration with the three participating communities focussed on two key areas: to understand and articulate the process of collaboration with communities supporting marginalised young people; and, to understand what aspects of the collaborative process were meaningful for the participants involved. Using these key areas as a frame, learnings were interpreted from the empirical material in this study using an emergent, iterative analysis process.

The analysis of empirical material identified that collaboration in participatory music projects has the potential to promote positive growth for participants in the form of strengthened connections with peers, increased self-esteem and confidence and empowerment. Learnings further indicated that this potential for empowerment is mediated by the degree of alignment between the structure of the chosen music project and particular contextual and individual factors, supporting a need for active and engaged collaboration to maximise this alignment, and subsequently the positive growth potential of participatory music projects.

Based on the interpretation of empirical material, I propose a structure of collaborative process that accounts for contextual variation between communities. This structure is based on three interpersonal interactions between music therapists and community collaborators, and highlights vital characteristics of collaboration. Critical aspects include the importance of a 'hangout period' prior to active collaboration, and the ongoing nature of negotiations within the collaborative process.

Implications from these learnings are proposed in the form of a new understanding of collaboration in music therapy - as a positive growth practice. This understanding is based on underlying principles of shared power and mutual responsibility. Particular emphasis is given to the critical and under-explored role that participant investment plays in music therapy collaborations.

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“No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it.”

(H.E Luccock)

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Chapter One: Introduction

The journey towards this research project began with a year spent living and working in a refuge for abandoned and abused women and children in rural Bangladesh. Prior to this I had spent five years working in diverse institutional and community settings in Melbourne, Australia, and was privileged to have worked with people across the lifespan, from early childhood services through to aged and palliative care. I was interested to explore how this professional experience may be of value to people in a developing-world context, those without access to support services like music therapy.

Over the yearlong period with the refuge community in Bangladesh, I worked together with a local psychosocial support team to introduce a variety of music projects to promote the health and wellbeing of the women and children supported by the refuge. This work was based on international development principles, emphasising collaboration and capacity building. Throughout the year our shared music endeavours found me (among many other things) learning Bollywood steps to popular Hindi songs from young Bangla mothers, running a drumming group using old oil cans from the kitchens, and standing onstage in a bright yellow sari with the pre-school children, and performing our personalised version of a Bangla children's song for local and international guests. Reflexivity was a crucial element of this experience, and my professional world-view was expanded by this opportunity to try and understand the application and relevance of my practice in this unusual context (Bolger, 2013).

Even before arriving in Bangladesh in 2008, I identified strongly with the principles of Community Music Therapy (CoMT), a theoretical discourse that had been emerging since the turn of the century and was grounded in ecological and participatory principles (Kenny & Stige, 2002; Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2004). This discourse has since been further developed and elaborated (as explored in the Chapter Two literature review), however, the ecological notion of engaging with context in music therapy practice, and a participatory emphasis on actively engaging participants in determining the direction and focus of music therapy, remain central to CoMT theory and practice (Stige & Aarø, 2012). In my prior

work in Australia, I had engaged with these concepts at a theoretical level that informed my approach to music therapy. In Bangladesh, I reflected on a number of complex questions about the *practical* application of these CoMT principles. My ongoing engagement with these questions informed and guided all aspects my work with the refugee community on a day-to-day basis.

I questioned how to work collaboratively with people who have never been invited to collaborate before, and how to do this in a way that is neither paternalistic nor tokenistic. I questioned the ethical merit of short, fixed-term music projects with communities, and how to develop them in a way that ensured my eventual departure did not result in loss and abandonment. I questioned how to sustainably approach this work so that music projects would have ongoing impact for the community and give them ownership over the process or product that endured after my departure. I grappled daily with these questions of collaboration, sustainability, and power that underpinned the ecological and participatory approach I was taking to my work with the refugee community in Bangladesh. These questions followed me back to Australia and prompted me to embark on this research project, in search of a deeper understanding.

My time at the refuge highlighted the importance and the inherent challenges in choosing to practice music therapy in an ecological and participatory way. This experience compelled me to consider the real-life implications and relevance of the CoMT discourse, which I had previously engaged with at a theoretical level. The end of my time in South Asia marked the beginning of a deeper and more applied theoretical exploration of participatory approaches to music therapy in this research project

Motivation for the Study

Since the turn of this century there has been a growing emphasis on participatory approaches in music therapy theory and practice, advocating collaboration with participants for empowerment and social change (Stige, 2002; Rolvsjord, 2004, 2006, 2010; Stige, Ansdell, Pavlicevic & Elefant, 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012). This has reflected global trends in public policy since the latter half of the 20th century, whereby health, governance and community development

policy has increasingly prioritised citizen participation (UN Assembly, 1948, 1989; Hochachka, 2010; WHO, 1989, 2008). The advent and ongoing development of the Community Music Therapy (CoMT) discourse (Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2004; Stige et al, 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012) and Resource-Oriented Music Therapy (ROMT) (Schwabe, 2005; Rolvsjord, 2010) have been important contributions to the theoretical understanding of participatory principles in music therapy.

To date, the literature has offered a strong philosophical and theoretical understanding of the relevance of participatory principles in music therapy, and a range of strong practical examples that have demonstrated these principles in individual music therapy contexts (these contributions to the literature are examined in depth in Chapter Two). However, there has been a notable lack of literature informing our understanding of the processes and procedures that underpin participatory approaches to music therapy. As an applied discipline, this understanding is necessary for music therapists to confidently apply CoMT theory to our work and coherently describe this work to others.

In particular, a practical understanding of collaboration, a concept central to participatory practice, is an area that has not been explored in depth in related music therapy literature. Both CoMT and ROMT theory have specified collaboration as a fundamental underlying feature of participatory work (Stige et al., 2010; Rolvsjord, 2010). However, in music therapy practice with communities, the challenging reality of collaborating with community participants is complex and not at all self-evident, and requires articulation. A lack of in-depth understanding of what it meant by 'collaboration' in CoMT has perhaps been compounded by the fact that 'collaboration' appears to have become something of an umbrella term in music therapy, often used to describe any and all interaction, irrespective of considerations of power and purpose. A more nuanced definition of collaboration as it was understood in this study is described in the proceeding section of this chapter (p5).

The emergent nature of collaboration makes it difficult to anticipate structures or objectives from the outset of a project, as these are necessarily developed during the process itself. This can be challenging when advocating with administrators for participatory approaches to practice. The music therapy

profession would benefit from a language with which to articulate the process of collaboration, in order to communicate with one another, other professionals, funding bodies and policy makers, and most importantly, with music therapy participants themselves.

In the closed therapeutic space of a clinical music therapy setting using a psychodynamic model, collaborative process has been well established and prioritised in the form of the therapeutic alliance negotiated between therapist and client (Hadley, 2003). However, moving out of the therapy room into community contexts, music therapists require a practical understanding of collaboration that is outward-facing and incorporates the ecological nature of CoMT practice. This ecological approach recognises that it is necessary to engage with people within the context of their community in music therapy (Stige et al., 2010). This calls for an understanding of collaboration that takes into account the unavoidable contextual variation that music therapists encounter and engage with in CoMT practice. This ecological perspective informed the aim and scope of this study, outlined below.

Aim and Scope of the Study

The aim of this study was to increase practical understanding of the process of collaboration in participatory music projects between music therapists and participating communities, and the meaning of that collaboration for the participants involved. In this study I was informed by music therapy theorist Randi Rolvsjord's conceptualisation of collaboration. Although Rolvsjord's description was proposed specifically for mental health, I believed it reflected my own understanding of collaboration, and felt it could be applied to the community-based context of this study. In her ground-breaking book *Resource-Oriented Music Therapy in Mental Health Care* (2010), Rolvsjord identified collaboration in music therapy as a shared and interactive process between therapist and participant, characterised by equality, mutuality, and participation (p77-80).

Based closely on Rolvsjord's descriptions of these three characteristics, I developed an explanation of each that was tailored to the community-based focus

in this study. *Equality* referred to an awareness of the equal rights of all participants and an active intent to contravene imbalanced power relations throughout the collaborative process by acknowledging and valuing the different strengths and skills brought by different participants. *Mutuality* referred to a shared and responsive relationship between participants, resulting in shared responsibility for the process towards a shared goal or understanding. *Participation* referred to active, collective participation in decision-making by all collaborators, including the music therapist, throughout the process.

Based on these descriptions, collaboration in this study was understood as a dialogic group process that actively sought to engage all participants in developing and enacting a shared music project. I took the perspective that the potential benefit of collaboration for participants lay in the experiential process of being a collaborator itself and negotiating the direction and purpose of this music project. This understanding of collaboration emphasised the value of the *process* of collaborating, rather than focusing on the outcome or product of the collaboration.

In this study I undertook a comparative analysis of the process of collaboration with three different communities. I used the comparison of these experiences to interpret a relative understanding of collaborative process that sought to transcend the individual processes in each separate context. By using this comparative approach I intended to develop an understanding of collaborative process that took into account inevitable contextual variation in music therapy practice.

Given the wide variety of potential target populations for CoMT practice, I narrowed the scope of this study to focus on marginalised young people and their supporting communities. In this study, I have used the term *marginalised* to describe the fact that the groups of young people engaged in this study were living in particularly deprived and challenging life situations that limited their access to opportunities available to average young people in Australia. The particular circumstances of the three groups of young people engaged in this study and descriptions of their supporting communities are detailed in Chapter Three.

I chose young people as the key collaborators in this research project for two reasons. The first was my personal interest and experience working with young people in a variety of institutional and community settings. The second was the fact that many young people have a strong and significant relationship with music (McFerran, 2010). This suggested that a participatory music project had potential as an accessible and appropriate way for this target group to explore what it means for them to engage in a collaborative process, a stated aim of this study.

Based on the aim and scope of this study, I proposed two objectives for the research project:

1. To understand what elements of young people's collaboration in a participatory music project were identified as meaningful to the young people involved
2. To understand and articulate the process of collaboration in participatory music projects with communities supporting marginalised young people, in a way that:
 - a. acknowledged the contextual variation of unique participating communities, and
 - b. honoured the complexity of our work

These two objectives sought to examine the process of collaboration from two different perspectives. The first objective considered collaboration from the young people's perspective, and sought to identify what was meaningful for them about their involvement in collaboration. *Meaningful* in the context of this study referred to aspects of their involvement that mattered to them or made a difference to their experience. The second objective took an interpersonal perspective, and sought to explore what happened in the process of collaboration between music therapists and communities in this study and how this could be conceptualised and described.

These objectives were designed to build on what was known about the process and meaning of collaboration in participatory approaches to music

therapy, in order to inform future collaborations between music therapists and communities supporting marginalised young people. In this study I sought an applied understanding of collaboration that created a link between the theoretical idea of collaboration in music therapy (outlined on p5) and the practical process of collaboration in CoMT. I aimed to inform future collaborations between music therapists and communities at three levels:

- At a community level, I sought to determine the potential meaning and impact of collaboration from the perspective of the community participants involved;
- At the music therapy profession level, I sought to develop a practical understanding of collaboration in participatory music therapy that can support music therapists to:
 - Engage with communities in collaborations that are emergent and grounded in the principles of equality, mutuality and shared decision-making
 - Articulate and communicate about this collaborative process both within and beyond the music therapy profession
- At a societal level, I sought to develop a clear and practical platform and language for collaboration in music therapy with which to advocate for participatory approaches to music therapy to policy makers and funding bodies.

The Approach to Inquiry in this Study

In this study I took a participatory approach to inquiry. In doing so, I emphasised research *with* participants, and placed value on the development of knowledge that was practically applicable to the participants involved. Participatory inquiry developed in response to an identified need to practically engage with problems in order to understand them, and the belief that it is the role of research not just to observe but also to have an impact on situations (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Action research is a research design based on the principles of participatory inquiry, and was the methodological approach taken in this

research project. The design features of action research are outlined in the Methodology Chapter of this thesis (p71).

Participatory inquiry and action research have had an eclectic history, influenced by many ideologies, from social psychology to systems theory, through to organisational philosophy (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). In particular, two participatory theorists significantly influenced my own understanding of participatory inquiry. The progressive thinking of Kurt Lewin and Paulo Friere has furthered the development of participatory inquiry through critical reflection on the social issues and structures that inform participatory inquiry, and their impact on the purpose and structure of research.

These two significant theoretical perspectives have influenced my thinking as a participatory researcher, and subsequently the design of this study. It is important to note that Jürgen Habermas and the philosophical discourse of critical theory offers another influential school of thought that informs many participatory researchers. However, this perspective did not contribute significantly to my understanding in developing this study, and is therefore not included in this overview.

The Influence of Kurt Lewin's Writings on this Study

Kurt Lewin was a German-American social psychologist who has been attributed with first using the term 'action research' (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Stige, 2002). Although not necessarily the first to undertake research practices now associated with participatory inquiry, Lewin's early pioneering work has contributed a great deal to the ongoing development of action research as a methodology for participatory inquiry, and has informed the work of many of his contemporaries (Bradbury, Mirvis, Neilsen, & Pasmore, 2008).

Lewin proposed that in order to effectively research a group of people, it was necessary to include members of that group in the research process, as they contributed a unique and important perspective to the study (Lewin, 1946). Innovative in the 1940s, this perspective has subsequently become a foundational element of participatory inquiry. Lewin also proposed that research should be structured in a stepwise spiral of planning, action and evaluation (Lewin, 1946;

Stige, 2002). This concept of the action-analysis spiral now forms the structural basis for modern action research design and is employed in this study.

In addition to these formative methodological contributions to action research, in *Action Research and Minority Problems*, Lewin (1946) argued that minority problems were also majority problems, indicating that issues of a minority group had a broader impact on the majority. He stated that the majority attitude towards minority groups contributed to the ability of minority groups to overcome challenges, and that the key to successful social change lay in effective intergroup relations. This perspective highlighted that research targeting the issues and experience of marginalised populations had direct relevance to society as a whole.

Like Lewin, I believe that it is important for the growth and development of society as a whole that minority perspectives are heard and acknowledged. I feel that in Australian society, the most dangerous factor segregating groups of people is fear resulting from a lack of understanding of the experiences and motivations of people whose life circumstances mean that they are different to the majority of Australians. This fear can lead to antisocial attitudes and behaviour between minority and majority groups, limiting the potential of people from both groups. This informed my decision to focus this research project on the experience of three groups of marginalised young people in Melbourne, Australia, in order to offer an opportunity for their minority perspectives to be heard.

The Influence of Paulo Freire's Writings on this Study

Paulo Freire was a Brazilian educator whose work with the education of oppressed and marginalised people has significantly informed participatory approaches to inquiry (Hunt, 2005; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). His work has been influential in the development of participatory action research (PAR), a method of participatory inquiry that strongly emphasises an emancipatory perspective towards social change. Freire's philosophies have been particularly influential with participatory action research projects in the developing world, where participatory approaches are often considered to be highly relevant.

In his foundational book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1972) proposed that oppression was a phenomenon that occurred through mutual

acceptance between the oppressor and the oppressed. Freire stated that this occurred because there was a perceived mutual benefit, whereby the oppressor maintained power and the oppressed had the safety and security of maintaining the 'status quo' (Freire, 1972). He proposed that the key to liberation for marginalised people was for them to become aware of and understand their situation and their needs, and to be able to critically examine their lives. He advocated that to this end, education should be a dialogic process between people who have equal capacity to contribute. For this to be possible, teachers as well as students must be committed to the process (Freire, 1972). The tenets of equality and liberation in Freire's work have enduring relevance for participatory approaches to inquiry, and his principles of developing knowledge through participatory dialogue have enduring relevance beyond the sphere of education.

Freire's emphasis on the importance of equality and dialogue in the interactions between participants has been influential on the focus for this study. Like Freire, I believe that the potential for marginalised populations to influence their own lives lies in their ability to engage as mutual partners in their experience. This priority on a shared and mutual process of learning has informed my interest in understanding the process of collaboration with marginalised young people in this study.

Summarising the influence of Lewin and Freire. From their different perspectives that represent different priorities and contexts, both Lewin and Freire have provided valuable insight into the potential relevance of collaboration, empowerment and social change as ideals that can underpin research. I closely identify with their position that research can play a role in promoting social equality, or adversely, perpetuating inequality. This prompted me to pursue a participatory approach to inquiry in this study.

Principles of Participatory Inquiry Informing this Study

I identify myself as a participatory researcher because my values, beliefs and assumptions about the purpose and meaning of research are closely aligned with the philosophical and methodological principles of participatory inquiry. These

philosophical and methodological principles of participatory inquiry have been succinctly summarised by Lincoln, Lyndham & Guba (2011) as:

- Reality is co-created in interaction with others and environment
- Research findings are established through participatory transaction with a focus on practical knowing
- Research has an action-orientation with a focus on transformation towards human flourishing
- Collaborative inquiry occurs at all points in the research process

In the remainder of the introduction I present the overall understanding of participatory inquiry that informed this research project, grounded in the underlying principles summarised above. To do this I describe the values, beliefs and assumptions I brought to this research project, and how they were informed by my stance as a participatory researcher.

Beliefs and assumptions about the nature of reality. Participatory inquiry is based on belief in a participative reality. This ontological perspective acknowledges a subjective-objective reality whereby existing objective structures, environments and phenomena in the world interplay with each individual's subjective perception, based on personal experiences, beliefs and understanding (Lincoln, Lyndham & Guba, 2011). This interplay results in a co-created, contextual reality that is comprised of various individual perceptions negotiated in a participative relationship with one another, society and the world (Heron & Reason, 1997).

This belief in a contextual, interactive reality led me to employ an ecological approach when engaging collaborators in this study. The target population in this study was marginalised young people. However, given my belief that these young people's reality is co-created in interaction with their supporting communities, I chose to also consider members of these supporting communities as potential research participants in this study. I called this a 'systems approach' to collaboration, whereby any member of the system

surrounding the marginalised young people might potentially be engaged as a collaborator in the research project.

Throughout this thesis I refer to research participants as ‘players’. I found this term to be more accessible to people than ‘participant’ or ‘co-researcher’, and to more clearly encompass the varied roles different participants played in this ‘systems approach’ to collaboration. In each of the three participating communities in this research project, some people were active participants in the process, while others took a more passive, supporting role. I adopted ‘player’ as a global term to refer to any person engaged as a collaborator in the music projects in this study.

By comparing three music projects from three separate communities, I took the concept of a co-created reality beyond the scope of individual communities, and sought to learn from the comparison between community contexts. In essence, this was a further co-creation based on the interplay between three unique community perspectives. In doing this I made the assumption that the comparison of the contextual realities of three separate communities could offer a deeper, relative understanding about the process of collaboration in participatory music projects. Further to this, I made the assumption that this relative understanding about collaboration might provide insights that could inform future collaborations between music therapists and communities supporting marginalised young people.

Beliefs and assumptions about the nature of knowledge. Participatory inquiry regards knowledge generation as a critically subjective process of active collaborative reflection. This epistemological perspective emphasises the value of practical and contextually relevant knowledge generated through participatory transaction. Four forms of knowing are valued in participatory inquiry: experiential knowing, presentational knowing, propositional knowing, and practical knowing (Heron & Reason, 2008). These four ways of knowing can be seen as levels that lead progressively into one another, and in this participatory approach to epistemology, “knowing will be more valid if the four ways are congruent with one another” (Heron & Reason, 2008, p368). These four ways of knowing are defined and demonstrated in the Methodology Chapter of this thesis.

The acknowledgment of different forms of knowing in participatory inquiry represents the belief that the learning gained through engagement in the collaborative process is in itself a form of practical knowledge that has inherent value (Lincoln, Lyndham & Guba, 2011). This epistemological perspective is based on the belief that knowledge is power, and that engagement in the generation of knowledge through research has the capacity to empower those people who actively engage with it. Participatory inquiry emphasises the importance of engaging collaboratively with participants in research that is about them, in order to ensure that the power in research is in the hands of the people whom the research is about (Freire, 1972).

This study was based on the belief that collaboration in research is potentially empowering for marginalised young people and their supporting communities. This belief informed the collaborative emphasis in this research project, and was a fundamental assumption underlying this research project. In this study I sought to explore this assumption by investigating the young people's perspective on what, if anything, was meaningful for them within the process of collaboration in a participatory music project with a music therapist.

Drawing further on participatory epistemology, in this study I emphasised the collaborative development of shared knowledge that was practically relevant to participants. I considered myself to be a co-participant in this collaboration, and I engaged with participants as an active collaborator in the process of knowledge generation in this study. As described earlier in this chapter (on p7), I sought to generate knowledge that was practically relevant at three levels: at the community level, at the music therapy profession level, and at a societal level.

Beliefs and assumptions about values in research. Values are considered to be intrinsic to participatory inquiry, and transformation towards human flourishing is understood as a primary purpose of research (Lincoln, Lyndham & Guba, 2011). This axiological perspective recognises that research has the capacity to create power imbalance between those who have the opportunity to access and engage with research and those who do not. It is thereby a political process that has the potential to either reduce or perpetuate inequality, and empowering participants through collaborative research practices

and access to relevant and applied knowledge is a priority in participatory inquiry. As a result, participatory inquiry often has an overt emancipatory or social change agenda (McIntyre, 2008).

In keeping with this axiology, I believe that engagement in a participatory music process fostered through mutual collaboration has the potential empower participants towards positive change in the form of increased wellbeing, personal transformation, and, ultimately, social change. I believe this orientation towards positive change for participants should be a consideration when undertaking research, and this influenced my decision to work with marginalised young people and their supporting communities in this study. I chose this target population as I considered them to be potentially vulnerable and disadvantaged due to their experiences of marginalisation. Based on this assumption I identified their engagement in this research project as a possible opportunity for positive change at the individual level, the interpersonal level, and potentially even the societal level.

In this study, I brought an orientation towards a social change to the collaborations in this study, whereby I offered social change suggestions and possibilities as they presented themselves, and used the potential for social change as a guiding perspective throughout the research project. However, I did not bring an overt social change agenda to the music projects with communities, and I was open to the possibility that participants may choose a different focus for the study. As a new person coming into participating communities to undertake this research project, I engaged with the communities as an outsider collaborating with insiders (Herr & Anderson, 2005). As a newcomer to these communities, I did not have an existing knowledge of the community on which to base a pre-existing social change agenda. It was my belief that actively taking a social change orientation to the research project would allow the potential for a social change agenda to emerge out of the collaborative process if this was the desire of community participants.

Overview of the Thesis

This thesis tells the story of this research project over the course of five chapters. I begin by offering a review of the literature (Chapter Two), examining the existing discourse on health promotion and empowerment, participatory approaches and collaboration, and social change. I explore how these broad topics relate to current theory and practice pertaining to young people and to music therapy. Chapter Three describes the methods of generating and analysing empirical material in this research project. In this section I outline the action research design for the study and the procedures used to collect and analyse empirical material.

In Chapters Four and Five I outline the learnings from the analysis and interpretation of empirical material. These learnings are presented over the course of two chapters, representing two analyses based on the two objectives for the study (see p6). In each chapter I describe the analysis process and offer an interpretation of learning for the analysis. In Chapter Six I synthesise the learnings from each analysis into an integrated discussion of the overall learnings from the research project. In this section I examine how the learnings from this research relate to the wider music therapy discourse and propose real-world implications of the study. In my final conclusion I propose how the learnings from this study may be applied to future music therapy practice with marginalised communities.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This literature review is presented three parts that explore different aspects of music therapy and related literature. Each part of this review pertains to a different aspect of this study. In Part One, I explore health promotion and empowerment in the literature. I consider how this relates to music therapy theory, with particular emphasis on CoMT as this is the approach to practice informing this study. In Part Two, I examine the music therapy literature from three perspectives that have particular relevance to this research project – people in context, participation and collaboration, and social action. In Part Three I present the literature pertaining to young people, music therapy and youth participation. I place particular emphasis on music therapy literature describing participatory approaches to practice with marginalised young people.

Part One: Health Promotion and Empowerment

A Broadening Perspective on Health Promotion and Empowerment

In 1946, the World Health Organisation identified health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (<http://www.who.int/about/definition/en/print.html>). This inclusive view of health has had implications for the scope of health-related practice in the later half of the 20th century and beyond, inviting us to consider health services beyond solely the treatment of illness. This has been reflected in the (gradual) broadening of focus in the health discourse over this period to include wellbeing, health promotion, and community building as health priorities.

Different principles have framed the understanding of the purpose and objectives of health care when moving from a ‘curing illness’ to ‘promoting health’ perspective. The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO, 1986) is a formative document that has tangibly articulated this perspective. The principles that underpin health promotion have been embedded into the Charter’s definition of health promotion below (p1):

(Health promotion is) the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and realise aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment. Health is, therefore, seen as a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept, emphasising social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. Therefore health promotion is not just the responsibility of the health sector, but goes beyond healthy lifestyles to well-being.

The underlying premise of this definition is that health and wellbeing can be promoted by fostering people's control and power over their health, and their engagement with the personal, social and environmental factors that impact on their wellbeing. This premise underlies the approach taken in this study, and is based on the notion that it is empowering for people to actively engage in decision related to their health and wellbeing. Empowerment is a complex concept that has been articulated in varied, but often related, ways (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). In this study, I present Zimmerman's (2000) understanding of empowerment, as it aligns compatibly with the philosophical orientation that underpins this study (as outlined in the Introduction chapter).

Zimmerman (1990, 1992, 1995, 2000) proposed that empowerment is contextual, and as such, what it means to be empowered will vary between individuals and between contexts. He identified that empowerment can occur at multiple levels – at the personal, the organisational and the community level – and that empowerment at one level can contribute to empowerment at other levels. Similar to Freire (1972), Zimmerman identified empowerment as a mechanism for social change. He saw empowering processes as processes of working with community participants, rather than for them, whereby community participants have an active role in change processes that concern them.

Empowerment and Music Therapy

There is a relatively small body of music therapy literature that has focused primarily on empowerment, although several studies have cited

empowerment as a benefit or objective of music therapy programs (Lejonclou & Trondalen, 2009; Magill, 2009; Oddy, 2001; van der Walt & Baron, 2006; Whipple & Lindsey, 1999; Williams & Abad, 2005). Some early empowerment literature in music therapy has suggested that empowerment was intrinsic to music therapy (Daveson, 2001a). Using clinical examples to demonstrate her argument, Daveson (2001a) proposed that similarities between empowerment strategies and music therapy practice indicated that music therapy, by its nature, is empowering. Whilst Daveson's argument and clinical examples demonstrated that music therapy is *potentially* empowering, Rolvsjord (2004) insightfully suggested that this does not necessarily mean that music therapy is categorically empowering.

Daveson's (2001a) article presented a deficit model of empowerment, whereby clients were perceived as lacking insight into their needs and the music therapist 'assists' and 'enables' them to become empowered. In the same year a different perspective on empowerment in music therapy was proposed by Procter (2001), which emphasised a focus on building on client's existing strengths and resources in an equal, collaborative partnership between client and therapist (Procter, 2001). Subsequent discourse drawing on empowerment theory has supported the further development of this strengths-based approach to empowerment in music therapy (Elefant, 2010a; Rolvsjord, 2004, 2006, 2010; Ruud, 2010; Stige, et al., 2010).

In this study I have taken this collaborative, strengths-based understanding of empowerment from the music therapy literature. Zimmerman's (2000) perspective on empowerment theory outlined above further informed this understanding. In particular, these sources have informed three core ideas about empowerment that underpin this study and are central this investigation of the literature:

1. The importance of considering people in the **context** of their community
2. An emphasis on **collaborative participation** with community members
3. The potential of empowering processes to promote **social action**

These three core ideas – context, collaborative participation and social action – are representative of the Community Music Therapy (CoMT) approach

taken in this study. CoMT is an example of music therapy practice oriented towards health promotion and wellbeing. The emergence of this perspective in music therapy is outlined below.

A Broadening Perspective on Music Therapy

The broadening perspective on health to encompass health promotion and wellbeing has been reflected in music therapy theory and practice. A key factor in this discussion in music therapy has been an emphasis on ecological perspectives. Ecological perspectives consider human development in relation to the interactions, processes and conditions that people encounter in everyday life (Bronfenbrenner, 2000). Considering people in the context of their everyday lives has gained increasing attention and priority in music therapy in recent years. However, as early as the 1980s some music therapy theorists were informed by ecological perspectives, as indicated by the pioneering work of Even Ruud and Carolyn Kenny in this area (Kenny, 1989; Ruud, 1997).

In *Defining Music Therapy*, Bruscia (1998) summarily grouped all music and music therapy practices that incorporate the wider context of a client into their work under the umbrella term “ecological practices” (Bruscia, 1998). Bruscia’s identified ecological practices as a broad and varied collection, grouped into levels of practice according to “whether the focus is on the individual, the ecology, or both, and the degree of change resulting from the interventions” (Bruscia, 1998, p231). Although the level of detail of any one ecological practice was limited, this contribution was significant as it highlighted the diversity in contextually informed approaches to music therapy practice. It was also significant as it made an early attempt, albeit simplistically, to qualify and prioritise the features of ecological music therapy practices.

The advent of Community Music Therapy. A focus on music therapy participants *within* their context in music therapy theory and research, and the consideration of the broader context of a client’s life in music therapy planning and intervention, has continued and developed with the advent of CoMT (Kenny & Stige, 2002; Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2004; Stige et al., 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012). Interestingly, CoMT was proposed as an ecological perspective by Bruscia (1998),

but has since been elaborated and developed into theoretical framework in its own right (Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2004).

In Ansdell's (2002) formative article, "Community Music Therapy and the Winds of Change" he identified an increasing focus in music therapy practices that worked with clients within their communities and engaged with their support networks, in contrast to traditional dyadic interventions in an isolated music therapy space. In response to this shift, Ansdell proposed CoMT as "a context-based and music-centered model that highlights the social and cultural factors influencing Music Therapy practice, theory and research" (Ansdell, 2002).

Subsequent dialogue surrounding CoMT has established further theoretical underpinnings for CoMT. These include the role of culture (Kenny & Stige, 2002; Stige, 2002), the relationship to health promotion and wellness (Pavlicevic, 2006; Rolvsjord, 2010; Schwabe, 2005), the development and use of theoretical language (Pavlicevic, 2003; Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2009; Small, 1998; Stige, et al., 2010), and the place of music therapy in relation to other community music and health music practices (O'Grady & McFerran, 2007a,b; Ruud, 2010).

Although originally proposed as a model, CoMT theory now functions more broadly as a theoretical framework, informing a diverse range of music therapy programs (Stige, et al., 2010). Some important key concepts that have informed the CoMT discourse towards the development of this theoretical framework are described below. These concepts are *culture*, *musicking*, *appropriation and affordance*, *resource-orientation*, and *music as a human right*. I provide an outline of each of these concepts as reported in the music therapy literature, and then conclude the theoretical section of this literature review with an overview of the current understanding of the theoretical framework of CoMT, as most recently articulated in *Invitation to Community Music Therapy* (Stige & Aarø, 2012).

Culture. Culture is a concept that has received particular attention in CoMT. This is unsurprising, given how directly context and culture relate to one another. The context-dependent nature of culture is highlighted when considering the many varied ways that the term is used. 'Work culture', 'popular culture', 'Australian culture', and 'a culture of oppression', all bring to mind a different set of pre-conceptions, understandings and generalisations, which vary

from person to person. This interrelationship of context and culture has led some theorists to use the terms interchangeably (Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2004; Stige, 2002).

In its broadest conception, the term culture has been used to identify people and relationships in context. The interrelated nature of culture was highlighted effectively and succinctly in Stige's (2002) broad definition (p38):

Culture is what happens when people spend time together; they act and interact, they produce artefacts and they use artefacts, and they do this as they make rules and break rules, if only to make new rules. Culture then is shaping people and shaped by people, in conscious and non-conscious ways.

A broad concept of culture, such as the one outlined above, incorporates both the process of social engagement and interaction, and the products that represent the lifestyle and customs of a network of people (Hawkes, 2001; Stige, 2002).

Interestingly, the public, the media and government have often equated culture with the arts (Hawkes, 2001), suggesting that artistic media, such as music, are popularly recognised as 'products' or 'artefacts' that represent culture. Given that music therapy practice incorporates both social process and the production of musical 'artefacts', Stige (2002) proposed that music therapy could reasonably be considered a cultural process.

Music therapy as culture is a concept that was given primacy in Culture-Centred Music Therapy, proposed by music therapy theorist Brynjulf Stige (2002). Stige's in-depth analysis of culture and music therapy presented a useful model for music therapy practice, highlighting the way different levels of culture related to one another in music therapy. Central was the interrelated interaction between the client, therapist, health concerns and music, moving outwards to incorporate roles, relationships, rituals and rationales, and moving further outwards to incorporate institutional, community, political, and aesthetic contexts (Stige, 2002, p209). Drawing on Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, Culture-Centred Music Therapy is an effective way of conceptualising music therapy and culture. Some CoMT theorists have perceived Culture-Centered Music Therapy as such a significant contribution that they have proposed it as a meta-theory of

CoMT (Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2009). Although this is not a widely acknowledged position, Culture-Centred Music Therapy has been undeniably influential in prompting more a more nuanced understanding of culture in the CoMT discourse.

Musicking. ‘Musicking’ is a concept that is important to acknowledge when considering people in context, as it is a word used to describe the act of engaging through music with people, objects and experiences. Musicking is a concept introduced by musicologist Christopher Small, as way to name and articulate the complex web of relationships between different elements involved in a musical experience (Small, 1998). Small originally proposed the concept of musicking in an attempt to articulate the relational and active nature of music participation (Small, 1998). He presented music as an action, stating that “to music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composing), or by dancing.” (Small, 1998, p9). Musicking has since been widely adopted in CoMT as the term used to describe music making in action (Ansdell, 2010a, 2010c; Pavlicevic, 2003; Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2009; Procter, 2004; Ruud, 2010; Stige, et al., 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012).

Small (1998) made a powerful argument that musicking is comprised of complex relationships that occur during a shared music experience: Relationships with the music itself, relationships to the experience as a whole, and relationships between different musicking experiences (Small, 1998). This articulation of the way in which relational factors are embedded in music experiences is what has made the concept of musicking such a ‘good fit’ for CoMT.

The idea that music is experienced through the relationship between the client(s), therapist, and music is fundamental to all music therapy practice (Davis, Gfeller & Thaut, 2008). Musicking has taken this same concept and expanded it out to include a broader contextual understanding of relationships that may potentially develop in a music experience. This relational “outwards-and-around” perspective has been identified as a key feature of CoMT (Stige, et al., 2010, p282).

Musical affordance and musical appropriation. Musical affordance is a complex but relevant concept proposed by music sociologist Tia DeNora, and has

been adopted and well supported among music therapy theorists (Ansdell, 2004; Rolvsjord, 2006; Ruud, 2010; Stige, 2004; Stige, et al., 2010). It is significant when looking at 'people in context' because it proposes a way of understanding "how music affects people, in a way which also includes social and cultural factors" (Ansdell, 2004, p74). The concept of musical affordance proposes that music or musical activity has the potential to afford a variety of beneficial outcomes for people, and the scope of these potentials are framed by a person's awareness of and engagement with them (DeNora, 2011). Ansdell (2004) described this as a "two-fold process of *musical affordances* and *musical appropriations*" (p73), whereby musical affordances are the properties and structures within music and music-making that have the potential to impact on participants, and musical appropriations describe how these affordances are used by participants (Ansdell, 2004).

Drawing on DeNora's work, Stige, Ansdell, Elefant and Pavlicevic (2010) attempted to 'map' this relationship between music and people. They proposed a cyclic relationship between the structural sounds, forms and shapes of music (the "musical") and the emotional, social, physical and relational associations to musical experiences (the "para-musical"), which have often been proposed as therapeutic outcomes (p298-9). They presented this musical/para-musical relationship as an ongoing cycle whereby para-musical concepts were incorporated into musical interactions that then afforded the development of further para-musical concepts (Stige, et al., 2010).

Central to this process are the contexts of the individuals engaged in the music experience, which are understood to define the parameters of musical affordance and appropriation. This theory has identified that people's perceptions, experience and actions, influenced by their context, will impact significantly on what they perceive to be the potential of a music experience (musical affordance), and will subsequently impact on the way they use the music (musical appropriation) (Ansdell, 2004; DeNora, 2000, 2007, 2011; Stige, et al., 2010). This means that:

Specific music in specific circumstances *can* variously afford emotional expression, identity clarification, communicative connection, social

aggression, or coordinating material for marching feet. But it all depends on the *when, how, and with whom* of the given context. The meaning of music(ing) is reflexively dependent on our perceptions, experiences, and actions in relation to it (Stige, et al., 2010, p298).

Musical affordance and appropriation are unfamiliar terms that point to an accurate but complex theoretical framework that is not likely to be immediately understood by the uninformed reader. The concepts of musical affordance and appropriation suggest that the potential of music to ‘help’ is directly related to the way a person chooses to use music, which in turn is directly influenced by their experience and perceptions. Although it is complicated, this theory can have direct practical applications in music therapy practice. If the experience of participating in music therapy gives people a broader understanding of the possible ways they can use music for their wellbeing, the potential of music to be helpful for these people will subsequently increase.

Resource-orientation. Resource-focused approaches in music therapy have gained theoretical momentum in recent years with the advent of a resource-oriented music therapy discourse (Rolvsjord, 2004, 2010; Schwabe, 2005). Resource-oriented music therapy takes a ‘salutogenic’ or health-focused approach to therapy, emphasising the clients’ role as active collaborators in the music therapy process. It focuses on building on clients’ resources and strengths in therapy, rather than addressing or improving health deficits (Rolvsjord, 2004, 2010; Schwabe, 2005).

A pioneer of this concept, Randi Rolvsjord (2010) proposed an in-depth theoretical framework called Resource-Oriented Music Therapy (ROMT) that was based on these principles. In her work, Rolvsjord focused specifically on mental health care, however, this important concept has had a wider influence on music therapy theory as people have interpreted resource-orientation for different arenas of music therapy practice. Of specific relevance to this study, the concept of resource-orientation has been acknowledged as a key quality of CoMT (Elefant, 2010d; Stige, et al., 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012), recognising a strengths-based approach to music therapy as fundamental to CoMT practice.

With the general trend in the health sector towards health promotion, health-focused perspectives have gained more popularity and credibility in recent years, however, they are not new to music therapy. As early as 1980, Even Ruud, a pioneer in health-focused perspectives, sought to shift the focus of his work away from illness, and to conceptualise music therapy as “an effort to ‘increase the possibilities of action’” (Ruud, 1997, p88). Additionally, a focus on building people’s strengths in music therapy has a long history, reaching all the way back to the pioneering music therapy work of Nordoff and Robbins (Nordoff & Robbins, 1965). ROMT has expanded on these foundations, collaborating with people in order for them to build on their *own* strengths (Rolvjord, 2006), and working with people to draw not just on their own personal resources, but also to access the health resources available to them, such as music (Rolvjord, 2010).

This concept of music as a resource for health and wellbeing has also gained recognition beyond the music therapy sphere, as evidenced by the UN compendium “Music as a Natural Resource” (2010). This compendium outlined music education, music therapy, and community music initiatives for health and wellbeing around the globe. This compendium is in no way comparable to the in-depth theorising around resource-orientation and music described above, and the brevity of each program outline offers no opportunity to assess the quality and theoretical basis of these programs. However, it is my opinion that this outside recognition of music’s potential as a resource for health and wellbeing is positive. I also believe that the representation of music therapy programs alongside those of other related disciplines is an important way for music therapy as a discipline to engage with the wider global discourse on music for health and wellbeing.

Music as a human right. The explicit concept of music as a human right, and subsequently music therapy as a human rights practice, is relatively new to CoMT, and was introduced explicitly to the theoretical discourse by Stige and Aarø as recently as 2012. However, as Stige and Aarø (2012) acknowledged, rights-based practice has long been implicit in music therapy. This has been evident in music therapist’s active engagement with concepts such as empowerment (Daveson, 2001a; Proctor, 2001; Rolvsjord, 2004, 2006), social change (Stige, 2003; Elefant, 2010a, 2010b; Veltre & Hadley, 2012) and inclusion

(Elefant, 2010c, 2010d; Linklater & Forbes, 2012; Rickson, 2010), as well as the growing feminist discourse in music therapy (Hadley, 2006; Edwards & Hadley, 2007; Curtis & Vaillancourt, 2012) to name a few. Specific relevant examples will be elaborated on in the second half of this literature review (p28).

A human rights perspective in music therapy relates to the global standards for human rights articulated by the United Nations. Article 27a of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN Assembly, 1948) stated “everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and the share in scientific advancements and its benefits” (p6). At a fundamental level, this recognised engagement with music as a universal human right. Subsequent UN conventions on the Rights of the Child (UN Assembly, 1989) and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Hendricks, 2007) have particularly specified the right of these vulnerable groups to access to and participation in social and cultural life, and freedom of expression with particular reference to arts-based forms of expression.

These examples represent the most basic ways our universal principles of human rights (UN Assembly, 1948) have incorporated the importance of music practices. An explicit human rights focus is emerging in the music therapy literature. In Norway, Krüger (2011) used the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a lens through which to interpret his research on the music use of children living the child welfare system. In Germany, Merkt (2012) used the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as the guiding principles of an inclusive choir. Similarly, in Canada, Curtis and Vaillancourt (2012) framed an innovative music therapy resource program designed to promote inclusion and awareness-raising for children with disabilities around the rights of children with disabilities.

These three examples have demonstrated the practical application of a human rights perspective in CoMT practice. There are many other more nuanced ways that the complex processes we engage with in music therapy could be interpreted in relation to human rights. This warrants a great deal more exploration but is beyond the scope of this literature review.

Current theoretical underpinnings of CoMT: PREPARE. The theoretical discourse on CoMT continues to evolve in response to new ideas that arise from music therapy practice and research. The five concepts described above are ideas that have significantly contributed to this ongoing conversation. The most recent understanding of CoMT as a theoretical framework was offered by Stige & Aarø (2012). They proposed seven qualities common to CoMT processes. These seven qualities are a useful way of understanding the shared characteristics of CoMT that manifest so differently in the diverse range of settings where CoMT is practiced. Stige and Aarø (2012) proposed these qualities of CoMT using the acronym PREPARE (p18-24):

P – Participatory: CoMT practice supports opportunities for “individual and social participation” (p20) and emphasises an approach where all participant voices are heard and valued.

R – Resource-Oriented: CoMT practice has a strength-based focus and draws on the social, emotional, cultural and practical resources of participants.

E – Ecological: CoMT practice “involves working with the reciprocal relationships between individuals, groups, and networks in social context”(p22).

P – Performative: CoMT practice involves an “outwards and around” approach (Stige et al., 2010, p282) and is enacted through the performance of relationships and actions in relation to the context in which they occur.

A – Activist: CoMT practitioners recognise that societal inequalities and limitations contribute to the challenges faced by participants, and are open to the possibility of CoMT as a forum for social action.

R – Reflective: CoMT practice is underpinned by ongoing reflection to understand and inform the ongoing process, grounded in dialogue and collaboration with participants.

E – Ethics-driven: CoMT practice is informed by a rights-based orientation and this approach to practice aims to value and promote the human rights of participants.

Earlier in this review I identified three core ideas about empowerment that underpin this study: context, collaborative participation, and social action (p18). These core ideas relate clearly to the qualities of CoMT outlined above. An emphasis on working with **people in context** is linked to the ecological and performative qualities of CoMT. The idea of **collaborative participation** references the participatory and resource-oriented qualities of CoMT. And, the idea of **social action** relates to the activist, reflective and ethics-driven qualities of CoMT.

These three ideas have been represented in many different ways in practice and research examples from the music therapy literature. In the subsequent sections of this review I outline the different ways music therapists have engaged with these ideas in the literature. I then narrow the focus of this review to music therapy work with young people and offer more in-depth and critical reflection on selected examples from the literature that have particular relevance for this study.

Part Two: Context, Participation and Collaboration, and Social Action

Music Therapy with People in Context

As stated in part one of this literature review, ecological practice that considers people in the context of their community has emerged as a fundamental aspect of CoMT (Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2004; Stige et al, 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012). In the music therapy literature, music therapy practice with people in context appears to have been approached in the literature from two different angles: engaging outwards with the community, and working directly with whole communities. I have selected examples and discussions from the literature that I believe contribute important insight into these two approaches.

Engaging outwards with community. One approach to working with people in context is to adopt an outwards-facing approach to work with a particular target group, where steps are taken to actively engage music therapy participants

with their surrounding communities. One way to describe this outwards-facing approach is as a 'systemic approach' to practice. This was the approach taken in the music projects in this study. I propose this language because these programs work with a particular target group, but endeavour to create opportunities to engage outwards with the social systems surrounding the people primarily engaged in music therapy.

Wood (2004) described this process in his work in neurorehabilitation, which he presented as a transitional process towards community-based musicking over time. Participants were supported to move progressively from individual institution-based music therapy sessions to group experiences, gradually transitioning to community-based music therapy groups until they were ultimately encouraged to independently access community music experiences.

Wood's (2004) approach employed a pre-determined structure that aimed to transition participants from the clinical to the community setting. Another common way that music therapy programs have engaged outwards with the surrounding community is through performance. Performance has been an increasingly prevalent aspect of CoMT processes with many different populations from oncology patients (O'Brien, 2006; Turry, 2005), to adult disability (Soshensky, 2011), to community mental health (Ansdell, 2010c, 2010d). Given music is the basis of our practice, performance offers a socially understood forum through which to link music therapy participants in to their surrounding community. Alongside this trend towards performance, a discussion of the benefits and the risks of performance in music therapy practice has emerged. This discourse has recognised that performance offers many potential therapeutic outcomes, and that it is also important to be mindful that participants do not feel compelled to perform if they are overly uncomfortable (Ansdell, 2010d, O'Grady, 2011).

Working directly with whole communities. An alternate approach to working with people in context from the music therapy literature is to engage an entire community in the music therapy process. To draw on clinical music therapy language, in this approach, the community as a whole is considered to be

the 'client' (Bolger & McFerran, 2013). This focus has led me to refer to such programs as taking a 'whole-community approach' to practice.

In some examples from the literature this has been achieved by engaging the community as a whole in a collection of music therapy projects and programs. The Music Therapy Community Clinic (MTCC) in Heideveld, South Africa has offered an example of this approach. The clinic offered a series of programs and projects designed to meet the varied and changing needs of members of the Heideveld community. Fouché's (2010) outline of the clinic's activities described a program that was deeply embedded in and responsive to the culture of the community it was situated within.

Reflecting on this approach with Pavlicevic (2010a), MTCC staff recognised that it took time and commitment to foster the relationships in the community necessary to realise this whole-community approach. I also identified this need for time to foster relationships when taking a whole-community approach with the refugee community in Bangladesh (Bolger & McFerran, 2013). This project also described a collection of music therapy projects designed to address different needs of the refugee community. However in this case the process was overlaid by a sustainability orientation as my input was limited to fixed one-year period.

On a smaller scale, Powell (2004) reflected on her work in an aged care facility as using a whole-community approach. She identified five different music therapy practices that engaged different levels of the aged-care facility's community, including small individual music therapy sessions, incidental 'hallway' interactions, group sing-alongs, and whole-community performances and events. Alternatively Kern and Aldridge (2006) took a multidimensional approach to engaging the whole community at an inclusive childcare facility. This interesting approach incorporated different types of music therapy input, including direct music therapy interventions with children, training opportunities for staff members, and even musical adaptations to the physical environment as a platform to promote interaction and engagement for children with autism in that community.

While the above examples have described a multiple-program approach to engaging whole communities, other examples have described engaging a whole community in a single unified project. Rickson (2010) engaged whole-school

communities in a specific music therapy protocol designed to promote school inclusion for children with disabilities. In her study, Rickson identified the whole school community as her target group, but sought to address what she identified as a single, specific community need.

Group performance is another forum which has been used to engage entire communities in a single, shared project. Oddy (2001) described a whole-community event designed to build community by working towards a large-scale community performance. This single project involved the whole community in a shared music process in preparation for this one-off event. On an even larger scale, The 'Peace Train' project (Katz, 2011) engaged multiple disconnected communities from disadvantaged regions in South Africa in group choir performances, in an attempt to foster inter-racial unity and connection after Apartheid.

These examples have demonstrated the many different ways that music therapists have engaged with the idea of working with people in context in their practice, both using systemic and whole-community approaches. It is clear this is an orientation to practice rather than a particular method or framework. This orientation offers individual music therapists scope to engage with community contexts in many different ways that can be responsive to the different needs of participants and settings in which music therapy is practiced.

Comparison between contexts. The unique variation between individual contexts has been recognised in the fact that the examples above from the music therapy practice were predominantly single case examples. Models offered were relatively context-specific, and there was an overriding recognition and respect for the idea that a one-size-fits-all approach was incongruent with a contextually-informed approach to practice. However, some useful examples from the literature have used comparison between case examples to explore how variation in context relates to CoMT theory.

In the prominent CoMT text *Where Music Helps*, Stige, Ansdell, Pavlicevic and Elefant (2010) synthesised their learnings from eight distinct case examples of CoMT practice in a clarifying concluding discussion. In this discussion the authors considered the broader theoretical implications of the learnings from

CoMT with individual communities, and conceptualised these contextual examples in relation to CoMT theory. Similarly, Ooshuizen (2006) presented three examples from CoMT practice with diverse communities in South Africa. In her discussion she explored how work in these different contexts raised questions of power, equality and access in music therapy. In developing their theory of collaborative musicing, Pavlicevic and Ansdell (2009) similarly drew on diverse practice examples to exemplify how their theoretical discussion was exemplified in different real-world settings.

Each of these examples used a comparative approach to offer significant insight into how contextual variation impacted on the theoretical understanding of music therapy's role and purpose in diverse communities. However, there have been few examples in the music therapy literature that have compared practice between contexts in order to understand how contextual variation impacts on music therapy work at the applied level of music therapy practice. Two notable exceptions have engaged with this contextual variation in different ways.

McFerran and Shanahan (2011) offered an important exploration of the role of context on the mode of practice used with pre-adolescent boys with profound multiple disabilities. The authors examined music therapy sessions with the boys in a special education and a paediatric hospice setting, and directly compared both the boy's responses and the practice approach of the therapists. Interestingly they noted that with this population, there was a great deal of similarity in the therapists' approach to practice between contexts. This study was a side-by-side comparison of work with the same participants in two different contexts. In contrast, Rickson (2010) used a sequential approach to develop a music therapy consultation protocol for special-needs students. In this action research project, Rickson engaged with four different schools in succession. She compared and reflected on the experience in each school context, and used the learnings from one school to inform and develop the way the protocol was delivered in the subsequent school.

Both of these are rare examples of how a comparative analysis of music therapy between contexts can offer insight into music therapy process at a practical level. With the exception of these studies, this comparative approach has been relatively unexplored in CoMT, particularly in relation to developing

applied understandings that can inform practice. I have built on the foundations offered by these studies and employed a comparative approach in this study. As stated in the introduction to this thesis (p6) one of the aims of this study was to work towards an applied, relational understanding of collaboration to bridge the gap between the theoretical CoMT discourse and contextually specific case examples. I believe such a comparative approach can be a valuable way to develop a relational understanding of key CoMT concepts, such as collaboration, that are mindful of contextual variation, but can be translated between contexts.

Participation and Collaboration in Music Therapy

As identified in the first part of this literature review, active and engaged participation is a key element of health and wellbeing practices that strive for empowerment. At a fundamental level, the notion that people should be involved in making choices about their participation has long been a part of music therapy practice. Music therapy methods provide a great many opportunities for people to exercise choice and control over their participation. Within the course of music making, music therapists are regularly led by the participants' musical contributions, matching and mirroring their playing and allowing them to shape and direct the course of the music (Davis, Gfeller, & Thaut, 2008; Wigram, 2004).

Participants can also exercise choice and control over the type and order of activities in a session and the instruments that will be used (Rainey-Perry, 2003). In song writing activities they make decisions regarding the lyric and musical content and have ultimate control and ownership of the final product (Baker, Wigram, Stott, & McFerran, 2008; Jones, 2005; Ledger, 2001). At a more fundamental level, people can decide whether or not to participate in music therapy at all. Often, in environments such as hospitals, music therapy may be the one intervention that people are able to decline, and sometimes this decision not to participate in music therapy can be very powerful (Daveson, 2001a).

For people experiencing hospitalisation, incarceration or whose opportunities for choice and control have been limited by disability, mental health difficulties or challenging life situations, these opportunities to exercise choice and control in music therapy have been identified as a positive way for people to impact on their world (Daveson, 2001b; Justice, 1994; Kallay, 1997; McFerran,

2009; Sheridan & McFerran, 2004). Choice and control within the music therapy process is an intrinsic and embedded way that music therapy practice supports participants to be active participants. With the increasing emphasis on participatory and ecological practices in the discipline, participation in music therapy has been expanded beyond basic choice and control to incorporate participant involvement in agenda setting and program development (Stige, 2006).

Collaboration in music therapy. In the important paper *“On a notion of participation in music therapy”*, Stige (2006) introduced a more nuanced understanding of participation to the music therapy discourse. He recognised that participation was not only a matter of being present and involved with others in music therapy, but that it was a cultural act that people engaged with in interaction with others and the environment. He identified this culturally-informed understanding as “participation as collaborative activity” (Stige, 2006, p133).

Collaboration was the primary focus of this research project, and has been interpreted as a way of participating in music therapy that encourages active involvement of participants in determining the trajectory and purpose of music therapy sessions. As outlined in the introduction to this thesis, collaboration is a term that has been used frequently in the music therapy literature, but rarely articulated in depth (p7). This is with the exception of Rolvsjord’s (2010) outline of collaboration that has formed the basis for the way collaboration is conceptualised in this study (see p7).

Stige (2006) offered a brief but comprehensive outline of how collaboration is undertaken in music therapy (p134):

In music therapy, collaboration usually involves music-making of some sort, which is contextualised by a series of complementing activities, such as talking, thinking, and planning. The goods produced may range from musical products (and even productions) to psychological insights, and they contribute to the development of relationships and negotiations on values that reproduce or transform the setting, and possibly also its contexts

While this outline does not include the underlying principles that inform collaboration, it offers a useful practical description of what collaboration involves in music therapy.

Professional collaborations. In the music therapy literature, references to collaboration have often described collaborative work with other professionals. Turry and Marcus (2005) described the collaboration between music therapists working as co-therapists in Nordoff-Robbins music therapy. A growing body of literature has examined and advocated for collaboration with other allied health and education professionals, including significant contributions from music therapists working in school inclusion, disability settings, and neuro-rehabilitation (Leung, 2008; Molyneux, Koo, Piggot-Irvine et al, 2012; Rickson, 2010, 2012; Rychener, 2006a, 2006b; Stige, 2002; Twyford, 2007, 2012; Twyford & Watson, 2008). These examples represent a movement towards trans-disciplinary practice that has encouraged music therapists to explore and communicate how their skills interplay with other professionals across a variety of settings.

Professional collaborations between music therapists and musicians have also been explored in the music therapy literature. Shoemark (2009) and Kildea (2007) described the way collaborations with symphony orchestra musicians in an acute hospital environment offered rich benefits for both musicians and patients. Both authors described the importance of offering support and practical guidance to musicians working in the hospital environment, and recognised the need to work and communicate as a team in this complex environment. In the community setting, Oosthuizen, Fouche and Torrence (2007) investigated the contributions of community musicians and music therapists to collaborative CoMT work in South Africa. In this study the authors recognised the valuable contribution of community musicians as role models, teachers, and cross-cultural representatives. They identified music therapists as bringing a therapeutic emphasis to these collaborations, in the form of fostering relationships, mentoring and holding the group process.

Professional collaboration is the most prevalent way collaboration has been explored in the music therapy literature, and is an important and growing aspect of music therapy practice. Collaboration with other professionals can lead to an alignment of goals and cohesive service delivery that is highly beneficial to music therapy participants. However, in order for collaboration to have an empowerment focus, as explored in this study, music therapy participants and/or their supporting communities must be engaged in the collaborative process.

Collaboration with supporting communities. The notion that music therapy participants' supporting communities – such as their family members or carers – should be engaged as collaborators in music therapy is increasingly prevalent in the music therapy literature. This focus on engaging supporting communities in collaboration has developed out of family-centred approaches to music therapy, prevalent in child-based services (Oldfield & Flower, 2008; Thompson, 2012), neonatal care (Nocker-Ribaupierre, 2011; Shoemark & Dearn, 2008) and aged care (Baker, Grocke & Pachana, 2012; Clair & Ebberts, 1997). Reflecting on examples that have taken this approach in the literature, there appears to be spectrum of different ways that music therapists have worked with supporting communities in music therapy, involving varying degrees of collaboration.

Some examples from the literature have described a family-centred approach where the family unit as a whole was recognised as the 'client' in music therapy. This approach has been prevalent in descriptions of work with children in a diverse range of settings, from hospitals (Ayson, 2008), to child and family psychiatry (Oldfield & Bunce, 2001). It has been described in work with children experiencing a variety of challenges, from autism (Archer, 2004) through to neglect (Jacobsen & Wigram). This approach has also been prioritised in music therapy with newborn infants, whereby music therapists have often worked to facilitate the parent-child relationship in music therapy. Examples from this area have included both work with premature infants in hospital settings (Nocker-Ribaupierre, 2011; Shoemark & Dearn, 2008; Whipple, 2000) and with mothers experiencing postnatal depression and their infants (Brotons & Marti, 2003).

Some interesting examples of engaging carers in music therapy has been described in work with older adults with dementia. Baker, Grocke and Pachana (2012) described a project where music therapists supported spouses to independently engage in music activities with their loved ones. This study found that this program was successful in benefiting the spousal relationship. This was congruent with the findings of Clair and Ebberts (1997) who recognised that music therapy could support positive interactions between loved ones in dementia care.

The breadth of such examples in the literature supports the value of engaging supporting communities in music therapy, and offers important insight into how this can be undertaken. Engaging families and carers to participate in and sometimes lead the music therapy process can offer opportunities to foster a collaborative dynamic with supporting communities. However, the examples from the literature above suggest that the degree to which a collaborative dynamic is achieved is highly varied in music therapy programs engaging with families and carers. The understanding of the supporting community as the 'client' is not unilaterally collaborative. It can also maintain quite a traditional therapist-client dynamic, where music therapists bring expert skills and families or communities are recipients of those skills.

Some particular examples from the music therapy literature have demonstrated a particularly strong commitment to collaboration with supporting communities, by engaging supporting communities not only within sessions, but in development and evaluation aspects of the program. For example, in early intervention work with indigenous families in Australia, Williams and Abad (2005) described engaging with community elders in planning to appropriately adapt their music therapy intervention to the culture and dynamics of the community. Hasler (2008) also described a commitment to engaging supporting communities in planning in her work with young people living in foster care.

Thompson (2012) showed a profound commitment to a collaborative approach when working with families of children with autism. In her research project she made a powerful argument that parents are experts on their child's experience, and her model of music therapy practice routinely engaged with parents in reflections and planning for the music programs with their child. In

this study, parents reported this as having a positive impact on their relationship and understanding of their children. Rickson (2010) described a similar commitment to collaborative planning and evaluation with carers of students with disabilities in mainstream education. In her action research study, Rickson consultatively engaged carers from school communities in developing a music therapy intervention protocol to promote inclusion for children with disabilities in mainstream school settings.

Although the level of collaboration varied between examples, all of the literature in this section described music therapy practice that sought to engage supporting communities in the music therapy process to some degree. Notably, the people being supported by these communities were not engaged as collaborators in these examples. This is reasonable as in most cases, as age-related factors as well as developmental or cognitive challenges presented significant barriers to this possibility. However, a ground-breaking example from the music therapy literature has challenged the assumption that cognitive or developmental challenges preclude people from engaging collaboratively in music therapy.

Warner (2005) undertook an action research project with a group of adults with significant communication and learning difficulties. Her belief and commitment to enlisting these people's voices, and her use of accessible music-based approaches to do so, resulted in a collaborative process where the participants were able to substantively impact on the process of inquiry. This important study recognised that while it may not be easy, music therapy can offer possibilities for people with cognitive and communication deficits to collaborate. This study was unique in engaging participants with disabilities in music therapy collaboration, however, most of the few examples of collaboration with participants in music therapy have engaged participants who are able and verbal.

Collaboration with music therapy participants. Given the increasing participatory emphasis in music therapy (Stige & Aarø, 2012), it is very likely that many music therapists are engaging collaboratively with participants in their work. However, this has seldom been described in the literature, and if so has often been referred to only briefly. In this section I outline a selection of examples

from the literature that have described collaborative work with music therapy participants, emphasising examples from the literature have not only stated that they have collaborated but have offered an explanation of how and why they did so. Certain examples detailing work with young people are notably missing, as they are included in part three of this review.

Involving participants in collaboration has been described in music therapy work with individuals, groups, and whole communities. As part of her introduction of Resource-Oriented Music Therapy, Rolvsjord (2010) offered several examples of collaboration where clients were integral to determining the direction of their individual music therapy work in the mental health setting. Turry (2005) described a transitional process towards a collaborative dynamic with an individual oncology patient as their therapy process evolved from a psychotherapy to a CoMT approach as the patient expressed an interest in building on her music therapy experience outside the therapy room. In the related discipline of music sociology, Batt-Rawden, DeNora and Ruud (2005) described how individuals with chronic illness living at home were engaged as collaborators in an independent music listening exercise. Participants were involved in choosing songs and reflecting on the experience and meaning of music as a health resource in everyday life.

In descriptions of collaboration with groups in the music therapy literature, there has been some emphasis on collaborative evaluation. In a series of articles describing a community-based mental health group, authors have reported ongoing participant involvement in developing and implementing evaluation surveys to inform the progress of the program (Baines, 2003; Baines & Danko, 2010). This collaborative program evaluation has also been described in a community-based early childhood program for at-risk families (Williams, 2006), where the engaging with participants offered insight into shortcomings and inconsistencies in the evaluation processes.

In-session collaboration with groups of participants has often been described in quite general terms in the music therapy, but has been referred to in areas as diverse as school-based trauma (McFerran & Teggelove, 2011), prison settings (O'Grady, 2011) and community-building performance (Oddy, 2001). The few examples of action research in music therapy have provided more

detailed descriptions of this collaborative group process. Elefant (2010a, 2010b) described a collaborative action-reflection process with a pair of choirs for people with physical disabilities, in order to maximise the positive experience for all participants. Hunt (2005) offered another example of school-based collaborative process with adolescents from refugee backgrounds, which will be elaborated later in this review (p47).

Interestingly, examples from the music therapy literature with an international development focus have often more overtly described collaborative processes and structures in their programs. These cross-cultural examples have described collaborations in the planning and implementation of music projects with whole communities of people, from school communities in Thailand (Rickson, 2009), to a Palestinian refugee community in Lebanon (Storsve, Westby & Ruud, 2010), to a local children's charity on the West Bank (Coombes, 2011), to a women and children's refuge community in rural Bangladesh (Bolger, 2011; Bolger & McFerran, 2013). The direct focus on community involvement in decision-making and implementation in these projects has perhaps been emphasised due to the cross-cultural and fixed-term nature of international development work. This necessitates the active involvement of community members to ensure culturally appropriate practices and the ongoing impact of music therapy programs (Bolger & McFerran, 2013).

Summarising collaboration in the music therapy literature. The examples from the literature described in this section have outlined music therapy programs that I believe have demonstrated a collaborative orientation to practice, to varying degrees. References to collaboration in the music therapy literature are distinctly more prevalent in descriptions of collaborative practice with other professionals in relation to transdisciplinary practice. Additionally, working with supporting communities by involving families or carers in developing and delivering music therapy services has been described frequently in the literature.

There are noticeably fewer descriptions of collaboration that directly engage music therapy participants in directing the trajectory of programs, and those that exist have described collaboration in very specific, contextual terms.

There are several possible reasons for this limited number. Given the complex populations that music therapists work with, participants may be considered too vulnerable or challenging to engage in collaboration. Alternatively, perhaps collaborating with professionals and community 'helpers' is more aligned with the existing structures of music therapy practice, and therefore undertaken more frequently. Or perhaps collaboration with music therapy participants is so prevalent and embedded in music therapy practice that it is not considered necessary to overtly describe it in case studies from practice. However, this final possibility is highly unlikely, and there is therefore a need for further research into collaborative practices that engage directly with participants in music therapy.

Additionally, in this extended review of the music therapy literature I did not identify any literature that focused particularly on the process of collaboration itself – on how music therapists practically undertake collaborative processes in music therapy. Stige and Aarø (2012) have offered a detailed and useful theoretical representation of participatory processes in music therapy, however, their construct does not offer an in-depth, applied understanding of the collaborative dynamic that underlies this participatory practice. This study has focused on articulating this practical understanding of collaboration with participants in music therapy.

Social Action and Music Therapy

The third perspective on the music therapy literature to be explored in part two of this literature review is music therapy for social action. As recognised in part one of this review, the notion of music as a human right and the relevance of an activist agenda in music therapy practice has become increasingly prevalent in the literature (see p41). The concept of music therapy as a forum to take social action has been explored from a number of angles in the music therapy literature, and will be outlined in this section of the literature review.

Social action in the form of crisis response is one way music therapists have engaged with this idea. Else (2010) has been a pioneer of music therapy's role as a psychosocial support service in disaster response. She offered an important perspective on the need for realistic expectations and integrated

teamwork when working with communities in crisis, and advocated for a flexible approach. This need for flexibility has been reflected in descriptions of music therapy programs in the wake of disaster. Reflecting on music therapy work after the Rhode Island nightclub fire, Whitehead-Pleaux (2005) described the challenge of engaging communities in acute crisis, recognising the need for existing relationships with disaster response services in order to effectively engage with communities. Otera (2012) advocated for time spent creating connections with the community in her work with communities after devastating earthquakes in Japan. However, in spite of the challenges involved, examples from the literature have supported the value of arts-based interventions in communities impacted by natural and man-made disaster (Lang & McInerney, 1999, 2002; Woodward, 2012).

Other interpretations of social action in the music therapy literature have identified social action as an agenda informing music therapy program development. Edith Boxhill, the founder of Music Therapists for Peace (1997) has long been an advocate for music therapists as global citizens whose job is to promote peace and anti-violence, and described enacting this peace-building agenda in school-based music therapy programs. Other examples from the literature have described how music therapy was used as a process through which to advocate and take action on environmental issues (Faire and Langan, 2004; Jourdan, 2010), and on the rights to inclusion and arts access for people with disabilities (Curtis & Vaillancourt, 2012; Merkt, 2012).

In addition to these examples of direct action and advocacy, many music therapists have described ethical and values-driven perspectives that have informed their approach to research and practice in music therapy. Krügar (2011) used a human rights perspective to frame his analysis of the experience of music for young people living in care, and several music therapists have offered theoretical perspectives on social justice that align with this human rights frame (Curtis, 2012; Vaillancourt, 2012). Vaillancourt (2009) examined the relevance of peace and social justice themes in music therapy student mentoring. She advocated for the use of arts-based inquiry and participatory approaches to support students to engage with social action ideals as part of their development as music therapy professionals. Feminism has been another

emerging perspective in music therapy that advocates for social action and equality as an ethical stance shaping music therapy practice and research (Baines, 2013; Curtis, 2013; Edwards & Hadley, 2007; Hadley & Edwards, 2004; Hadley, 2006). In a related perspective prioritising equality, Baines (2013) and Smith (2012a) introduced the notion of anti-oppressive practice as an approach to music therapy that actively seeks to act against oppressive societal structures.

Developing social action agendas with music therapy participants.

All of the examples above described social action agendas that framed or informed music therapists' approaches to their work. These important perspectives recognised the professional responsibility of music therapists to contribute positively to fostering a just and equal global community. In the literature there are fewer examples of social action that have been formulated and developed *with* participants towards participants' own social action priorities.

Stige (2002) offered an early example of this approach when he worked together with a local community to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities in the local marching band. A young man with a disability who sought to engage in musicking with his wider community proposed this inclusion agenda. Elephant (2010c) similarly described an inclusion agenda that emerged from her music therapy work integrating children with disabilities into a music group in a mainstream school. The relationships fostered in this program prompted the children involved to advocate for the development of an inclusive summer camp so that their friends with disabilities could attend camp with them. In addition, Pavlicevic (2010b) described a music therapy outreach project for at-risk youth in South Africa, where an anti-crime message emerged from the songwriting project with the young people.

It is telling that while many music therapists bring a social action orientation to their practice, the literature offers relatively few examples of social action in music therapy that have been generated out of the music therapy process with participants. This suggests that it is not easy to foster a shared social action agenda in music therapy. However, this does not mean that it is not worthwhile to try. Instead, it suggests that further exploration of how to engage with communities to explore the potential for social action in music therapy is

necessary. In this study I brought a social action orientation alongside a commitment to collaboration with participants through which I aimed to further explore this challenge.

McFerran and Hunt (2008) investigated this challenge when reflecting on a series of three music therapy research projects with young people experiencing grief, loss and trauma due to bereavement and migration. In each of these projects the authors took a participatory approach and actively invited young people to explore the potential impact of their musicking on the wider community. The young people repeatedly rejected these invitations, focusing instead on their own group experience. This led the authors to propose that a social action agenda may not be appropriate with young people, as adolescence is recognised as a self-focussed developmental stage. However, the authors also recognised that longer timeframes and an approach that was more integrated in the community may promote young people's interest in the wider social impact of their experience, and suggested that further research into this area was required. In this study I aimed to build on these recommendations to further the understanding of the role and relevance of social action in music therapy with young people.

Part Three: Music Therapy and Young People

In part one of this literature review I have outlined the theoretical foundations of health promotion, empowerment and CoMT that underpinned this study. In part two I have explored the ways that key concepts related to this study are addressed in the music therapy literature, and identified the areas for further research. In this final section of the literature review, I examine the literature from the perspective of music therapy with young people – the target population for this study. I present a theoretical understanding of music's role in adolescence, and outline current descriptions of music therapy practice with young people. I place particular emphasis on examples from the music therapy literature with young people that have described an emphasis on context, collaborative participation, social action, or a combination of these key concepts.

Music and Young People

Music has been widely recognised to be an effective and engaging medium for young people (McFerran, 2010; Derrington, 2012). Music has been found to serve a variety of psychological functions for adolescents, as a way to explore identity and emotions, and to facilitate agency and interpersonal relationships (Laiho, 2004). Group interviews with young people identified music as a versatile tool for mood regulation used by this age group (Saarikallio & Erkkila, 2007) in socially, environmentally and contextually contingent ways. Specific areas they identified were the use of music for entertainment, revival, strong sensation, diversion, discharge, mental work and solace (Saarikallio & Erkkila, 2007, p96).

Further study in the use of music for mood regulation by young people has highlighted the complexity of this relationship. McFerran, Garrido and Saarikallio (in press) recognised that music not only has positive potential as a vehicle for young people to achieve catharsis, but can also be used destructively by young people to ruminate on negative emotions. The authors recognised that young people with mental health challenges were particularly vulnerable to this negative potential. They advocated the need for young people to use their music intentionally and reflectively to achieve positive health outcomes. This has important implications for music therapists in terms of supporting that intentionality in music therapy work with young people.

In her formative book, *Adolescents, Music and Music Therapy*, McFerran (2010) identified that young people use a combination of live and recorded music, in shared and individual ways that can promote their healthy development during adolescence. She proposed that young people use music to explore and express their public and private identity, to self-regulate their mood, to develop personal and social competence, and to connect with others (McFerran, 2010). The multi-faceted relationship that young people have with music offers a promising foundation for music therapy practice with this population, as reflected in the music therapy literature.

Music Therapy and Young People

There is a great deal of music therapy literature pertaining to work with young people. A 2010 systematic review of this literature identified that the vast

majority of music therapy work with young people has been undertaken in educational and health institutions, including schools, hospitals, mental health institutions, residential settings and hospices (McFerran, 2010, p29). Of the small body of literature (16%) undertaken in community settings, many of these have been identified as day centres and programs that are, in practical terms, very similar to institution-based services, although located in a community setting (McFerran, 2010).

The focus for this study was on health promotion and wellbeing approaches to music therapy with young people in community settings. In particular, this study emphasised music therapy with marginalised young people. As articulated in the introduction to this study, this refers to young people who have been marginalised by life circumstances that have limited their access to opportunities available to the average young person, which has potentially impacted on their health and wellbeing (p5). In addition to 'marginalised', a variety of related terms have been used in the literature. Some authors have chosen to recognise these young people as 'at-risk' (Clements-Cortes, 2013; Fouché & Torrance, 2005; Smith, 2012b; Snow & D'Amico, 2010), or have referred to their 'deprived', 'disadvantaged' or 'minority' backgrounds (Cobbett, 2009; Nocker-Ribaupierre & Wofl, 2010; Kobin & Tyson, 2006). All of these terms identify young people who have faced challenges that make them potentially vulnerable.

This broad understanding represents many different groups of young people facing a variety of challenges. Examples of marginalised populations from the music therapy literature include: Young people who have been marginalised by traumatic experiences such as experiences as refugees (Baker & Jones, 2005, 2006; Hunt, 2006; Jones, Baker & Day, 2004; Choi, 2010) and survival of natural disasters (McFerran and Teggelove, 2011); young people who were members of disadvantaged communities due to low socio-economic circumstances (Chong & Soo, 2011; Kobin & Tyson, 2006; Nocker-Ribaupierre & Wofl; Smith, 2012b, Pavlicevic, 2010a) and neighbourhoods challenged by gangsterism (Fouché & Torrance, 2005); young people marginalised by experiences of living in foster or residential care (Amir & Yair, 2008; Austin, 2010; Ciardiello, 2003; Hasler, 2008; Krügar, 2011; Layman, Hussey & Laing, 2002); young people at-risk of

disengaging or underachieving at school (Cobbett, 2009; Clements-Cortes, 2013; Derrington, 2012; Snow & D'Amico, 2010); and, young people accessing outreach and drop-in youth services and accommodation (Smith, 2012a; Lightstone, 2012). Examples of music therapy with marginalised young people in the literature have predominantly been undertaken in school settings, with a small number of community-based examples.

Given the diverse range of challenges facing this broad population, there are many ways music therapists have described working with marginalised young people. However, two general approaches to practice are evident. The first are examples that describe a predominantly therapist-driven process, whereby structured programs have been implemented to address the needs of young people identified as at-risk. These examples represent a traditional music therapy dynamic, whereby the therapist's expert skills have been used to shape and direct the structure and goals of music therapy. The second are examples of music therapy practice with marginalised young people and related theory that describe participatory, emergent approaches to practice. These contributions to the literature represent an empowerment focus, and, in different ways, have engaged with the ideas of context, collaborative participation and social action that underpin this research project.

Participatory Approaches to Music Therapy and Marginalised Young People

In this review I focus on the small but innovative group of studies that have emphasised participatory approaches to engaging with marginalised young people, and consider how they have articulated the methods, priorities, and challenges of this approach. This eclectic group includes practice from all around the world. In an Australian school-based study, Hunt (2005, 2006) undertook a 9-week participatory music therapy program with students from refugee backgrounds to promote a sense of belonging. Assessment of the musical material reflected the development of group cohesion throughout the program, suggesting a sense of belonging was fostered (Hunt, 2005, 2006). This study used a cyclic action research design to promote the students' ongoing input. The author found that students engaged with choosing music activities and making decisions within

the program, but an interest in exploring the wider implications of their project was not fostered in the short time period of the project.

A contrasting example from Australian schools was a music therapy project for high school students impacted by the tragic Black Saturday bushfires (McFerran & Teggelove, 2009). This study also emphasised a participatory approach, allowing students to set the priorities and direction for the group. Participants valued the opportunity to have positive and fun group experiences in the wake of tragedy, and saw the program as a way to explore new experiences and aspects of their identity. In this group, the young people demonstrated a strong interest on linking with the wider community and explored that both within the music therapy process, and independently beyond the music therapy sessions (McFerran & Teggelove, 2009).

In a series of contributions to prominent CoMT text *Where Music Helps*, Pavlicevic (2010a,b,c) used in-depth ethnographic methods to reflect on and compare two community-based music therapy programs for marginalised young people living in low socio-economic communities in South Africa. The music therapy experiences explored include a youth choir and community performance, and an outreach program for 'youth at risk'. Pavlicevic (2010a, b) recognised social action as an embedded aspect of these music therapy programs. This was addressed overtly through the use of songwriting in both cases, but also evidenced in music therapists' awareness and ability to respond to the complex dynamics of the communities surrounding the music therapy programs. This perspective highlighted the value of engaging with community contexts. Pavlicevic also articulated the value of finding a balance between structure and space when supporting young people's participation in music therapy. She articulated this as music therapists' ability to do as little as is needed, while being alert to the possibility and need to responsively act and support the group process (Pavlicevic, 2010c).

The value of a responsive approach when working with marginalised young people was also highlighted in music therapy work in youth outreach services in Canada. In an innovative approach to practice, Smith (2012a) described his involvement with an outreach truck that provided mobile services to 'under-housed youth' (p272). This approach articulated the importance of

meeting the young people where they are at, physically, by taking services to where these young people are located, in the music, by working spontaneously using a drop-in 'street jam' approach (Smith, 2012a, p274), and with language, by consciously not labelling or diagnosing the young people's current situation or challenge. The author described this as an 'anti-oppressive' approach to practice (Smith, 2012a, p275), demonstrating a clear social justice stance informing his practice.

In an alternate music therapy setting, Austin (2010) drew on traditional psychotherapeutic practice with marginalised young people. She offered a valuable perspective on the qualities a music therapist must bring to the therapeutic relationship with this complex population. She recognised a need for music therapists to bring their personality and experience to music therapy, suggesting a need for flexible and reflexive boundaries with this population. She stated "my clients need the presence of the therapist's authentic self to reflect, interpret, model, and educate in ways that are often direct, active and involved. Many of them need therapists who express their feelings directly and honestly" (Austin, 2010, p184-5).

Cobbett (2009) also reflected on the music therapists' boundaries and roles when working with young people from low socio-economic backgrounds, and advocated a flexible and reflexive approach. He described how at times his work involved engaging with young people outside of music-based interactions, and articulated a need for a person-centred approach that sometimes includes non-musical activities as part of the music therapy relationship. Cobbett (2009) also emphasised the value of youth-friendly techniques and music styles when working with marginalised young people. Derrington (2012) also advocated strongly for the critical need for age-appropriate methods and techniques in her work with complex adolescents in a supported school environment.

The use of music technology has been particularly highlighted in the literature as an age-appropriate therapeutic method with this population (Cobbett, 2009; McFerran, 2010; Smith, 2012b). In addition, hip-hop and rap have been increasingly recognised as an important musical genres with marginalised young people. A growing body of literature has explored the uses of rap and hip-hop with this population, both by music therapists and other

community support professionals (Alvarez, 2012; Ciardiello, 2003; Hadley & Yancy, 2012; Kobin & Tyson, 2006; Lightstone, 2012). Veltre and Hadley (2012) have provided a useful theoretical perspective on hip-hop as an inherently collaborative process. They articulated how hip-hop as a music style and a culture was born in marginalised communities as a way to express and protest challenges and overcome obstacles. They proposed that hip-hop is linked to this culture of social action and through this holds empowerment potential for marginalised young people.

These studies exemplified important theoretical underpinnings and practical examples of music therapy with marginalised young people that were relevant to this study. They explored the concepts of context, collaborative participation and social action from different perspectives that offered insight into collaboration with marginalised young people. Although these examples offered rich descriptions of programs that use collaborative approaches, an applied conceptual understanding of collaborative process with marginalised young people is currently unexplored in the literature. This was the focus of the current study.

The Challenge of Youth Participation

The challenge of engaging collaboratively with young people has been recognised in the youth participation literature, highlighting a need for this practical understanding of collaborative process. In his formative book *Children's Participation* (2008), Hart articulated a graded scale of child participation based on Arnstein's foundational 'ladder of citizen participation' (Arnstein, 1969). He identified a scale of child participation from ingenuous participation based on manipulation and tokenism, through approaches based on informing and consulting children, through to practices in which children initiate and share decision-making with adults (Hart, 2008).

In an examination of youth participation policy in the Australian context, Bessant (2004) argued that while youth participation has been increasingly popular in political discourse, there was significant disparity between the rhetoric of youth participation and practical reality. She proposed that young people encountered systemic obstacles to participation that inhibited their capacity to

substantively effect change. Additionally she posited that political agendas mandating youth participation were incongruent with the ethos of democratic participation.

Similar barriers to genuine participation have been identified in the United Kingdom and the United States. Milbourne (2009) proposed that youth participation requires a change of focus away from adult-driven priorities, necessitating new approaches to practice in youth services. This study of community organisations working with young people in the United Kingdom identified that such new approaches were limited by policy and organisational structures that emphasised adult-selected agendas and processes (Milbourne, 2009). In a study of 88 youth programs in the United States, Sutton (2007) also recognised this emphasis on adult perspectives in youth-related research. This study identified a “reluctance of youth development researchers to acknowledge and document the significant contributions that young people make collectively to community and structural change” (Sutton, 2007, p638).

The literature has offered various responses to these challenges to youth participation. Percy-Smith (2010) argued for approaches that engage young people in participatory experiences ‘within the context of their lived realities’ (p114). He proposed that embedding participation into the environments and interactions of their everyday lives will promote more genuine and meaningful participation experiences for young people. Fenge, Hodges and Cutts (2011) argued convincingly for creative approaches to youth participation, such as involving young people in arts-based processes. These authors suggested that creative media allowed young people the opportunity to engage simultaneously in a creative and investigative process.

In an in-depth investigation of three successful youth participation programs in Australia, Black, Walsh and Taylor (2011) explored the aspects of these programs that supported positive experiences for the young people involved. They identified the need for programs to focus on young people’s strengths and interests, and to be based on participant’s own priorities and needs. The authors recognised the need for projects that offered opportunities for self-expression and creativity, and engagement in purposeful activity. In addition, they argued convincingly that participatory youth projects required a safe

environment and supportive relationships through on which to develop a collaborative dynamic (Black, Walsh & Taylor, 2011).

This support for creative approaches in youth participation, combined with the need for a safe environment and supportive relationships through which to negotiate participation, suggests that music therapy is potentially a highly appropriate and effective forum for genuine youth participation. These examples from the literature highlighted the complexity of engaging in collaborative processes with marginalised young people. This supports the intent of this study to generate a practical understanding of collaborative processes with young people in music therapy, in order to effectively navigate this complexity in music therapy practice.

Articulating the ‘Gap’ in the Literature

Throughout is literature review I identified several areas in the current literature where further research is required to expand on current understanding about how and why music therapists may engage in collaborations with marginalised young people in community settings. These ‘gaps’ in the literature are outlined below:

- Further research required developing a practical understanding of collaborative process in music therapy. Particularly related to:
 - Collaboration with music therapy participants
 - Collaboration with marginalised young people in community settings
- Further research required comparing the music therapy process between community contexts, to develop a relational understanding of collaboration between contexts
- Further research required into the role and relevance of social action in music therapy programs

I sought to address these areas in this research project. In the forthcoming chapter I outline the methodology and procedures used to generate knowledge

about these areas, in order to contribute to the ongoing discussion outlined in this literature review.

Chapter Three: Methodology, Methods and Procedures

In this study I employed an action research methodology. Action research is grounded strongly in participatory philosophy. This participatory ethos forms the basis for the design and procedures of all action research projects. It informs both the structure of the research process and the principles that guide engagement with participants, choice of methods and interpretation of empirical material. In the Introduction Chapter, I briefly outlined of the participatory approach to inquiry taken in this study (p7). I introduced action research as a research methodology and provided an overview of the key philosophical influences informing this research project. In this methods chapter I expand on these beginnings.

The structure of this methods chapter is designed to offer a clear overview of the methodology informing this research project, and the methods and procedures used to explore the focus of this investigation. Rather than using a pre-determined research protocol, many of the methods and procedures used in this study emerged out of the research process. This emergent approach is fundamental to action research methodology (outlined in forthcoming sections of this chapter), and grounded in the participatory principles that underpin this approach to research.

The evolving nature of an emergent research design does not neatly align with a traditional methods chapter structure. Therefore, the structure adopted in the chapter is somewhat unique, constructed to tell the story of this research process as clearly and coherently as possible. Collaborative decision-making informed the trajectory of the research process throughout this study, impacting significantly on all aspects of the research design, and on the methods and procedures developed. In this chapter I attempt to openly represent this shared and evolving process, but also draw on the benefit of hindsight to articulate the structure and the central ideas and approaches that emerged from in this research process.

I first present an overview of action research methodology, and outline the principles that underpinned the methods and procedures adopted in this study. I then introduce the participating communities who were my co-researchers in developing the research process. I outline the research design, and the set-up procedures used to plan the study and engage participants. Subsequently I outline the knowledge generation procedures used to generate empirical material (data). This is followed by a description of the analysis procedures used in this study. I conclude this chapter by outlining the measures taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the learnings generated through the research process.

Action Research Methodology

Action research is a participatory approach to research, emphasising research *with* participants, rather than *about* or *for* participants (Lincoln, Lyndham & Guba, 2011). When designing an action research project, the people who are the focus of the research inquiry are considered to be experts in their own experience, and as such are engaged as co-researchers in the study (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Co-researchers collaborate in decision-making and meaning-making throughout the research process. This collaboration is a feature of all stages of the research process, from planning, implementation, and analysis, to the reporting of findings.

The collaborative emphasis in action research made it a natural choice of methodology for this research project, which sought to examine collaborative process. The focus in this study was to understand the process and meaning of collaboration in participatory music projects with marginalised young people and their supporting communities. The use of an action research methodology allowed participating communities to collaborate not only in their community-based music projects, but in the research process as a whole. This approach aligned closely with my participatory stance as a researcher (see p10) further supporting my choice of action research as the methodology for this study.

Action research developed as a research practice in response to an identified need to practically engage with problems in order to understand them, and the belief that it is the role of research not just to observe but also to impact

on situations (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Practical knowledge is often the focus of investigation in action research projects (Lincoln, Lyndham & Guba, 2011). Research prioritises a greater understanding of actual, rather than abstract practices, and the knowledge produced is practically and directly related to the community who is conducting the investigation (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Wicks, Reason, & Bradbury, 2008).

Action research theory has an eclectic history, and has been influenced by many ideologies, from social psychology, to systems theory, to organisational philosophy (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). As a result of these various perspectives, action research is often recognised as “not so much a *methodology* as an *orientation to inquiry*” (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, xxi). With such diverse origins, the principles of action research have been adopted and adapted for different contexts, and interpreted in multiple ways, creating a family of research practices. These strands of action research practice use various names, from action inquiry, to action science, to participatory action research, each emphasising different priorities (Herr & Anderson, 2005; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005).

All of these action research practices share an emphasis on participatory research methods, and on social action for positive change as a key research objective. However, theoretical frameworks and ideologies can vary between action research practices, impacting on the way this is translated into research design and methods. From this family of action research practices, the approach most closely aligned to this research project is participatory action research (PAR).

Participatory Action Research

Like action research more broadly, PAR is considered to have multiple origins and is currently practiced in many forms across a range of disciplines (Rahman, 2008; Swantz, 2008). These various PAR projects share a common philosophical approach to research that informs methodological decisions. Rice and Ezzy (1999) provide a broad but useful definition of the philosophy underpinning PAR (p173):

In principle, PAR aims to examine the political structures that disempower marginalised, deprived and oppressed groups of people and to find ways in which these structures can be changed. As such, PAR aims to create new forms of knowledge through a creative synthesis of the different understandings and experiences of those who take part.

This definition highlights key priorities of PAR projects, emphasising an emancipatory perspective and a focus on marginalised populations. These priorities inform research decisions, impacting on choices of research population, data collection methods used, research objectives and interpretation of results.

PAR prioritises collaboration with vulnerable or marginalised groups, who bring their own local knowledge and experience to the research process (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). The process aims for participants to broaden their understanding of their situation, building a group knowledge. In order to maximise shared understanding, this process of knowledge generation uses methods that are accessible and useful to the participants involved, and often incorporates creative and innovative approaches to achieve this (McIntyre, 2008). The group knowledge generated is subsequently used to inform social action towards the ultimate aim of positive social change for participants.

As the name implies, the idea that research should result in both understanding *and* action for positive change is a fundamental premise of all action research (Lincoln, Lyndham & Guba, 2011). PAR projects focus particularly on action towards social justice and equality for vulnerable and marginalised populations. Subsequently, action in PAR projects has an emancipatory focus. PAR is a political process, in the sense that it aims to question and positively change the social politics and systems impacting on a given research environment, with an orientation towards empowerment and equality for the marginalised populations involved (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Social action is a key element of PAR, and some PAR researchers argue that if emancipatory change is not achieved in a PAR project then the objectives of the project have not been met (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

The relationship between PAR and this study. This research project was informed by many of the priorities of PAR. I chose to collaborate with a group in society who are vulnerable and oppressed, namely marginalised young people. In general, young people are often identified as potentially marginalised due to the fact that their age can prevent them from having voice in social and political decisions that affect them (Rodriquez & Brown, 2009). The young people in this study are further marginalised by particular deprived and challenging life situations. To use the words of one of the young people in this study, each group of young people in the research project had “been through stuff”. More specifically, these young people had been exposed to environments and experiences that had limited their access to opportunities that promote personal and social development – opportunities more readily available to young people in Australia who have been less marginalised by their life circumstances. The particular circumstances of the three groups of young people who participated in this study are detailed in the forthcoming section of this chapter (p59).

I intentionally chose to use the word ‘marginalised’ in this study after considering a variety of related terms. Other terms such as ‘at-risk’ or ‘vulnerable’ are also used to describe young people who have “been through stuff”. In a study of terminology surrounding marginalised young people in education settings, te Riele (2006) found that the term ‘at-risk’ promoted a tendency to locate ‘problems’ with the young person. She suggested using the term ‘marginalised’ as this term referred to the relationship between the young people and their circumstances. She proposed that it was less likely to problematise the young people themselves, but rather allowed young people to be considered in relation to their circumstances. Like te Riele, I use the term marginalised in this thesis because I believe it speaks most directly to the young people’s relationship to their life circumstances. While these circumstances have the *potential* to lead to vulnerability or risk of negative outcomes, this can depend on the particular internal and external resources available to individual young people.

There was a political element in my choice to work with this population. I believed it was possible for these marginalised young people to use the action research process as a mechanism for social change. To be more specific, I believed the young people could use their participatory music project to examine,

comment upon and impact on their social world. This belief informed the social change orientation that I brought to this study (see p14).

However, social change was not the sole research objective of this study. The aim of this study was to understand the process and meaning of collaboration in a music project. Therefore my primary commitment was to the participatory process with participants, and I placed primacy on collaborative decision-making at all stages of the research process. I took every opportunity to offer social change perspectives throughout the research process. However, as a newcomer to each of the participating communities, I did not have prior knowledge of each community on which to base a pre-existing social change agenda. This study therefore emphasised collaboration to develop a research focus that was identified as relevant and important to participants themselves, to which I brought my social change orientation.

This research project reflected many of the characteristics of a PAR project, and was informed by the same philosophies. However, whilst subtle, the distinction of bringing a social change orientation rather than a social change agenda is significant. The emancipatory objective represented by the concept of a social change agenda is a fundamental element that distinguishes PAR projects from other action research. Although an emancipatory ethos informed this research project and remained a potential throughout the study, it was not the primary focus of the research project.

For this reason, in this thesis I use the term action research in reference to this project, rather than calling it a PAR project. Stige (2005) aptly states that the term 'action research' has been used to represent such a diversity of research practices that the parameters for what action research means have become unclear and confusing. The detailed descriptions of process in this chapter address this concern by providing a comprehensive explanation of what is meant by the term action research in this study.

Introducing the Participating Communities

In action research, knowledge is generated in a community of inquiry, made up of all participants who engage as co-researchers and, as such, are active

agents in all aspects of the research (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Together, co-researchers collaboratively choose the research focus for their project, and are actively involved in compiling, analysing and sharing the knowledge produced by the group (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; McIntyre, 2008). As introduced in Chapter One (p12), 'players' is the term I use to describe co-researchers in this study.

Given this emphasis on collaborative inquiry, I now provide an overview of the three participating communities who became the players in this study. The process of selecting and recruiting these three communities was part of the cyclic action research process, and is outlined in detail in the forthcoming 'Set-up Procedures' section of this study (p73). However, collaboration with players from these participating communities and the systems that support them was critical to the development of the research method throughout this study. It is therefore important to introduce these communities from the outset, before commencing a description of the methods we used.

The community of inquiry in this study was made up of three different groups of marginalised young people and the communities that support them. These supporting communities were centred around three community organisations through which the research project was conducted. Marginalised young people themselves were the core focus group for this study, however, in keeping with the 'systems approach' to collaboration taken in this study (see p12), both the young people and supporting community members were recognised as potential players in each community.

Staff from each community organisation became key supporting players. They brought to the study their local knowledge and skills, and their existing relationships with both the young people and the community. Each organisation varied in their objective, their focus, and their service delivery, and these differences between contexts impacted on the structure and the methods of the participatory process that emerged with each community (outlined in the forthcoming Procedures sections of this chapter).

The next three subsections of this chapter provide an overview of the three groups that collaborated in this research project: the drop-in group (p61), the share home (p64), and the therapeutic camp (p66), I begin each overview with a

description of each community, and describe the factors that contribute to the marginalisation of the young people in these communities. I then describe the community organisations that were the settings for the participatory music projects with each community, and the existing philosophical and practical factors in these organisations that informed the progression of the collaboration with each community.

Introducing the Drop-in Group

The drop-in group was a youth program for young residents of a public housing community in inner urban Melbourne. A large housing estate formed the foundation for this community, comprising of five high-rise apartment buildings located in close proximity to one another, connected by lawns and play areas. In Australia, public housing estates such as this are one of several government-regulated social housing options for people who cannot afford housing for a variety of reasons (<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/housing-and-accommodation>).

Many residents in this community had had challenging or traumatic life experiences that had contributed to their need for housing assistance. Many were in need of support due to disability or mental illness, and many were victims of violence, substance misuse, systemic poverty or had endured displacement and war as refugees in their countries of origin. This community was also serviced by a large number of government, community, and resident organisations that were committed to supporting the community, often with conflicting ideas of how this was best achieved.

Challenges facing young people in the public housing community. The estate was a vibrant and culturally rich environment, home to a melting-pot of people from many cultural backgrounds. There was a strong community culture expressed in celebrations and festivals organised by local community organisations to showcase and celebrate this unique and diverse community. However, the high-density and low socio-economic nature of this environment also presented challenges for residents and the services that supported them.

A pervasive drug dealing culture plagued this public housing community. Drug users came to the estate from all over Melbourne to purchase and take

drugs, causing significant safety concerns for residents. In addition, the close living conditions of so many people with different lifestyles and values contributed to significant inter-racial tension and gang activity. These challenges served to exacerbate the pre-existing stigma associated with living in public housing in Australia, and residents faced ongoing judgement from 'outsiders'. This complex array of challenges contributed to the marginalisation of the young people living in this community.

Description of the drop-in group environment. The drop-in group was a program that ran at the local neighbourhood house that served the public housing estate and surrounding community. The neighbourhood house was a community hub located directly adjacent to the housing estate. It was a space that could be accessed by the community to run programs, meetings and classes. Two permanent staff members coordinated with local community members, organisations and services to plan, implement and resource initiatives and programs that addressed local needs and promoted community development in the area.

The neighbourhood house had a kitchen, a hang out space with couches, two large activity rooms, an enclosed outdoor area with a barbeque, and a computer room, which was extremely popular with the young people, many of whom had limited access to computers at home. Community artwork was displayed throughout the house and the environment was colourful, engaging and homey. The house had a strong arts and music culture, and was well equipped with a wide variety of high-quality band instruments including drums, electric and bass guitars, keyboards, microphones, and amplifiers, as well as a small selection of hand percussion. Both staff members identified themselves as community development workers and were also musicians, but did not engage in music as part of their role with the young people in this study.

The drop-in group logistics and purpose. The drop-in group was an ongoing youth program for young people aged 13-17 and ran weekly during school terms, breaking for school holidays. The neighbourhood house and a local community organisation shared responsibility for the program, and a community development worker from the neighbourhood house and a youth worker from the

community organisation worked on the program. These two staff members were engaged as co-researchers on the study.

The drop-in group sought to create a forum for young people to build skills and have experiences that would serve them in their future lives. The purpose of the program was for the young people from the community to have opportunities to engage purposefully in a variety of new experiences that connected them with other young people. The program aimed to promote positive cross-cultural interaction between young people from a diversity of cultural backgrounds who shared a complex and densely populated environment. Additionally many of these young people's families had recently arrived in Australia as migrants and refugees, and the drop-in group also served as a supported environment for them to negotiate and develop their understanding of social norms and expectations in the Australian context.

The drop-in group structure. Consistent with its name, the drop-in group had a very flexible and responsive structure and young people were allowed to come and go as they chose. The main rule of the program was that everyone treated one another with respect. The staff members offered a variety of activities in response to the expressed interest of the young people, and often had volunteers or guest artists in to run dance, cooking, art or music sessions with the young people. The participatory music project for this study was presented as one of these activities and ran over the course of three school terms.

The computer room was extremely engaging for the many of the young people, and they would often remain there on Facebook and YouTube for the duration of the 2-hour session. The computer room was a strong motivator to attract young people to the program, but could hinder their involvement in activities more targeted to the engagement and interaction goals of the program. At the end of each 2-hour session, the group came together to eat a meal and hold an informal discussion about the program. This time was used to touch base with the young people as a group, to make plans and get feedback on the program.

Young people engaging in the drop-in group. The nature of the drop-in program meant that the number and mix of young people varied weekly, with a core group of approximately 10 young people who attended the program regularly. More boys attended the group regularly than girls, although three girls

were regular participants in the program. The program relied on word-of-mouth to recruit new young people, and participants often invited friends and siblings to the group. Weekly group numbers generally fluctuated between 10 and 20 young people. As a drop-in program, there was a need to provide interesting projects with clear objectives in order to motivate the young people to continue to attend and participate in activities over successive weeks.

Four boys aged 13-16 engaged in this research project. These boys were regular attendees at the drop-in group. Throughout the nine months that I was engaged with this youth program, several other young people participated in the music project from week to week. However, these four young men were committed to engaging in the research component of the music project and engaged in ongoing action and reflection as part of the cyclic action research process.

Introducing the Share Home Group

The share home was part of an organisation that used a family-based model to support young people who had experienced homelessness. The community was made up of a network of share homes throughout metropolitan Melbourne and some key rural centres in Victoria. Approximately four young people lived in each share home, and although the young people sometimes moved between households, the intention was for them to have a consistent, long-term home environment as much as possible. The participatory music project with the share home was conducted out of one of these homes in an outer south-east suburb of Melbourne.

Challenges facing young people in the share home community. The young people at the share home generally ranged between 15 and 22 years of age and had been marginalised by extended periods of homelessness. Many had been forced to leave home due to physical, verbal or sexual abuse, and had experienced violence, neglect, abandonment and interrupted schooling. Their life experiences had impacted on the young people's well being, sometimes manifesting in mental health challenges, poor self-image, self-harm and antisocial behaviour. These experiences and their subsequent impact on the health and wellbeing of these young people had resulted in increased marginalisation through reduced access

to education and employment opportunities and greater risk of ongoing mental health challenges.

Description of the share home environment. Each share home was a standard residential property, and functioned as a regular household. The share home where this study was conducted had two large living spaces and a kitchen. Each young person had an individual bedroom, which they were free to decorate as they choose. An additional outdoor space with a large table in the middle of the house was a popular gathering space where the young people sat and smoked, talked and listened to music. All young people had chores, and a curfew, and contributed to the cooking and general upkeep of the house.

Each share home had two experienced live-in carers that were a consistent adult presence for the young people, serving the equivalent of parental roles in the household. Rotating weekly, these staff lived onsite with the young people in the home, and provided day-to-day support. A central team of share home support workers delivered additional therapeutic and lifestyle support and case management to supplement the ongoing support provided in each home by the live-in carers.

The share home group logistics and purpose. The share home was an ongoing support network for the young people it supports. The share home community aimed to provide a safe and consistent environment and long-term professional support for young people to recover from their individual experiences of trauma, develop positive relationships and plan for the future. Therapeutic services were provided to all young people by the organisation over the period of their involvement with the community. However, this therapeutic input was offered separately to the ongoing daily life of the share home, which aimed to be a 'normalising' home environment rather than a therapeutic space.

The share home functioned like a family. Carers provided practical assistance such as driving young people to work or school, as well as being an ongoing supportive presence in the home. The home itself had clear rules and expectations for all residents, including curfews and rules around visits from boyfriends or girlfriends. Young people were encouraged to be themselves, but also expected to contribute and engage with the daily life of the household.

The share home group structure. The group in the share home was built into the ongoing home life of the residents. The home environment at the share home demanded a particular type of flexibility. The music project needed to work in with the existing culture of the house, with the inherent chaos and last-minute changes of plans that can be expected from a household of four adolescents. With the young people's individual schedules and commitments to school and work, as well as visiting boyfriends and rotating carers, the result was an overall dynamic that changed continuously depending on who was around and what they were interested in doing on any given evening. The participatory music project with this community was run in seven fortnightly sessions on a Thursday evening over three months, each session lasting three to four hours.

Young people engaging in the share home group. Over the course of the project, four young people engaged in the project, two young women and two young men aged from 18 to 22 years old. These young people were all residents at this share home. From week to week the young people chose different levels of engagement in the project depending on their mood and other commitments, however, they all participated as co-researchers and engaged in ongoing incidental reflection throughout the project.

Introducing the Therapeutic Camp Group

The therapeutic camp was a youth program that was part of a large Christian organisation providing family services to children, young people and their families who were distressed, disadvantaged and abused. They offered support services to families in Melbourne, Sydney and large regional centres in Victoria and New South Wales. The organisation provided case management, community programs and out-of-home care services for young people with complex needs and their families. The young people engaging in the therapeutic camps were clients of this Christian organisation, either as ongoing residents in out-of-home care facilities, foster homes, or through government-mandated family case management.

Challenges facing the young people engaged in the therapeutic camp. Many of the young people engaged in the therapeutic camp had life histories of violence, neglect and abuse. Their lives often lacked stability and a sense of personal safety

and security, compounded for some by mental health challenges and disability. Many of the young people engaged in drug and alcohol abuse, criminal activity, and violence, and often had little regard for their personal health and wellbeing. The young people in this program were at risk of or currently living in out-of-home care. They lived in complex and often dysfunctional home situations, and/or in foster care, or in state residential care, and many were moved regularly between living situations, limiting their ability to form healthy attachments and develop strong, supportive relationships.

Description of the therapeutic camp environment. The therapeutic camp was a camp-based program that provided regular weeklong and weekend therapeutic camps and day trips for these young people who were involved in the child protection and the juvenile justice systems. Two staff members ran the therapeutic camp program, supported by a large and dedicated team of volunteers. The staff members were a social worker and a drug and alcohol counsellor, and were engaged as co-researchers on this research project.

Weeklong camps were held every school holidays, and weekend camps and day trips ran regularly throughout school terms. The camps were generally held at a large beach house on the coast, surrounded by bushland. The house had dormitory bedrooms, a large open-plan kitchen and living room with a long table down the middle and couches surrounding a fireplace. An additional recreation room housed a pool table and selection of sports equipment. Outside a wide decked area surrounded the house, with a large table where the group often gathered.

Therapeutic camp purpose and logistics. The therapeutic camp was a program that was committed to providing ongoing emotional support to the young people it engaged, as well as opportunities for positive peer engagement and new experiences. The camp was an opportunity for these young people to take some time out from their complex home lives, and to engage in positive experiences with people who understood and accepted them. In addition, for many it was an opportunity to take time away from drug and alcohol dependencies.

Interspersed with fun activities, the camp ran targeted therapeutic sessions aimed at addressing the particular challenges faced by these young

people. All young people were expected to follow a set of pre-determined 'camp rules' that dictated respectful and safe behaviour. The two permanent therapeutic camp staff were the young people's principal support people, both during and between camps. These staff acted as the young people's first contact in the event of any emergency or problem, such as a legal issue or a medical emergency.

The therapeutic camp structure. The therapeutic camp had a fun and relaxed culture that fostered acceptance, trust and mutual respect. The camp was action-packed with activities throughout the daytime, designed to broaden the experience and sometimes challenge the young people. Activities included rock climbing, horse riding, bush walks and craft activities.

In the evening the staff ran therapeutic 'campfire' sessions where the group explored issues and themes that arose for the young people. These campfire sessions ran in the late evenings for 2-4 hours, and often included both an experiential and dialogic component. The participatory music project with this community linked in with this camp culture. Over the course of a one-week camp, the participatory music project was incorporated into this program structure, both through reflective campfire sessions and exploratory activity-based sessions.

Young people engaging in the therapeutic camp group. Around 20 young people between the ages of 13 and 17 were involved in the camps, although most did not attend every camp and day trip. Young people over the age of 17 who would like to maintain a connection to the program could continue to participate as 'young volunteers', undertaking some additional leadership responsibilities. Twelve young people engaged as co-researchers in the participatory music project on the therapeutic camp. This included both young people and young volunteers. The group consisted of 5 boys and 7 girls, aged between 13 and 18 years of age.

Summary of Participating Communities

In the three different participating communities, the young people engaged in this study were considered to be marginalised for different reasons. For the young people in the drop-in group, their membership in the public housing community itself was the main marginalising factor in their lives. In the share

home, the young people's life experience of homelessness was the primary reason for their marginalisation. For the young people on therapeutic camp, their experiences of state residential care or challenging home circumstances were the factors that contributed to their experience of marginalisation.

By summarising and highlighting the young people's experiences of marginalisation in this section, I aim to provide some perspective on why these young people were chosen to engage in this research project. In highlighting these factors I in no way intend to suggest that these factors represent the entire experience of these young people. My experience of engaging with these young people showed me first-hand that they have lived complex and interesting lives, and it is not my intention to marginalise them further by suggesting that these factors tell their entire story.

However, as young people who have experienced marginalisation are the focus group for this study, I aim to clearly indicate why these communities have been engaged as players by demonstrating how the life experience these young people has resulted in particular challenges to overcome and limited access to opportunities and resources. Table 1 (p70) provides a concise summary of the demographic, organisational and philosophical factors that impacted on the way in which they engaged with this research.

		Drop-in group	Share home	Therapeutic camp
Young people information	Demographics of participating young people	4 x male Ages: 13-16 years	2 x female 2 x male Ages: 18-22 years	7x female 5 x male Ages: 13-18 years
Community information	Community served by this group	Inner-urban public housing community	Young people who have experienced homelessness	Young people at-risk of or living in out-of-home residential care
	Type of community	Community of location	Community of need and location	Community of need
	Marginalising factors in this community	- Persistent drug dealing culture - Complex multicultural environment - Gang violence - Low socio-economic status - Exposure to drugs and violence - Social stigma	- Histories of physical, verbal or sexual abuse - Neglect - Abandonment - Interrupted schooling - Mental health issues	- Dysfunctional and unstable home lives - Abandonment - Unhealthy attachment - Exposure to drugs and violence - Institutionalisation - Social stigma
	Potential impact of marginalising factors on young people in this community	- Gang behaviour - Inter-racial tension and prejudice - Limited personal safety - Lack of access to resources and opportunities	- Self harm - Mental health issues - Criminal behaviour - Lack of access to resources and opportunities	- Self harm - Mental health issues - Criminal behaviour - Lack of regard for own health and safety - Lack of access to resources and opportunities
Participating organisation information	Type of organisation	Neighbourhood house	Not-for-profit community organisation	Christian charity organisation
	Organisational philosophy/focus	Broad community building and community development focus	Long-term practical and therapeutic support for homeless youth	Child and family welfare support and case management
	Youth program structure	Weekly ongoing youth program run to school terms – drop-in transient population	Home-base ongoing care in small residential home environments	Monthly weekend and week-long therapeutic camps and day trips
	Youth program staff	2 x staff members - Youth worker - Community development worker	2 x staff members - Live-in carers	2 x staff members - Drug and alcohol counsellor - Social worker
Music project information	Music project structure	2 hr weekly drop-in session	3-4 hr fortnightly session	4 x 2-4 hr sessions at one week-long camp
	Music project duration	Nine-month weekly program based around school terms	3-month fortnightly program	One-week intensive program with continued consultative support towards end-of-year concert

Table 1. Overview of participating community information. Summary of relevant demographic, organisational and philosophical factors for all three participating communities.

My role as an academic researcher. In action research, the research process is one of shared learning between the academic researcher and community players (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; McIntyre, 2008). The role of the academic researcher varies depending on the researcher's relationship to the participating community. A researcher who is a member of the community under investigation will undertake a different process to a researcher entering a community as an outsider for the purposes of the study (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

Action research recognises researchers as active agents whose participation is expected to influence the trajectory of the research. It is therefore critical to articulate the relationship between academic researchers and participating communities, as this will influence the understanding of outcomes in an action research project. I use Herr and Anderson's (2005) 'continuum of positionality' to outline my relationship to the participating communities in this study. The continuum of positionality locates action researchers along a continuum from 'insider studying one's own practice', moving through different degrees of collaboration between insiders and outsiders, to 'outsider studying insiders'.

In each of the communities introduced above, I was positioned on this continuum as an outsider in collaboration with insiders: I engaged with the drop-in group, the share home and the therapeutic camp for the purposes of undertaking this research project. This recruitment process is outlined in detail in the Set-up Procedures section of this chapter (p73). As an action researcher, I sought to collaborate with players to identify the focus and structure of their music project.

Action Research Design

Action research is generally accepted to be a cyclic process of action and analysis, involving four stages: planning, action, observation and reflection (Herr & Anderson, 2005). The observation and reflection (analysis) stages of each research cycle inform the planning and action (action) stages of the subsequent research cycle, forming an ongoing spiral (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). This spiral is a

fundamental characteristic of most action research traditions, and provides the structural framework for this research methodology. This spiralling process results in a study design that emerges in response to the ongoing learnings generated in each research cycle. The action research spiral is reflected clearly in Figure 1 (below).

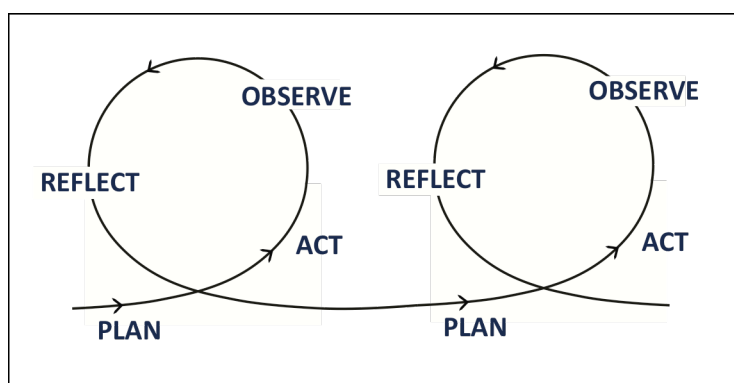


Fig 1. The action research spiral. This figure represents the spiralling action research process that emerges in successive cycles of planning, action, observation and reflection.

Action Research Design in this Study

In this study, the research process emerged over eight cycles of action and reflection. In retrospect, I have broken these eight cycles into three stages of research: the planning stage, made up of three action cycles; the exploration stage, made up of three action cycles; and the abstraction stage, made up of two action cycles (see Figure 2 below). I describe these three stages of the research process over the remainder of this chapter.

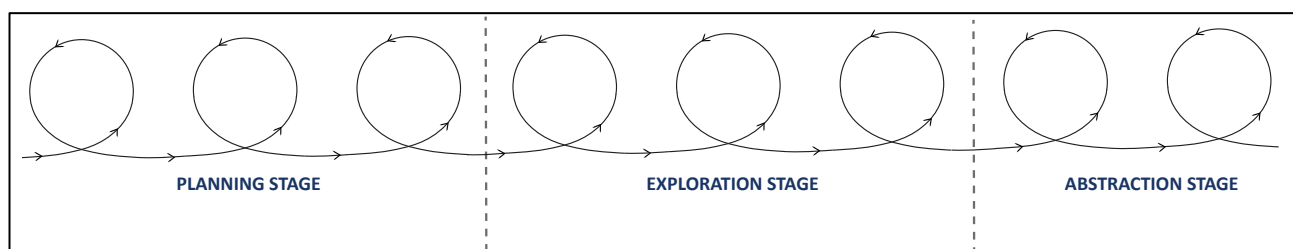


Fig. 2. Stages of the research process in this study. The eight cycles of action and reflection in this study separated into three distinct stages of research.

In each action cycle I prioritised collaboration with community players and ongoing interpretation of learnings to inform and direct the emergent research process. This occurred through the process of planning, action, observation and reflection in each cycle. However, as the research focus evolved and was refined over the course of the study, different stages of the research process were characterised by different research methods and procedures, and engaged with different levels of the system supporting marginalised young people.

Set-up Procedures

In the remainder of this chapter, I describe the evolution of the research focus in this study, and the collaborative methods used to inform and impact that process. For the purpose of clarity, descriptions of methods and procedures are separated into three sections. In the current section I describe the set-up procedures used to initiate contact with players and plan the study.

Subsequent sections describe knowledge generation procedures used to develop the empirical material for the study, and analysis procedures used to interpret meaning from the empirical material. These different procedures correlate generally to the three stages of research in this study – the planning stage, the exploration stage, and the abstraction stage. These stages are referred to throughout this chapter to provide a temporal understanding of the evolution of the research process over time.

The Planning Stage of the Study

The process of collaboration in this study began in the planning stage, before the three participating communities introduced earlier in this chapter were recruited as players in the research project. Upon entering the study, I was an outsider seeking to establish a new research relationship with a community supporting with marginalised young people in urban Melbourne. The ‘systems approach’ taken in this study (see p12) informed my collaborations in this early stage of the research. In the planning stage, I engaged with people from several different levels of the system supporting marginalised young people in urban Melbourne. I sought their local knowledge and perspectives in order to refine my

research focus and develop a plan for the study that was relevant and meaningful to the people I sought to engage as players.

I entered this study with a general research focus: to understand and articulate the process of collaboration in participatory music projects with marginalised young people and their supporting communities, and the meaning of that experience for the young people involved. This was based on my research interest in both young people and collaborative process in music therapy (outlined in Chapter One), and was informed by my review of the literature (Chapter Two). This focus provided an entry point for initiating the action research process.

From the outset of the study, I anticipated engaging a single community supporting a particular group of marginalised young people as my collaborators. As previously articulated in this thesis, young people in Australia experience marginalisation for a many different reasons (p12). Subsequently 'marginalised young people' was a broad and diverse group. I decided to select a group of young people who shared a common experience of marginalisation, so that the group would have the possibility of exploring this experience in their music project if they chose to.

Initially, I selected young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds as the focus group for the study. As a large multicultural city, Melbourne has a large population of young people from CALD backgrounds. Many of these young people have traumatic histories of persecution and poverty in their countries of origin, and now face the challenges associated with integrating into Australian society. The music therapy literature identified music as a valuable medium for working cross-culturally with marginalised populations (Baker & Jones, 2006; Bergmann, 2002; Coombes, 2011; Hunt, 2006; Shapiro, 2005), and this informed my initial decision to focus on this group of young people.

However, in keeping with the participatory philosophy underpinning this study, I was open at all stages to adjusting this focus in response to the learnings from collaborative interactions with players. Both my intention to work with one participating community, and my decision to engage only young people from CALD backgrounds as players were altered as a result of collaborations in the

planning stage of this study. This process occurred over three action cycles and is described below. I used a variety of methods to structure these collaborations, and the subsequent learnings impacted on the research focus in different ways.

Methods of collaboration in the planning stage. In the first three cycles that made up the planning stage of this study, I collaborated with several different groups of people who were part of the system that supports marginalised young people. In the first cycle of the planning stage I undertook ‘expert interviews’ with 10 community workers from 7 community organisations to inform early planning and establish if there was a need for this research project. Interviewees worked with young people from CALD backgrounds in community settings in urban Melbourne. They were found using online industry directories and personal contacts.

I contacted community workers from organisations who provided youth services for CALD young people by email or telephone and invited them to engage in an interview with me to give their expert perspective on working with this marginalised group. These open-ended interviews aimed to ascertain the key challenges facing these young people from the expert perspective of community workers, and what they considered to be important considerations and challenges when working with these young people. Based on this discussion, community workers were invited to make suggestions about ways to design the research project to most effectively engage young people in the study.

During this stage I also undertook recruitment meetings with individual community organisations working with young people from CALD backgrounds where I discussed the research project with potential partner organisations. I invited the organisations to input practical suggestions for how the research project might be conducted in their context, and what resources and structures would be needed in the research design for me to collaborate with their community. When a community worker identified a need for such a project with the young people they worked with, I offered these organisations the opportunity to engage in a more in-depth collaboration by becoming the community partner organisation for the project.

When the first community partner organisation was engaged, I conducted four introductory music sessions with young people from the community to ascertain whether or not there was a need or interest in undertaking a participatory music project from the perspective of the young people in the community. Five young people engaged at different times over the course of these voluntary sessions. They had been informed of the sessions by the community worker for the organisation, or had been brought by their friends. The sessions were experiential, and involved showing the young people the participatory approach to working that the research project would take. We discussed their interest in this kind of music project, and their opinions about the structure and purpose of such as music project in their community.

The impact of these collaborations on the research project. These collaborations impacted on the design and trajectory of the research project in a number of ways. Conversations with both workers and young people highlighted the importance of a study design that had the flexibility to accommodate the real-world contexts of marginalised young people, whose lives were often chaotic and unpredictable. These conversations taught me that integrating the research project into the existing culture of the participating community would maximise the possibility of engaging young people as players. In response to this learning I decided to embed the research project into an existing youth program run by a community partner organisation, to ensure the young people had a familiar real-world forum through which to engage with the project.

Before collaborating with community members, I had decided to focus this project on young people from CALD backgrounds. However, after collaborating with professionals and young people in the planning cycles, I expanded my notion of potential co-researchers, from young people from CALD backgrounds to marginalised young people generally. This shift was linked to the decision to embed the research project in an existing youth program. I decided to collaborate with the community partner organisations to identify an appropriate group of marginalised young people from within the community they support, rather than arbitrarily nominating a group from the outset. This process will be outlined in more detail in the forthcoming recruitment section (p78).

The decisions to engage with existing community culture by embedding the research project in a pre-existing youth program, and to broaden the focus group to include marginalised young people more generally, raised a further question that impacted on the focus and design of the study: What could we learn from comparing the process and meaning of collaboration in participatory music projects between different participating communities supporting different groups of marginalised young people? This question prompted a significant change in the research design – I decided to engage three different communities supporting marginalised young people in the study, rather than only one. The aim of this design change was to learn from the comparison of the collaborative process with different types of community supporting marginalised young people.

These changes to the research design and focus were the outcome of discussions with community members in the first three cycles of the research project. At the conclusion of the planning stage, my general research focus had been refined into a clear plan for the study. In response to the input from collaborators I had refined my study design by deciding to embed the research project into existing youth programs. I had expanded my inclusion criteria for participants to include young people experiencing different types of marginalisation. And I had expanded the scope of the study to a comparative exploration of collaboration with three different communities. As I began recruitment of these three participating communities, the research project moved from the planning stage to the exploration stage.

The Exploration Stage of the Study

In the fourth, fifth and sixth action cycles of this study, I engaged in the cyclic process of action and reflection with community partner organisations and the young people they supported to enact this refined research design. These action cycles comprised the exploration stage of the study. In this stage I collaborated directly with young people and their supporting community from three participating communities, who became the players in the study.

I have already introduced the three communities that engaged as players in this research project (see p59) Before embarking an in-depth description of our collaborative research process (beginning on p82) I outline the underlying

criteria informing the selection of these communities. I also outline the recruitment and ethics procedures used in this study. These processes represented the start of the exploration stage of this study. In this exploration stage I engaged with participating communities to undertake community-based music projects, and collaboratively explored the process and meaning of collaboration with players.

Engaging communities as collaborators. Responding to the learnings from the planning stage, I aimed to recruit three communities supporting marginalised young people to the study in order to explore how the process of collaboration varied between different contexts. I used the same process for contacting communities that I employed in the planning stage: I accessed online community directories and my professional contacts in community settings to identify potential communities.

I contacted workers from potential community organisations by email or telephone to gauge their interest in participating in the project. If they expressed an interest, we met to discuss the details of the research project and identify whether the community met the criteria for inclusion in the project, outlined below. If the community met the criteria, the community organisation was invited to join the research project.

I used a number of criteria to select the communities that were invited to participate in the study. My primary consideration in developing these criteria was to ensure there was adequate similarity between communities that a comparison between contexts would be feasible, but sufficient variation to represent a variety of different groups of marginalised young people. These criteria are described below.

Selection criteria to ensure comparability between communities. The key criterion for recruitment of participating communities in this study was that each community was engaged with a cohort of young people who were experiencing marginalisation. As articulated earlier in this chapter, these were young people between the ages of 13 and 22, living in particularly deprived and challenging life situations that limited their access to opportunities available to

average young people in Australia. All of the groups of young people engaged in the study were supported by community organisations through which the research project was to be conducted.

To be invited to engage in the research, each community organisation required an existing youth program or space that was accessed by the young people and could serve as a forum to undertake the research project. Community organisations were also required to have the capacity to provide basic logistical support such as a time and venue for the project to run and mechanisms to communicate with the young people. For practical reasons, it was required that all of these community organisations were within a one-hour driving distance from Melbourne's city centre so that I could readily access the communities by car.

Community organisations were not expected to supply music equipment, although some communities had an existing selection of instruments that were made available to the research project. I supplied a wide variety of musical instruments, including a keyboard, two guitars, two hand drums, five large tuned percussion instruments and a selection of hand-held percussion. These supplemented any existing musical equipment owned by the community organisations or individual players engaged in the study.

Selection criteria to ensure variation between communities. When inviting groups of young people to participate in the study, I deliberately approached groups whose experiences of marginalisation were different from one another, in order to promote variation between the communities involved. Of the three participating communities, one group of young people were public housing residents (the drop-in group), another group were young people who had experienced homelessness (the share home group), and the third group were young people who were at-risk of or currently living in out-of-home residential care (the therapeutic camp group). The circumstances in each of these communities that contribute to these young people's marginalisation were outlined earlier in this chapter and are summarised in Table 1 (p70).

In addition to variation in the young people's experience of marginalisation, there was also intentional variation in the types of community

supporting the different groups of young people. Stige's (2002) continuum of community provides a useful way to conceptualise the difference between the three participating communities in this study. Stige proposes that the characteristics that bring groups of people together as communities can be understood as a continuum, from communities connected through shared location, through to communities connected by shared need. The three participating communities in this study were spread diversely across this continuum (see Figure 3 below).

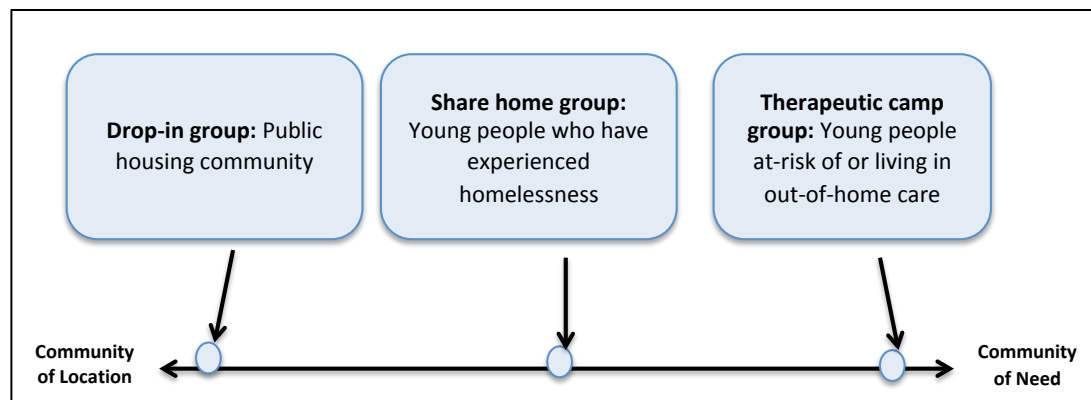


Fig 3. The continuum of community. Participating communities as they were located on the continuum of community. Adapted from Stige (2002).

The music project with the drop-in group was based at a local neighbourhood house and players were connected by their shared location as public housing residents. The music project with the share home group was based at the young people's share house, and players were connected by both their shared location *and* their common need for support after being homeless. The music project with the therapeutic camp group took place on camp by the beach. This group did not share a location but were connected as a community by their shared need for support due to experiences of living in care or unstable homes. By engaging different types of communities I sought to develop a comparative understanding of the process and meaning of collaboration with diverse communities supporting marginalised young people.

Recruitment and ethics approval. Recruitment to the study was a two-stage process. In the first stage, I recruited a community organisation from each community through which to run the music project. In each community I identified and approached a community organisation that ran group programs with marginalised young people and invited key workers from that organisation to engage as partners in the research. Together, we chose one of the organisation's youth programs to serve as a forum for the research project. I then provided any staff members involved in that youth program with a plain language statement and consent form for the project (See Appendix 1 and 2).

The second stage was to recruit the young people from the participating community to the project. The learnings from the planning stages of the study had identified a need to spend time building rapport with the young people prior to recruitment. In response to this learning, I spent time 'hanging out' in the youth programs that had been identified as the forum for the study in each community. The purpose of this 'hangout period' was for the young people and I to get to know one another in the community context prior to their recruitment into the study. This time was sometimes spent playing and listening to music, but I also engaged in other program activities. I told the young people I was interested in inviting them to participate in a research-based music project at some point, but this was not the focus of this period. The amount of time spent 'hanging out' varied between the three communities, depending on how long was needed for the young people and I to get to know one another. I judged this using my discretion, and in discussion with program staff. This 'hangout period' emerged as a significant part of the collaborative process in this study, and is described and analysed in more depth in results Chapter Five.

After 'hanging out' with each community, I invited the young people to engage as players in the study. With each community, this was a group discussion between the young people, a worker from the community organisation and myself. Using accessible language, I explained that I was interested in working with them as co-researchers on a participatory music project, using an action research process.

I explained that we would make decisions together about the focus of the music project, based on their priorities as a group. I described the cyclic process

of action and reflection, explaining that we would work together to plan and carry out the project, and then reflect together on what we had done and what we would do next. I explained that I was also interested to know what happens when we collaborate to create a music project together, and what that process is like for them. I also explained that it was fine if they did not wish to participate in the research, and that they could still participate in music activities going on in the program if they chose, but would not engage in the reflections and planning.

At this time, young people were then given consent forms and plain language statements by the program staff (see Appendix 1 and 3) and invited to ask any questions. For young people under the age of 18, consent forms and plain languages statements were also given to their parent or guardian (see Appendix 1 and 4). These consent forms were followed up by program staff where required. All of the young people in the project had parents or guardians who were able to read and understand English.

As this study was an emergent process, so too was the ethics approval process. An initial ethics application was submitted and approved by the Melbourne University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) before I began recruitment of any communities. However, as the research project emerged and changed, and communities were recruited, I submitted three progressive ethics amendments to reflect the specific requirements of each community. These amendments were discussed with program staff to ensure they reflected the needs of the young people in each community. For the drop-in group and the share home, the community organisations were satisfied to rely on the decisions of the Melbourne University HREC. However, the community organisation for the therapeutic camp had an internal organisational ethics committee that also reviewed and requested amendments to the ethics application for the project (see Appendix 5 for ethics approval emails).

Knowledge Generation Procedures

Following recruitment of the three participating communities, participatory music projects were undertaken with the drop-in group, the share home group and the therapeutic camp group. Empirical material was created and

reflected on with each community as part of the action research process. Knowledge was generated through the development and interpretation of this empirical material with players over the course of the study. In this section of the chapter I describe the process of developing empirical material to explore the research topic with players, and the specific procedures used to generate knowledge in this study. I then outline the procedure used to combine the empirical material from all three individual communities.

The generation of knowledge is the process through which learnings are gathered and organised so they can be interpreted in relation to the focus of a research project. The development of empirical material is the way these learnings are tangibly documented. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) posit that in research projects that take an interpretative approach, such as this study, empirical material is 'generated' rather than 'collected'. Consistent with Schwartz-Shea and Yanow's assertions (2012), I believe that knowledge is co-generated by co-researchers during the research process, in relationship with one another and the world, rather than independent facts or ideas that can be 'gathered' or 'collected'. I therefore refer to the collaborative development and interpretation of learnings in this study as a process of knowledge generation.

Players and I developed a variety of types of empirical material throughout this study. This included group notes, my reflective field notes, and video and audio recordings, as well as creative formats such as song lyrics, mind maps and photographs. In subsequent sections of this chapter these types of empirical material will be described in more detail. Over the course of this study, a vast amount of empirical material was created. Examples and excerpts of this empirical material are provided in the appendices of this thesis, as the compilation of all empirical material is too large to include in its entirety.

Throughout the process, I chose different methods for developing empirical material with different communities, based on what would allow players to most effectively engage with the research process. These choices were informed in discussion with community players. For example, when engaging players from the drop-in group in their first group reflection, I chose to use a video camera to record the process. This was informed by a staff member's suggestion that being videoed was motivating for this group of young people and

may help them to engage in the reflective process. By using a variety of methods to develop empirical material, I aimed to offer approaches that were meaningful to the young people, and to generate knowledge in ways that were accessible and useful to each community. This was informed by my participatory stance that prioritises knowledge generation that is locally relevant and practically applicable to participants (McIntyre, 2008).

Describing Knowledge Generation in this Chapter

The subsequent sections of this chapter describe the procedures undertaken with all three participating communities to develop and record the knowledge generated in this study. In order to clearly represent this information, I describe this process using an approach proposed by prominent action research theorists, Heron and Reason (2008). Heron and Reason (2008) identify four successive ‘ways of knowing’ that are achieved in action research: experiential knowing, presentational knowing, propositional knowing, and practical knowing. Each of these ‘ways of knowing’ generate different types of knowledge that together comprise the overall learnings of the research project.

Heron and Reason’s four ‘ways of knowing’ offer a framework for presenting the methods used to generate knowledge in this study. I progressively describe each ‘way of knowing’, how players and I experienced it in this study, and the types of empirical material created to record the knowledge generated. An overall summary of the all methods used and types of empirical material created to generate knowledge in this study is offered at the end of this section of the chapter (p78).

Experiential Knowing in this Research Project

Experiential knowing is the in-the-moment knowledge generated by participants through their active participation in collaborative interactions during the process of developing each participatory music project (Heron & Reason, 2008). The method used to develop experiential knowledge in this study was the participatory process undertaken with each community. This general participatory process with communities was as follows:

The young people and supporting adults from each participating community collaborated with me to plan, develop and undertake a participatory music project in their community. Through collaborative discussion with these players, different communities identified an area of interest to them as a group, and decided how to best explore that idea in a music project. We undertook the planned music project, using an ongoing process of action and reflection to implement, develop and analyse the project as it progressed. Together players decided how to report the outcomes of the project to their communities, using methods that were compatible with their local community culture.

The participatory process with each community was developed in negotiation with the pre-existing community culture, impacting on the way this process emerged in different communities. Working with existing community cultures also involved working with existing constraints and boundaries in each community. These real-world constraints (included in forthcoming project descriptions) impacted on the way the music projects developed with each community, as did time restrictions placed on the research process by academic PhD timeframes. I call these impacting factors constraints rather than limitations. 'Limitations' implies that there is an ideal research scenario that is not limited, and I do not believe that this is possible or relevant when taking a participatory approach to research.

In this study, experiential knowledge was generated through the process of collaborating to develop music projects in each community. In three brief descriptions below I describe the music projects that emerged in collaboration with each community, and the existing program culture and constraints that impacted on each project. These descriptions are supplemented in subsequent results and discussion chapters, where detailed, targeted case examples from the projects are used to explicate and contextualise particular learnings that emerge from the analysis of empirical material. In addition, rich descriptions of the music projects with each community are provided in Appendix 6, proposed from my perspective as academic researcher in this project.

Description of the music project with the drop-in group.

Existing program culture and player demographics. The neighbourhood house youth program that hosted music project at the public housing community was a weekly drop-in program, which was why a drop-in structure was also adopted in this music project. The drop-in nature of the youth program meant that it was a very unstructured and flexible program, with very little ongoing expectation placed on the young people. The program was open to any young people between the ages of 13 and 17. There were a core group of approximately 10 regular attendees at the program, but the number of young people varied between 6 and 20 every week. They engaged in a variety of concurrent activities, including computers, cooking, and the music project. Not all young people engaged in the music project, but all who were present at the time of the project were welcome to participate if they chose. The drop-in culture of the project meant that many young people participated in the music project at different times, with four committed young men agreeing to engage as players in the research element of the music project. These four young people collaborated with me in decision-making and reflection throughout the process.

Music project aims. The young people in the drop-in group decided to develop a band in their music project. Their goals for the project were music-centred: they wanted to develop their skills and identity as musicians. Although the neighbourhood house had significant music resources in the form of music equipment and staff skills, a music program was not currently available to the young people in this youth program. These young people did not have access to opportunities to develop music skills and have music-based experiences in their broader lives, and they articulated this as the chosen purpose of their music project. The culture at the drop-in group was that of a 'pathway program'. It served to provide peer-group experiences that acted as a 'training ground' to prepare the young people for future life experiences. This culture was reflected in the way the players approached the music project: they used it to learn and try out new experiences to take with them into their future lives.

Music project structure. The drop-in group music project ran weekly during school terms over 9 months. Throughout the project the young people engaged in weekly band practice and jam sessions, they undertook a community

performance on the public housing estate, and they wrote and recorded an original song. This process underwent several cycles of action and reflection, where players engaged in formal planning and reflection, both in groups and as individuals. In this environment the young people saw my role as similar to a band manager. It was my job to take the ideas generated in this process and provide ongoing support and encouragement to the young people to work towards their goals.

Reporting back to the community. The young people in the drop-in group chose an active method of 'reporting back' their experiences in the music project through performance at two community events. They also created a recording their original song, and a professional sound technician was engaged to facilitate that process. This generated a copy of their song for their personal ongoing use.

Project constraints. The variation and flexibility of the program's drop-in culture at times conflicted with the commitment required by group members to develop a band. It was challenging for the young people to maintain the momentum and motivation required for band rehearsals in such a changing environment. The music project with the drop-in group was also constrained by the fact that the young people involved had varying levels of commitment to the project, which impacted on their group process.

Description of the music project at the share home.

Existing program structure and player demographics. As the name suggests, the share home group was based in the young people's home environment, where I came to work with them fortnightly in their living room. As a home space, the environment was relaxed and flexible. As I brought the project to them and entered their home, I was conscious to allow people the opportunity to engage as much or little as they felt like on a given evening. Four young people engaged in the research process, however, they were rarely all home on the evening of my visits. At least two of the players were home for each fortnightly music session, with sessions being attended by three young people on average. Players were between the ages of 18 and 22 and all were residents at the share home.

Music project aims. The music project with this community ran as a cluster of individual and small-group music projects driven by the individual motivation

of the different young people. Goals for their music projects varied between players. For two it was to learn how to extend or revisit their music skills, the other two sought to use the music project to build more confidence in themselves.

Music project structure. Each session at the share home lasted three to four hours, running late into the evening. Throughout the evenings I worked individually with different young people towards their goals, moving between projects and giving the young people time to explore and extend their projects independently. Different projects involved songwriting, computer-based loop song creation, singing, jamming and music-based reflection using significant familiar songs. Players sometimes chose to work together to further develop their projects. This was initiated by the young people themselves.

Reporting back to the community. Reporting on their experiences in the project also varied between players at the share home. One young woman chose not to share her experience with anyone aside from me in a final interview. Conversely, three young people chose to perform an original work for the entire city-wide share home community at an awards ceremony, an idea that was planned and executed by the young people themselves. Additionally, two players developed audio and video recordings of their projects to have an ongoing record of their project to share with whomever they chose.

Project constraints. The research process at the share home was significantly impacted by time constraints. Due to logistical challenges, it took five months from the initial contact with the community to the commencement of sessions with the young people. At this point, community support staff suggested that a set time frame for the project would help give the young people a sense of the duration of their commitment to the project. A timeframe of three months was established for the project, comprised of fortnightly sessions. In this time, we undertook one action and the first formal reflection also served as players' final interviews for the project.

This was a significant constraint. Both the young people and I identified the potential to further develop this music project in a variety of ways. This would potentially have supported further growth and had a wider impact on the share home community. While all the players stated that they were prepared for the music project to end, they all also indicated that they would have preferred

the research project to continue. Unfortunately real-world time constraints on the project due to the delayed start and university PhD timeframes inhibited us from further developing the share home music project.

Description of the music project on therapeutic camp.

Existing program culture and player demographics. The therapeutic camp culture involved the young people engaging in a variety of planned activities. In keeping with this culture, the method to be used in the project – songwriting– was chosen in advance by the supporting staff on the camp. Staff believed it would be easier for the young people to engage in the project if they had some structures to frame the collaboration. The group of young people on camp consisted of 12 young people aged between 13 and 18.

Music project aims. The goal for this music project was to use a group songwriting process to explore the young people's experience of being part of the therapeutic camp program. The music project was used as a forum to explore what it meant to the young people to belong to the group involved in the therapeutic camp. The music project and subsequent group song was identified as a tangible focus for this discussion with the young people.

Music project structure. The music project at the therapeutic camp took the form of a group songwriting project during a weeklong camp. The songwriting process evolved over four sessions throughout the week. These sessions involved a group jam session, a lyric writing session, a session to develop song melody and instrumentation, and culminated in a recording session of the original song by all group members. Throughout this week, the young people's input and reflections were sought both during the songwriting sessions, and informally during group discussions or in passing when spending time with young people.

Reporting back to the community. After creating and recording their original song, all participants received a copy on CD. The therapeutic camp community then decided to perform the song live as a group at their annual end-of-year graduation ceremony. For these young people this was the way they shared their experience in the music project, and communicated about their experience as part of the therapeutic camp program to their peers and families.

Project constraints. This action research process was constrained by logistical factors put in place by the organisational ethics committee for this participating community, which did not allow the use of formal, recorded reflection with the young people during the process. This was due to concerns about recording of some of the young people who were wards of the state. This limited the possibilities for reflection during the participatory process to quite a concrete level, based around their choices and opinions about the song writing process, and did not afford many opportunities to develop the program further. The ethics committee permitted final interviews with the young people at the conclusion of the project, as long as these were undertaken by staff members from the therapeutic camp program.

Empirical material developed to represent experiential knowing. A number of types of empirical material were created to document the learnings from experiential knowing in this study. As part of the collaborative process with both the drop-in group and the therapeutic camp, group notes were taken during collaborative group discussions, documenting ideas, observations and plans relevant to each community's specific music projects. These group notes were handwritten in coloured pens on large pieces of poster paper, and these posters became data sources for the research project.

Visual forms of documentation were used with both the drop-in group and the share home. At the drop-in group, photographs documenting participatory interactions between participants were shared with the young people throughout the project. At the share home, one player used video to document his music project. Visual documentation for data collection purposes was not permitted on therapeutic camp; however, the young people and staff independently used their mobile phone cameras to capture the process at various points during the music project. Although these recordings and photographs were not included as empirical material, it is possible that they supported individual participants' own in-the-moment understanding of the participatory process.

For the processes with the drop-in group and the share home I kept ongoing session notes in the form of mind maps (<http://www.conceptdraw.com/>) that were created after each session with the communities. To ensure consistency

in the detail of these session notes, I used five standard headings to document the sessions: What happened; my observations; my impressions; my feelings; my decisions/conclusions (see Appendix 7 for a representative example of these notes). The therapeutic camp community had an explicit policy that session notes were not written about the camp, so instead I wrote a general reflection following the camp that summarised the process undertaken with the community (see Appendix 9 for a reflection excerpt).

In addition, I kept a decision log throughout the entire research process with all three communities. The decision log documented decisions I made during the study that impacted on the research process. The purpose of the log was to ensure I was aware of my own impact on the collaborative process, and that choices I made were undertaken in collaboration with co-researchers and other research colleagues, including my PhD supervisors. The decision log recorded the decisions made, who and what influenced each decision, the potential impacts of the decision on the project, which collaborators I had discussed the decision with and key discussion points, the conclusions drawn from discussions with collaborators, and proposed action based on the decision (see Appendix 8 for a decision log excerpt). The log was supplemented by a reflective document that examined my subjective perspective on decisions in more depth when necessary (see Appendix 9 for reflection excerpt).

Presentational Knowing in this Research Project

Presentational knowing is the process of identifying what is significant in learnings gained through the process of experiential knowing and representing these learnings in a presentational format (Heron & Reason, 2008). In this project, three methods were used to generate presentational knowledge by all of the participating communities in this study. These methods were songwriting, performance and recording.

Songwriting was a method used by all three communities to explore their experiences. In all groups, developing a song together was a process through which group members developed a shared understanding. They did this by negotiating their different ideas and skills to develop a shared product, in the form of a song, which represented their experience. This generated

presentational knowledge in the form of songs that demonstrated the both the music skills and the lyric descriptions of their experiences that were explored in the music projects.

The nature of the shared experience varied between communities in interesting ways. For the drop-in group and the therapeutic camp, songwriting was a group process and players used songwriting to explore and present the experience or the identity of the group as a whole. Group knowledge was developed through the exploration of these shared themes in the songwriting process. At the share home, the songwriting process was used to explore themes personal to one young person in the program. However, interpersonal learnings were also generated in this process when he engaged another young person in the collaboration to develop the music for his song. In this process at the share home, both individual and shared learnings were developed through the songwriting process.

Performance was the second method of presentational knowing used in all three music projects. In all groups, performance for their local community was a process of embodying and presenting the group identity fostered through the participatory process, and demonstrating the musical skills developed by players. In addition, the performance of original songs by young people at the share home and the therapeutic camp allowed performances to be a forum to share the story explored in their songwriting processes.

Recording was the third method of presentational knowing that was common to all three music projects. For the drop-in group and the therapeutic camp, recording was a way to extend and formalise the songwriting process by developing a permanent copy of the original songs written by both groups. The recording process was a learning process itself, where players made individual choices and together negotiated their individual roles and what that meant for the recording as a whole. At the share home recording was used in a different way. The young person who used this method of presentational knowing chose to record versions of herself singing preferred popular songs in order to generate an ongoing reminder of the 'musical self' that was fostered in the music project, that she could keep and share with others.

Empirical material developed to represent presentational knowing.

A number of types of empirical material were developed with each community that represented the presentational knowledge generated by collaborating communities in this study. The songs written in all three participatory music projects provided two forms of empirical material for the project: the song lyrics, and the recordings created in the process. In addition, video footage and photographs from the performances by each community also comprised empirical material for the research project. In keeping with ethics regulations for the therapeutic camp, photographs taken at the therapeutic camp performance did not include images of the young people, but captured a display showcasing of the process created by the staff members from the community.

Propositional Knowing in this Research Project

Propositional knowing is the process of intellectual understanding developed through the research process, which led to the generation of propositional knowledge in this study. This propositional knowledge was generated through the formal and informal processes of collaborative reflection with participants. Several methods were used to gather propositional knowledge in this study, and these methods were uniquely tailored to individual processes with different communities.

Sometimes these methods involved formal, documented group or individual reflection with collaborators. Alternatively sometimes the process was incidental and incorporated into the program, when packing up instruments or over a meal at the end of the session. Through the process with each community I selected the different methods for gathering propositional knowledge based on what I perceived to be the most effective and relevant approach for each community at the time. The methods used with different communities were also informed by the different ethical considerations and timeframes that impacted on the participatory process with each community.

Of the three communities, the participatory process with the drop-in group was the longest. Drop-in group players collaborated in several cycles of action and reflection over the course of their music project. Incidental group discussions and one-on-one conversations occurred during the sessions, when setting up and

packing up equipment, while eating, or at the computers while looking at music videos on YouTube. Additionally, players, drop-in group staff and I also used formal methods of reflection throughout the process, in the form of focus groups and individual interviews with participants. As described earlier, drop-in staff identified video as a motivating tool for these young people, so I frequently used video in these focus groups and interviews as a targeted and relevant way to capture the interviews in this community. Audio recordings were also used to capture interviews in this community.

As previously stated earlier, unavoidable time limitations with the share home meant that we were only able to undertake one cycle of action and reflection in their music project. From the outset I was aware that the time limitations on the share home music project would limit opportunities for formal reflection. For this reason I chose to use informal, but targeted, ongoing reflection as the primary method for processing the learnings in this community. These reflections were embedded into the culture of music sessions. With the share home group, it was possible to use this as an effective strategy for developing propositional knowledge because the players were older and more mature, and able to engage in reflective discussions in a less structured and concrete way. During the share home music project, players engaged in only one formalised reflection, in the form of one-on-one interviews at the project's conclusion. In these interviews players reflected on the learnings that had been explored and discussed throughout the process, and more broadly on the process as a whole. These interviews were audio-recorded.

On therapeutic camp, the organisation's ethics board had stipulated the way data could be collected with the young people. This impacted on how propositional knowledge was gathered and represented with this community. These stipulations prohibited formalised reflection methods with players about the music project whilst we were undertaking the process on camp. Over the weeklong camp, all young people engaged in informal conversations where we intentionally discussed the process. However, as 12 young people and 2 staff members collaborated on this project, I believe a more concrete and structured approach to these reflections would have deepened the collective propositional knowledge generated as a group.

Although I was unable to formally reflect with the young people from the therapeutic camp group, I was permitted to interview two staff members who were also collaborators on the music project. After camp, the staff members and I undertook a formal group interview where we explored what we had experienced and observed as the group's learnings during the participatory music project on camp. This interview was audio recorded. At the conclusion of the entire project, after the young people had performed their song for their community, these same staff members conducted in-depth final interviews with three of the participating young people and these interviews were audio-recorded. The staff chose these young people on the basis of convenience, based on who they could arrange meetings with at the time. The staff also conducted brief telephone follow-ups with seven of the remaining young people and summarised their statements.

Empirical material developed to represent propositional knowing.

The empirical material developed to represent propositional knowing in this study took the form of the video footage and transcriptions of audio recordings from the interviews and focus groups with each community. During the cyclic research process, I conducted these interviews and focus groups with players as part of the ongoing process of action and reflection. At the conclusion of each music project, young people were invited to participate in a final interview reflecting on the entire research project. Three young people from each community chose to engage in an open-ended interview about their experience (see Appendix 10 for an example interview transcript).

In keeping with the participatory approach in this study, I was the interviewer in these final interviews where possible. I believed that the participatory relationship, developed through ongoing reflection together over the course of the collaborative process, would be familiar to the young people and would encourage open reflection on the process. I also believed that, having been involved in the entire project, I could remind the young people of the learnings from our collaborative reflections throughout the process, to allow them to reflect on changes or similarities in what they experienced over time.

At the drop-in group and the share home I conducted these final interviews. However, as previously described, organisational ethics stipulations

required staff members to conduct the final interviews with the therapeutic camp group. These staff were heavily engaged in the process throughout in the music project and well-placed to conduct these interviews. These staff members also undertook the seven brief telephone interviews with other players from the therapeutic camp. These were briefly summarised by the staff (see Appendix 11 for an excerpt) and extremely limited in depth.

A series of guiding questions provided a basic framework for all final interviews (see Appendix 12). These questions were adapted and expanded in response to the reflections of young people within each interview. This responsive approach is commonly adopted in semi-structured qualitative interviews to allow the opportunity to expand on ideas and observations as they emerge in the interview process (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). A more detailed outline of the final interview rationale and process employed in this study is provided in Chapter Four (p117) as part of the description of analysis process.

Practical Knowing in this Research Project

Practical knowing is the process of developing an understanding of how to do something (Heron & Reason, 2008). This is a practical learning process of building skills and capacities by players through the participatory process. In this research project, the practical knowledge gained by players had musical and interpersonal elements that were experienced individually by different players, depending on their chosen role in the collaboration. As this practical knowledge was unique to each individual young person, this section is not broken down into a description of the process with each community. However, the general areas of practical knowing described by players are summarised below.

For many young people some of the practical knowledge developed in this study took the form of music skills. This involved working with me to learn new music instruments or techniques and to extend pre-existing music skills, which were then applied in their music projects. The method we used to develop this practical knowing was to incorporate collaborative skills sharing and music instruction elements into the participatory process.

In addition to music skills, young people developed practical knowledge in interpersonal skills of leadership and problem solving, and how to negotiate

relationships with other people. To develop this knowledge young people were required to negotiate and enact their chosen role in the group. Through their collaboration in the music projects, young people also developed practical knowledge in how to use music as a way to explore and express their identity, both as a group and as individuals, and how to share that with other people. Ongoing collaborative discussion was the method used to build these forms of practical knowledge in this study.

As described briefly above, the practical knowledge developed by the young people in this study was complex and multi-faceted. In their final interviews young people identified this knowledge as an important part of their experience in the projects. This is explored in significantly more depth in Chapter Four, which presents the results of the analysis exploring the meaning of the young people's experience of collaboration in this study.

Empirical material developed to represent practical knowing. The practical knowledge explored in this research project takes the form of internal resources and experiences developed by players through the participatory process. In that sense, the young people themselves are the sources of empirical material for this practical knowing. In their final interviews, the young people reflected on the resources and experiences they developed in the music projects. Audio transcriptions of these interviews are the empirical material for this practical knowledge (see Appendix 10 for an example).

Summary of Knowledge Generation with Individual Communities

In summary, each participating community undertook a participatory music project that focused on the priorities and issues identified collaboratively by the players in that community. These projects generated four types of local community knowledge. These were collaboratively explored in an ongoing process of action and reflection, using methods tailored to the players and their communities. Players reported back their learnings to their communities using presentational methods suited to the culture of each community.

Throughout this process, a variety of methods were used to capture the learnings from the participatory process. Using these methods, a variety of types

of empirical material were created (see Table 2 below). These were the tangible representations of the knowledge generated in the three music projects in this study. They represented a spectrum of group and individual learnings by players across the different participating communities.

	Methods of knowledge generation	Types of empirical material created
Experiential knowledge	- Ongoing participatory process - Group discussion - Collaborative decision-making	- Group notes - Brainstorming posters - Session notes - Decision log - Extended reflection notes - Photographs & video footage
Presentational knowledge	- Songwriting - Recording - Performance	- Photographs - Video footage of performance - Original songs – lyrics and recordings - Poster display
Propositional knowledge	- Formal focus groups - Formal interviews - Incidental ongoing reflections	- Video footage of focus groups and interviews - Audio transcripts of interviews
Practical knowledge	- Music skill development - Interpersonal skill development	- Audio transcripts of final interviews

Table 2. Summary of knowledge generation. The methods used and types of empirical material created to reflect the four different types of knowledge generated in this study.

In the process of knowledge generation, players and I developed knowledge in ways that were contextually appropriate and had practical relevance for individual participating communities. In this study I also sought to develop a broader inter-community knowledge, whereby the learnings from different communities informed one another. This was embedded into the design of the study as an extension of the reflection phase of each action research cycle. I methodically combined the empirical material from all participating communities at the end of each action cycle to get a clear and comprehensive picture of what occurred across communities in each cycle. I then shared this combined understanding with players for their input and feedback.

Combining the Empirical Material from all Communities

After undertaking local reflections with communities in each cycle, I brought together all the empirical material created in the cycle – different in format as well as source – and combined them into a single, encompassing format. The purpose of this process was to explore how the learnings from different communities related to one another, to develop an overall combined knowledge for each action cycle. Through this process I cyclically integrated the three music projects with individual communities into the single, wider action research process that incorporated all three communities. This generated broader inter-community learnings about the process and meaning of collaboration with all communities.

These combined learnings were then fed back to communities for their input and used to inform the planning of subsequent research cycles in each community. In this way, learnings from the wider comparative research process could inform local community projects, just as learnings from the local processes informed the wider research project. Combining the empirical material in each cycle involved more than simply merging the different types of empirical material into one format. To develop the combined learnings, I related and compared information from different communities. This involved interpretation of the empirical material. The methods used to combine and interpret the empirical material are described below.

Combining and interpreting the empirical material. The format used to represent the combined empirical material took the form of two mind maps for each action cycle (see Appendix 13 and 14 for examples). The first mindmap summarised the research process for the cycle, using the action research structure of plan, action, observation and reflection as headings to develop an in-depth overview of what had occurred. Using this structure I merged the concurrent processes with each community into a combined overview of the research process for the action cycle.

The information detailed in the first mindmap generally remained separated into discrete communities (see Appendix 13). The second mindmap documented an integrated interpretation of the learnings from each cycle. On this

map I presented what was happening across communities in each action cycle, and how learnings from different communities compared to and informed one another (see Appendix 14). This second mindmap was structured around the overall topics for each cycle. I interpreted these topics by analysing all the empirical material developed in the cycle.

This was a three-part process. First I identified the key learnings from each piece of empirical material; I then grouped the key learnings into topics representing the combined learnings from the cycle; I then brought these combined learnings back to players for their feedback. For the purpose of clarity, the methods used in this process are outlined below. The theoretical underpinnings that informed this process, and subsequent analysis processes in this study, are presented in the forthcoming Analysis Procedures section of this chapter (see p103).

Identifying key learnings. I analysed each piece of empirical material individually by reading, watching or listening to it multiple times. I identified the key learnings from each piece of empirical material, and allocated a representative keyword or short descriptive sentence to each key learning. This is similar to the process of coding used in grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). It is important to note that in the coding process in this study, not every word or concept from each piece of empirical material was identified as a key learning and coded. I made interpretive decisions about what should be identified as a key learning, based on the focus of the research project. For each piece of empirical material, I coded all of the information that I considered to contribute to a deeper understanding of the process or meaning of collaboration with players in this study (The rationale for this use of an interpretative lens is elaborated on p104).

Grouping key learnings into topics. After I completed this selective coding process for each piece of empirical material, I grouped the key learnings into topics. These topics linked the various key learnings and provided an interrelated understanding of what could be learnt from the action cycle. These topics became the headings for the second mindmap in each cycle. On this second mind map, the key learnings were written under the heading of the topic they related to.

Sharing the combined learnings with players. The combined learnings from the cycle were then reported back to players for their input. The process of sharing the combined learnings with players varied between players and communities. As with the many collaborative discussions in the research project, we did this in formal ways, such as during group meetings or university supervision, *and* informal ways, such as whilst packing up after a program or in incidental conversation with players. These discussions of the combined learnings assisted us in planning subsequent action cycles.

The case vignette below offers an example of how the combined learnings from action cycle three were collaboratively interpreted and actioned with different players in this study:

In action cycle three, I undertook series of introductory music sessions with some young women from the public housing community, at the local neighbourhood house. This was the first group with the first community to engage in the project – the very beginning of a possible future collaboration. The purpose of the introductory sessions was for us to get to know one another before inviting the young women to participate in the research project. Neighbourhood house staff suggested we start the program with a small group and allow it to grow by word of mouth, as was the community culture. Initially two young women were engaged in the program. They decided on a 'singing lesson' focus. We met weekly at the neighbourhood house, but worked in a portable room located in the adjacent garden, separate to the main building.

The introductory sessions ran for four weeks, up until the end of the school term. One young woman was particularly focused, and several others came to try out the program. At the end of term we made a plan to resume after school holidays. I aimed to recruit the committed young woman into the study then, and build the group from there. When I returned after the school holidays, she did not come to the session, in spite of text message reminders. Nor did she come the following week.

I did not know why she stopped coming and I was not adequately engaged in the community to find out if she needed additional support to attend. Was she required to babysit for her younger siblings during this time, a reality for many

young women in this community? Did she have other conflicting commitments to school or after-school activities? Had she grown tired of the sessions? Even if I had been able to contact the young woman directly, I did not know if she would tell me the real reason, or give me the reason she thought I wanted to hear. We had not yet developed a strong enough rapport for her to necessarily trust me with her opinions or personal challenges.

This hiatus in the process with the community represented the end of an action cycle, and I undertook the process of combining the learnings from the empirical material in that action cycle. My interpretation of the combined learnings, including the experience described above, suggested that it was necessary to spend time 'hanging out' in the community before engaging in a collaboration, in order to have time to build relationships with players and develop an identity in the community. During action cycle three I had come into the community just once a week and worked in a separate portable space. From this 'outsider' position, I was not integrated enough into the community to effectively and responsively support an emergent participatory process.

After undertaking this analysis, I discussed this learning with my university supervisor and the neighbourhood house staff. They offered their perspectives on my interpretation, and we worked together to decide how we would use this learning to make a plan for action cycle four. In supervision, we planned that I should try to find a way of integrating more effectively into the neighbourhood housing community. We also decided that I would try to engage two other communities supporting marginalised young people into the project, so that I could compare the process of collaboration between the different communities.

I discussed this learning and possible plan with the neighbourhood house staff member as we packed up chairs and tables at the end of the day. He agreed that it would help for me to work within an existing neighbourhood house program in order to get to know the community. He suggested I come and join a particular program that he was involved in called Outlook. Outlook later became the core program for the participatory music project with this community.

This case vignette describes how the combined learnings from action cycle three were shared with university collaborators, such as my supervisor, and

community players, such as the neighbourhood house staff member. It was in collaboration with these players that the learnings were applied to the action research process and used to inform the planning for the subsequent action cycle.

Analysis Procedures

In the previous section of this chapter I described the way empirical material was developed and interpreted in the ongoing cycles of action and reflection in this research project. This was embedded into the research process over the first six action cycles, which were the planning and exploration stages of the study. The final two action cycles comprised the abstraction stage of the study. In this stage, I abstracted the learnings developed throughout the study to interpret a broader conceptual understanding of the learnings.

This involved two structured analyses of the empirical material, where I investigated the two halves of the research focus for the study: the meaning of collaboration for players, and the process of collaboration with communities supporting marginalised young people. The overall learnings from these two analyses are the focus of the two subsequent results chapters of this thesis. In this section of the chapter I describe the process and the methods used in these structured analyses.

Overview of Approach to Analysis

I used an emergent approach to the analysis of empirical material in this study, in keeping with the overall emergent design of this action research project. This meant that I did not follow a pre-existing analysis protocol. Instead, I articulated a focus and a purpose for each analysis process from the outset. This served as the interpretative lens for the analysis. I then used an iterative process to find the most useful and reasonable interpretation of the empirical material in relation to the focus for the analysis. The interpretative lenses and iterative process used are elaborated later in this section.

While the analysis process in this study did not follow a pre-ordained structure, I sought to be methodical, reflective and dialogic at all stages of the process. I was influenced by grounded theory methods and the principles of

hermeneutic inquiry when constructing my approach to analysis. Grounded theory coding strategies (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) provided an example from which I developed a process for methodically extracting learnings from the large amount of empirical material created in the study. This process is elaborated later in this section (see p106).

The purpose of these analyses was to systematically abstract the raw empirical material into a conceptual interpretation of the learnings, based on the focus of the study. Similar to a hermeneutic approach to inquiry (Thiselton, 2009), I drew on my experience as a participant in the music projects, my skills and knowledge as a music therapist, and my understanding of the literature to inform my interpretation. In addition to drawing on my own perceptions and experience, I shared the learnings from the analyses with both players and music therapy professionals from around the world. I invited their opinions and critique of my interpretation, and these discussions were integrated into the analysis process.

Articulating the Focus for each Analysis

As identified earlier in this chapter, action research is often a political process, in the sense that it aims to investigate a particular focus or agenda. I recognised that there were many possible ways to interpret the empirical material in this study. Based on my research focus, I articulated the purpose and priorities of each analysis, which served as an interpretative lens (outlined below). I acknowledged that my choice of interpretative lens would influence the perspective on the learnings that emerged from the analyses. From my stance as a participatory researcher, I did not see this as a limitation. Rather, it was consistent with the 'political' purpose of this study, which was to inform my chosen research focus (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

The lens for each analysis was not used to anticipate or seek any particular outcomes from the empirical material, or direct the learnings towards any preconceived conclusions. Instead it served as a frame for understanding the learnings that emerged out of the analysis process. As outlined in the forthcoming description of the analysis process (p106), I questioned my interpretations

throughout the process and actively sought alternative and conflicting perspectives in the empirical material.

The overall focus of this research project was to understand the process of collaboration for communities supporting marginalised young people and the meaning of that experience for the young people involved. I used this focus as a basis to articulate an interpretative lens for the two analyses of empirical material in the abstraction stage of the research project. The purpose and priorities of each analysis articulated below became the interpretative lens for the analyses.

Analysis A: The meaning of collaboration for players. In this analysis I sought to understand what was meaningful to the young people in their experience of collaboration in the participatory music projects in this study, and to interpret what may be learnt about collaboration from their experience. The analysis was underpinned by two priorities: to represent the young people's voices as clearly and faithfully as possible, and to represent the complexity of their varied experience. In order to focus solely on the young people's perspective, I analysed a subset of the overall empirical material from the study. This subset consisted of the transcripts of nine final interviews conducted at the conclusion of the music with individual young people from all three participating communities. The results of this analysis are presented in Chapter Four.

Analysis B: The process of collaboration with communities. In this analysis I sought to understand and articulate the process of collaboration in participatory music projects with communities supporting marginalised young people. The priority in this analysis was to develop an understanding of collaborative process that accounted for variation between different contexts, and to find the most useful and practical way of representing collaborative process to inform future collaborations between music therapists and communities. The empirical material used for this analysis was the twelve mindmaps representing the combined learnings from each action cycle in the study. Using these mindmaps I drew on all the learnings generated with communities throughout the study. The results of this analysis are presented in Chapter Five.

Description of Analysis Process

I used the same emergent, iterative approach to both of the analyses in the abstraction stage of this study. However, the way each of these analyses evolved varied based on the different interpretative lenses that framed each analysis, outlined above. For clarity, a description of how the analysis process emerged for each separate analysis is incorporated into the subsequent Chapters Four and Five. In this chapter I summarise the iterative process underpinning both analyses.

Beginning with the raw empirical material for each analysis, I asked the empirical material a series of guiding questions based on the interpretative lens for the analysis. These questions became progressively more abstract as I interpreted the empirical material, drawing on my experience as a collaborator in the study and my knowledge as a music therapy professional and researcher. In addition to my own skills and experience, I periodically shared my interpretation with players and music therapy peers for their perspective on my analysis.

Using the analysis lens as a basis, I attempted to interpret the empirical material from different perspectives to find various ways of understanding the learnings that emerged. When a particular interpretation emerged from the empirical material, I questioned that interpretation by returning to the empirical material and looking for evidence that contradicted or supplemented that interpretation. Ultimately I selected the interpretation that I identified as the most useful way of understanding the learnings based on the focus for the analysis, and that was the most reasonable interpretation based on my interrogation of the empirical material. Figure 4 (p107) is a visual representation of this iterative process.

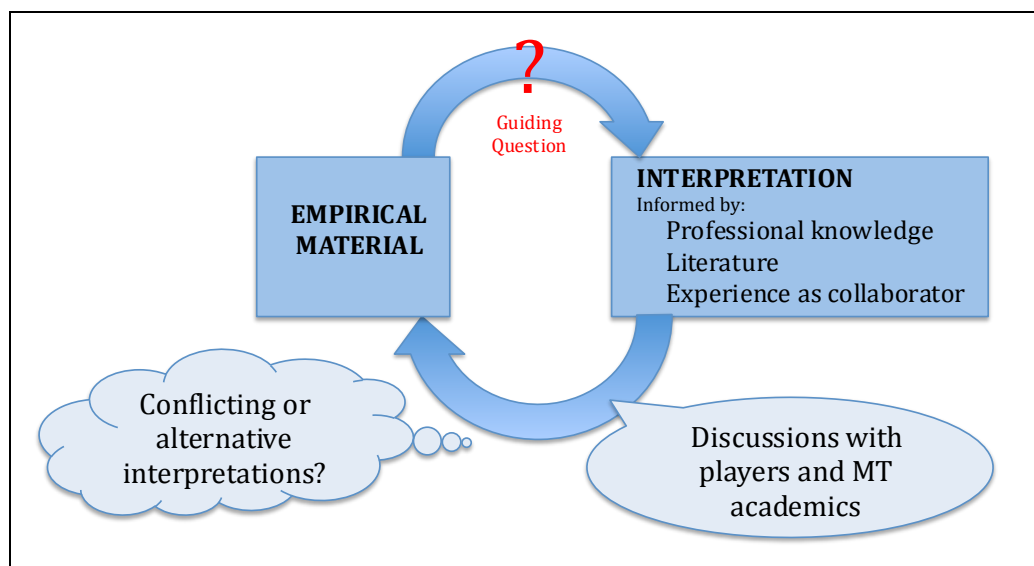


Fig. 4. The iterative process of analysis. This figure depicts how the empirical material was interpreted and the different questions and contributions impacting the interpretation.

Part one of the iterative analysis process. Reflecting back, this iterative process emerged in two parts. In the first part I extracted concepts from the raw empirical material and abstracted them to develop a conceptual understanding for each analysis. I used a coding process similar to that used to code the empirical material throughout the study at the end of each action cycle (see p99).

Starting with the raw empirical material, I extracted key concepts that related to the interpretative lens for each analysis and labelled them with a keyword or phrase. I then examined how these individual concepts related to one another, and grouped them into categories. I then looked at the different perspectives represented within each of those categories, to examine how the concepts in each category were experienced and described by different players and in different communities. From these three cycles of analysis I developed a conceptual interpretation of the focus for each analysis – the process and the meaning of collaboration – that I took back to players and presented to music therapy peers for feedback.

This coding part of the analysis process was informed by grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) and I therefore use the grounded theory terms ‘concept’ and ‘category’ in this thesis. However, the coding process in this study varied from grounded theory in certain ways. Rather than coding all of the empirical

material, I selectively coded information that related to the interpretative lens for each analysis. My process also differed as I undertook these final analyses at the completion of the music projects, rather than using a parallel data collection and analysis approach favoured in grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Part two of the iterative analysis process. The second part of each analysis was a comparative analysis. I examined and compared how the conceptual interpretations of the process and meaning of collaboration were enacted with each community. I used my experience, understanding and observations as a collaborator and a music therapist to compare the collaborative process with each of the communities in this study. As my perspective on the music projects informed this comparative analysis, in-depth descriptions of each music project from my perspective are provided in Appendix 6.

This part of the iterative analysis was based on a hermeneutic approach to inquiry (Thiselton, 2009), in the sense that I used my experience as a collaborator, my professional skills as a music therapist, and my understanding of music therapy and participatory theory to inform the comparative analysis. I found this hermeneutic approach to be highly compatible with the participatory ethos of action research. As a research collaborator, my input and perspective were an embedded part of the research process throughout the study. Applying a hermeneutic approach to the analysis process was consistent with this approach.

The purpose of the comparative analyses was to explore the similarities and differences between communities and individual players in this study. Out of these analyses I developed an understanding of how individual and contextual factors impacted on the process and meaning of collaboration. These were incorporated into the conceptual interpretations that I had developed in the first part of each analysis, and became the overall interpretation of the process and meaning of collaboration – the final overall learnings for the study.

In the forthcoming two results chapters for this thesis, I describe how this iterative process emerged in each analysis and present the overall learnings for each of the analyses undertaken in the abstraction stage of the study. These chapters also describe how the process and meaning of collaboration varied

between individuals and contexts in this study, and implications of this for the overall learnings of the research.

Trustworthiness of Research Learnings

In this chapter, I have described the research design and procedures used to generate and analyse empirical material in this study. In this final section of the chapter, I outline the measures undertaken throughout this research project to ensure the trustworthiness of the learnings developed. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) identify three measures of trustworthiness in studies that use interpretative methodologies, such as this research project. By interpretative methodologies, Schwartz-Shea and Yanow refer to studies whereby the purpose of research is “situated, contextualised meaning-making” (p99), wherein “both researchers and participants are seen as “embodied” or situated, and that situatedness, which can be person-specific, plays a role in the co-generation of data” (p95). This description is consistent with the approach taken in this study, and I therefore use Schwartz-Shea and Yanow’s (2012) proposed measures to examine trustworthiness in this study.

Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) propose that three features of the research process can be used to evaluate research trustworthiness. These features are: ongoing reflexivity, member-checking and checking researcher sense-making throughout the process of generating and analysing empirical material. They assert that attention to these three design features is important in interpretative research to ensure the processes used are reliable and representative of the phenomenon they are studying. In the remainder of this chapter I use these features as a frame to describe the strategies used to ensure the trustworthiness of research findings in this study.

Ongoing Reflexivity

Ongoing critical reflection was fundamental to the research process in this study. Given the emergent design used, ongoing reflexivity with community players allowed us to make informed decisions about the direction of the research process as it progressed. These decisions impacted on the types of empirical

material generated and the methods of analysis used. The purpose of this research project was to develop learnings that represented the experience and the meaning of the collaborative process for players. Ongoing reflection on this experience by players and I throughout the research process helped to ensure that we were conscious of our reactions and decisions and how they were impacting and shaping the music projects as they emerged.

This ongoing reflexivity occurred in several ways, and has already been described in detail throughout this chapter. To summarise, in each participating community, players and I used the cyclic process of action and reflection as a structure through which to periodically reflect together on the progress of the research. These reflections used video recordings, audio recordings and group notes to aid reflection, and were sometimes done in groups and sometimes in a one-on-one dialogue. In addition, I reflected individually on all sessions with the three communities and created reflective session notes (see Appendix 6) to record my observations and interpretations. I also created a decision log (see Appendix 8) to track the choices I made throughout the research project that impacted on the progress of the research.

The many methods of ongoing reflection in this study explored the process and meaning of collaboration from the perspective of many different players, including myself, from all three communities. Different types of empirical material reflected different perspectives on the same experience, in order to capture the most complete picture possible of the collaborations under investigation. This method, called triangulation, is commonly used in qualitative research to ensure the validity of research findings (Rice & Ezzy, 1999).

Member-Checking

The second research design feature highlighted by Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) is member checking. This involves bringing any analysis of empirical material done by the academic researcher back to players to ensure that interpretations accurately reflect players' experience. In action research, member checking is an embedded element of the design. Players in this study were engaged as collaborators and were actively involved in the interpretation of learnings throughout the cyclic process of action and reflection (McIntyre, 2008).

However, three separate communities were simultaneously engaged in this research project. This meant that an additional member-checking measure was required ensure that learnings from individual communities could be communicated and reflected on by players *between* communities. To do this I combined the learnings from all three communities after each action cycle (described on p__ of this chapter) and reported this back to communities so that learnings could be interpreted and integrated into each local context as appropriate.

In addition, I independently undertook the two final analyses in the abstraction stage of the study, as described earlier in this chapter (from p103). These analyses occurred after all three music projects were completed. I liaised with each community partner organisation to decide the best way to share these final learnings with players and solicit their feedback. In all communities we decided that I would provide paper copies for staff at the partner organisations to distribute to the young people. The young people could then contact me directly if they wanted to provide feedback or discuss their opinions with the staff at the partner organisations if they preferred.

We chose this indirect way of reporting back to young people because the final analyses were completed ten months after the conclusion of the music projects. As is the nature of this target population, many players' engagement with the partner organisation had changed for a variety of reasons. Using a paper document, staff could provide young people with a copy of the learnings in a way that was most appropriate for their current engagement with each partner organisation. For some young people this was during a home visit, for others it was when they dropped in to use the computers, for others it was by mail. This was left to the local experts who were considered best placed to make this decision.

I was invested in presenting these final learnings in a way that was accessible to the young people, to invite their feedback and opinions. In my experience of working with these players, on-line forums like YouTube and Facebook were a familiar way they regularly offered their comments and opinions. With this in mind, I modelled my summary of the final learnings on the layout of YouTube, using direct quotes from the young people, and providing my

interpretation in the form of ‘comments’ (see Appendix 15). While the layout was based on an Internet website, this document was never placed online.

Checking Researcher Sense-Making

The third way that I ensured the trustworthiness of findings in this study was to check my interpretation or ‘sense-making’ of the empirical material throughout the knowledge generation and analysis processes. I did this by continuously checking my interpretations throughout the study against my pre-existing assumptions, to ensure that my preconceived notions of what I may expect to see in the empirical material were not influencing my interpretations. I did this to ensure that my interpretation of learnings was informed by the empirical material itself, and not by my expectations or assumptions.

I ‘checked’ my interpretations by repeatedly returning to the empirical throughout knowledge generation and analysis to question any new learnings and look for evidence of alternate and opposing perspectives on the same idea in the data. I also ‘checked’ my interpretations in the extended journal of my decision log (see Appendix 8). As described earlier, this decision log was a mechanism designed to methodically question my interpretations. Throughout the research process I made decisions that were influenced by my interpretations of the empirical material. I used the decision log to document and identify the impact of these decisions on the research process, and to prompt me to collaborate with other players in all decision-making. The decision log served as an ongoing mechanism to ‘check’ my interpretations both with other players and against my own assumptions.

Trustworthiness and Social Action

In action research, it is a priority that research findings are relevant and applicable to the participants involved. In addition to the three design features described above, an important measure of the trustworthiness of the research findings in action research is the degree to which findings are meaningful to co-researchers (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). As described throughout this chapter, I placed priority on the generation of empirical material that was meaningful and useful to players, and intentionally chose knowledge generation and analysis

methods that would be engaging and relevant to the players in each community. This was the key factor that informed the methods of data generation and analysis employed in this research project

Some action research theorists also posit that the trustworthiness in an action research process is evidenced in the social action that is achieved by the research (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). This practical approach to measuring the trustworthiness of a project is reflective of the emphasis on practical knowledge in action research. This social action aspect of action research often takes an emancipatory emphasis, informed by a social change agenda.

As stated earlier in this thesis (p14), I brought a social change orientation rather than a social change agenda to this research project. An emancipatory focus did not emerge as the focus of the social action undertaken by communities in this study. Instead, communities chose very tangible and locally-relevant forms of social action. Players chose to use the forum of live performance to demonstrate for their community what they had learnt in their music project. They also chose to develop recordings of their work as a concrete and ongoing way for them to share their experience in the music project with members of their community as they saw fit.

Although I brought a social change orientation to this research project, the 'social action' chosen by players did not result directly in broader social change outcomes. However, this study generated overall learnings about the potential of collaboration in music therapy as a mechanism for positive growth, including the potential for social change. These learnings and subsequent possible implications for music therapy practice are explored extensively in the Discussion Chapter of this thesis (Chapter Six). It is intended that these learnings may contribute further knowledge to the ongoing discussion of music therapy's potential role in social change initiatives.

In Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the research methodology used in this research project. I have described the methods and procedures employed throughout the process, and the principles of action research that underpinned

decision-making in this study. I have also explored the trustworthiness of the learnings developed.

In the forthcoming two chapters of this thesis I present the overall learnings that emerged from the process of knowledge generation and analysis in this study. In Chapter Four I present my interpretation of the meaning of being involved in collaboration for the young people in this study. In Chapter Five I present my interpretation of the process of collaboration in participatory music projects between a music therapist and community supporting marginalised young people.

Chapter Four: Analysis One - Meaningful Aspects of Collaboration

In the previous chapter I outlined the methods used in this research project to generate and analyse empirical material. In this study I undertook two analyses of the empirical material to explore the two halves of my chosen research focus: To understand and articulate the *meaning* and the *process* of collaboration with marginalised young people and their supporting communities. These analyses and subsequent learnings are presented in the two forthcoming chapters of this thesis.

Based on the overall research focus outlined above, research objectives informing each analysis were articulated in the introduction to this thesis (p6). The analysis and interpretation presented in this chapter address the first of these two research objectives: To understand what elements of young people's collaboration in a participatory music project were identified as meaningful to the young people involved.

In participatory research, participants are understood to be experts on their experience, and as such, their perspective on the experience is highly valued (McIntyre, 2008). This participatory view informed my attempt to understand and articulate collaboration in this research project. In this chapter I seek to represent the young people's voice on their experience of collaboration in this study, and to present my interpretation of what we can learn from their voices about the meaning of collaboration in participatory music projects for the young people involved. This was the overall agenda for the analysis of empirical material described in this chapter.

Interpretative Lens Used to Examine the Meaning of Collaboration

As articulated in the Chapter Three, I used an iterative analysis process to interpret learnings from the empirical material in this study (see p106). An interpretative lens framed the way information was extracted from the empirical material. This was based on the focus for each analysis. In Table 3 (below), I outline the dimensions of the interpretative lens that framed the interpretation of

the young people's voices presented in this chapter. The aim and agenda described represent the general focus for this analysis. The priorities and approach taken to interpretation represent how that focus was explored, and are elaborated throughout this chapter.

	Analysis one: Meaningful aspects of collaboration
The aim of this analysis	To understand what elements of young people's collaboration in a participatory music project are identified as meaningful to the young people involved
The agenda informing this analysis	To represent the young people's voice on the meaning of their experience of collaboration in this study To interpret what we can learn from these voices about the meaning of collaboration in participatory music projects for young people
The priorities informing the interpretation in this analysis	To represent the young people's voices as clearly and faithfully as possible To represent the complexity and diversity of young people's varied experience
The approach taken to interpretation in this analysis	To actively explore both positive and challenging interpretations of the empirical material To identify and juxtapose the varying perspectives of individual young people on different aspects of their experience To compare the experience both between individual young people and between young people from different contexts To interpret what this comparison may teach us about the meaning of collaboration in participatory music projects

Table 3. Dimensions of interpretative lens informing Analysis One. The factors framing the overall purpose of this analysis that inform this interpretation of the meaning of collaboration.

Empirical Material Used to Examine the Meaning of Collaboration

The purpose of this analysis is to represent the young people's perspective on the meanings of collaboration. Therefore in this analysis I used a subset of the overall empirical material generated in the research project. This was made up of the transcripts from nine final interviews with young people from all three participating communities, conducted after the music projects with each community were completed (see Appendix 10 for example interview transcript).

All players were invited to undertake a final interview to reflect on their experience as collaborators. Of the 20 young people who were players in the project, three from each group agreed to be interviewed. During semi-structured interviews, players were asked to reflect on their experience of participation and describe what it was like for them to be part of the music project. They were asked to reflect on the most important parts of the process for them, their role in the program, and what they liked and disliked (see Appendix 12 for interview questions). The semi-structured interview approach meant that interview questions were used as a basic guide, but that the trajectory of each interview was developed in response to player's reflections.

As outlined in Chapter Three (p95) I conducted the interviews with young people from the drop-in group and the share home. However, due to ethics requirements with the therapeutic camp community, two camp staff members conducted the interviews with the young people from this community. These staff members were close collaborators in the music project themselves, with a clear understanding of the purpose of the interviews and prior experience interviewing young people.

The participatory ethos of this study informed the interview approach taken by camp staff and myself as interviewers. We actively drew on our relationships with the young people and our experience and observations as co-participants in the music projects. We drew on this experience to prompt the young people or provide examples if they were unsure about the meaning of a question. We also used our knowledge of individual young people's experiences to encourage reflection on not only on the best but also on the more challenging parts of their experience. This was important because the young people were aware that as the academic researcher I would be analysing the interviews. It was helpful to be able to prompt and invite reflection on the challenging aspects of the process, to demonstrate to the young people that I was open and interested to hear both their positive *and* negative reflections on their experience.

Using this dialogic style and drawing on relationships and experience with the young people in these final interviews was a deliberate choice. Having strived to foster a dynamic of shared power throughout the research process, I drew on that dynamic in these final interviews. In doing so I sought to minimise power

imbalance in the interviews, acknowledged as a potential challenge in qualitative interviewing (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005; Knapik, 2006). The participatory approach to final interviews in this study was reflective of Knapik's (2006) notion of "mutual exploration" (p10) of the research focus, whereby researchers strive to "create social conditions in which participants can bring forth concerns that are meaningful to them" (Knapik, 2006, p10). To achieve this, Knapik (2006) advocated for dialogic and relational interview approaches. The final interviews in this study were based on these principles of dialogue and relationship.

Structure of this Chapter

As described in the Chapter Three (p106) I used an emergent, iterative approach to analyse the empirical material generated in this study. In this chapter I outline the way that iterative approach was applied to this analysis of the young people's voices, and my subsequent interpretation of what this suggests about the meaning of collaboration in the music projects for the players involved. This is presented in three sections:

1. **Overview of the analysis process**
2. **Interpretation of the young people's voices for each category**
3. **Implication of learnings from young people's voices**

Overview of the Analysis Process

I began the iterative analysis process with the transcripts from the nine final interviews with the young people, which constituted the raw empirical material for the analysis. As stated in Table 3 (p___), the agenda for this analysis was to represent the young people's voice on the meaning of their experience of collaboration. This agenda informed the process of abstracting the raw empirical material towards an interpretation of the meaning of collaboration in this analysis.

Extracting and Categorising Quotes from the Interview Transcripts

I began the analysis by reading through each interview transcript multiple times, extracting all of the quotes from each young person that referred to meaningful elements of their experience. This was selective process, based on the interpretative lens identified for this analysis (refer to Chapter Three, p104) for a detailed explanation of this selective approach to coding). In this process I actively sought to identify both positive and negative elements that the young people considered significant to their participation in the music project.

To each extracted quote I attributed short phrases or keywords – termed ‘concepts’ in this thesis – representing my interpretation of the young person’s statement. The number of concepts developed for each statement varied depending on the complexity and length of the quote extracted from the empirical material. These quotes and concepts were collated in a summary document (an excerpt from this document is provided in Appendix 16).

Once quotes had been extracted and coded for each interview, I undertook a second cycle of analysis to identify how the concepts generated related to one another. I grouped related concepts into categories, based on a common idea or topic. This grouping of concepts into categories was a dynamic process. I read repeatedly through the concepts looking for links between different concepts. When a link emerged, I returned to the concepts to identify if and how other concepts related to this link.

This process resulted in a web of interrelated concepts that gradually evolved and separated into eight discrete categories. Four of these categories related to aspects of the process that were meaningful, and four categories related to meaningful outcomes of the young people’s experiences in the music projects. Table 4 lists the eight categories that emerged from this process. The italicised descriptions of each category are intentionally framed in language accessible to the young people in this study, as I aim to represent their voices. These categories form the basis of the interpretation of learnings presented in this chapter.

Categories denoting meaningful aspects of young peoples' experiences of collaboration	
Meaningful aspects of the collaborative process	
1.	Choice in participation: <i>Making choices about getting involved</i>
2.	Tangible purpose: <i>Working towards something</i>
3.	Pathways: <i>Moving towards independence</i>
4.	Collaborative support style: <i>The music therapist's role in the project</i>
Meaningful outcomes for players	
5.	Changed self concept: <i>Developing new ways of looking at oneself</i>
6.	Skill development and mastery: <i>Growing as musicians</i>
7.	Peer connection: <i>Strengthening connections within the group</i>
8.	Acknowledgement: <i>Being seen and heard</i>

Table 4. Categories representing meaningful aspects of collaboration. This table lists the categories developed through the analysis of young people's interview transcripts to identify meaningful elements in their experience in the participatory music projects.

Identifying and Clarifying Perspectives Within Categories

The categories generated represented my interpretation of the aspects of the music projects that the young people identified as meaningful, based on my analysis of the empirical material. I was committed to representing the young people's voices in this analysis. Therefore, after creating the categories, I used the original summary document to create a list of the young people's quotes for each category.

Examining the accumulated quotes for each category, it became clear that players' statements encompassed a variety of different perspectives on each category. Some statements shared a similar view and others juxtaposed one another. In addition, some perspectives appeared to be common across all three music groups, some varied between contexts, and others were individual to each young person. This indicated that while the categories represented shared

aspects of the music projects that players identified as meaningful, the way players related to each category was nuanced and complex.

Creating comparative descriptions for each category. To explore this complexity, I immersed myself in the quotes from each category to generate a comparative description for each category. These became the basis for the learnings presented in this chapter (beginning on p124). In these comparative descriptions I articulated the different ways the young people related to each category and explored whether players' different perspectives appeared be context-related or more individualised experiences. As part of this cycle of analysis, I repeatedly revisited the original interview transcripts to ensure no statements had been inadvertently missed in the initial coding of empirical material. I focused on one category at a time, looking for statements that both supported and challenged the existing perspectives outlined in the comparative descriptions being created.

I incorporated direct quotes from the young people into the comparative descriptions to ensure their voices remained prominent in the analysis. When selecting quotes, I attempted to ensure that all the perspectives on each category were represented, and that all nine players were represented as evenly as possible. When numerous quotes represented the same perspective on a category, I used the quote that I considered to most clearly and accurately represent the many statements describing that perspective.

The majority of quotes used in these comparative descriptions were direct quotes of the young people. However, two young people indicated that they would feel self-conscious if directly quoted. In order to represent these young people's voices in the learnings, but respect their discomfort, I chose to paraphrase their words but attempted to retain the integrity of their statements as much as possible. I also occasionally paraphrased dialogue between the young person and interviewer where no discrete quote was available and it was considered important to include that particular young person's perspective.

Having created comparative descriptions for each category, I recognised that while each description represented a variety of perspectives on each category, the overriding tone used to describe the learnings was generally very

positive. I did not want to undervalue the young people's positive reflections on their experience, however, I was conscious that young people tend to reflect positively on their engagement with music (McFerran et al., in press). In order to ensure that all aspects of the young people's experience of each category was represented, I undertook two measures: I shared my interpretations with players for their feedback; and, I created an overall summary of each young person's position in relation to each category. These processes are described below.

Sharing comparative descriptions with players. Once I had developed a comparative description for each category, I reported my interpretation of the empirical material back to the young people to invite their feedback. This was in keeping with action research methodology, which emphasises participant input at all stages of the research process (Herr, 2005; McIntyre, 2008). As described in detail in Chapter Three (p111), I created a youth-friendly format for presenting these learnings in order to maximise the likelihood that young people would provide feedback (see Appendix 15 for an example).

None of the young people chose to comment on my interpretation of their voice in this analysis. There are many possible reasons for this. To speculate, the unavoidable time delay between the conclusion of music projects and the communication of learnings may have meant players had disengaged from the process and moved on to other endeavours. Alternatively, young people may not have had anything further to say about their experience, having contributed repeatedly during ongoing reflection throughout the music projects. Or perhaps responding to this invitation for their feedback was simply not a priority for these young people, as reported by Skewes (2001) in her music therapy research with adolescents.

Summarising each young person's overall position in relation to each category. In addition to seeking player's feedback, I also returned to each young person's original interview transcript and used his or her overall interview to develop a one-paragraph summary of each player's reported experience of each category (see Appendix 17). During this process I drew on my knowledge of each young person from our relationship as co-researchers to supplement the

interview data where relevant. This reflects the hermeneutic approach that informed the analyses in this study (see p106) I used this knowledge to add depth or insight to a young person's described experience, but not to change their perspective.

I undertook this process was to summarily capture each young person's stance in relation to each category, to ensure no perspectives on a given category were overlooked or oversimplified when the transcripts were broken down into individual statements and coded. This was informed by the second priority of this analysis (see Table 3, p116): to honour the complexity of the young people's experience. I sought to ensure that the findings were not unintentionally skewed towards positive interpretation.

Synthesising and Interpreting Overall Learnings from Analysis

Through this iterative analysis process, I had generated comparative descriptions articulating young people's different perspectives on each category, and overall summaries of each young person's position in relation to each category that had emerged. These learnings comprehensively described the young people's varied perspectives on meaningful elements of their experience of collaboration in this study. In the final cycle of this analysis, I combined and abstracted the learnings from these comparative descriptions and player summaries. The object of this cycle was to interpret what these young people's voices suggested more broadly about the process of collaboration with marginalised young people in participatory music projects.

To do this I examined the learnings from this analysis, drawing on my knowledge of the three music projects, the participating communities and the players, based on my experience as a co-participant in all three music projects and my professional training as a music therapist. I compared the similarities and differences in different young people's perspectives on each category, and proposed personal, social and contextual factors that I interpreted to have contributed to the young people's experiences of each category in this study. These interpretations for each category are described in the forthcoming section of this chapter.

Based on the synthesised learnings from each category, I generated an overall understanding of the meaning of collaboration in the music projects for the young people involved in this study. This understanding is proposed in the final section of this chapter (p158). In this final section I articulate the broader implications of the learnings from the young people's voices in this study.

Interpretation of the Young People's Voices for Each Category

The purpose of this section is to present my interpretation of the young people's voices for each category in this analysis, generated through the process articulated above. This is important as these interpretations informed the overall understanding of the meaning of collaboration generated in this analysis, which is presented in the final section of this chapter (see p158). This section is structured using the eight categories that emerged from the analysis of players' interview transcripts. I present my integrated interpretation of the comparative descriptions and player summaries, drawing on my experience as a co-participant and music therapy professional. Throughout the section, the young people's voices are prioritised through the use of direct quotes from the interview transcripts.

The overall learnings reported for each category are comprised of the young people's individual voices, represented in quotes, and descriptions of the music projects where appropriate. I offer a comparison of the different perspectives offered for each category. I also present my proposed interpretation of the meaning and implication of learnings for each category, indicating factors that appear have influenced the variation in perspectives for each category where relevant. These different aspects are integrated into an overall understanding for each category. Following this overview of each category, I summarise the overall learnings from this analysis of the young people's voices, and propose what this contributes to our understanding of participatory music therapy with this population.

Choice in Participation: Making Choices About Getting Involved

The participatory approach in this research project meant that collaboration was prioritised in all three music projects. This collaborative emphasis meant that players in each music project were offered opportunities to decide for themselves the amount and the way that they participate in their music project. The existing culture of each community was taken into account when framing these choices. For the drop-in group and the share home, young people were offered complete freedom to choose the level and mode of their individual participation. On the therapeutic camp, there was an existing expectation that the young people would participate all activities. In response to this, I intentionally structured the songwriting project to have space within the process for varying degrees of participation, both active and passive, so that young people could choose their level of participation in spite of the expectation that they would be present at sessions. To use the words of one of the young people from this group: *“it was just chilled out, people dropping in words, people helping, people weren’t (helping)...”*

In their final interviews, the young people identified several perspectives on the importance of making choices about participation in the music projects. Players from both the share home and the therapeutic camp stated that the freedom to choose how they participated was a positive feature of the collaborative process for them. As one young woman said:

“...I had my own opinions towards (the music program), and I could make my own decisions, it wasn’t like you turned around and pressured us into doing anything. And like, if you said ‘hey, let’s do this’ and I said ‘no’, you wouldn’t have cared, you would have said ‘alright then, we’ll work on something else’... It was good. I guess I was more into doing (music) this time around because I wasn’t being forced to do it, it was something that I was deciding to do myself.”

This player suggested that choosing her level of involvement promoted a higher level of engagement for her. Responses from young people in the share home and therapeutic camp projects indicated that choosing their level of involvement was also important to players who took a less active role.

For me, it was important that everyone came together for a good reason, to play music, and it was like, even if I wasn't in the core group at the time, I was still part of it. It was nice to know that it was there and available if I wanted to be involved.

These reflections suggested that players who chose a less active role in the collaboration still identified themselves as part of the music project in these communities. This indicated that having space for a variety of approaches to engagement in the structure of music projects was beneficial. Players from the share home and the therapeutic camp welcomed opportunities to take responsibility for their role in the music project. Their statements suggested that choosing their own place in the group strengthened their sense of belonging to the group, whether that role was large or small.

Players from the drop-in group identified some challenges related to this collaborative approach. They described how when some players changed their mind regularly about their level of participation in music, it was difficult for other group members who were relying on them. Players reported that this was frustrating, as they couldn't achieve what they hoped to without the commitment of all group members.

"...like, if you want to play, you're going to have to play. You chose to play, and you just can't quit half way. So that's when I want those people that chose to play to have to play..."

This was particularly significant in the drop-in group. They had chosen to form a band, which required members to be committed to rehearsals. One young person reflected on his reaction to being asked to come to rehearsals at a time that did not suit him:

"I got annoyed... with everyone. They all made me come in and I was playing (computer) games..."

The players in this group found that achieving their goals as a band required a level of commitment from players once they had decided to participate. In this group, young people's different levels of commitment and expectations for the music project was incompatible with the type of project we had chosen. For one young person this was a reason he eventually disengaged from the music project:

"...I was just tired of complaining, like, asking people to come and practice..."

This group still achieved a great deal in their music project, both individually and as a band. As well as ongoing weekly jam sessions and rehearsals, they undertook a group performance and wrote and recorded an original song. However, the varied commitment of group members was an ongoing challenge for the group. The role of balancing choice in participation with commitment to the project fell to me, as one of the young people from the group reflects:

"We got to choose which, like, what we wanted to do, but then (Lucy) just like, kind of guided us towards that direction..."

In summary. The young people's statements indicated that having choice in participation was meaningful to their experience in the music projects, however the nature of that meaning varied between contexts. Players from the share home and therapeutic camp groups suggested that the fact that their music projects that could simultaneously accommodate a variety of different types and levels of engagement allowed young people less inclined towards active participation to feel a part of the group. This suggests that collaborative music projects may offer the potential to promote belonging and a sense of group identity between young people with different degrees and styles of engagement.

However, the experience described by the young people from the drop-in group indicated that this potential benefit may be dependent on whether or not the chosen structure of the music project is compatible with the way players choose to participate. A music project that requires long-term ongoing

commitment, such as forming a band, may not be compatible with a group whose members change their level of participation regularly.

Tangible Purpose: Working Towards Something

In their final interviews, seven of the young people from across all three participating communities identified that the sense of direction created by working towards a tangible purpose was a meaningful aspect of their experience in the music projects. Interestingly, each participating community chose to undertake both a performance and a recording as part of their music project. In all communities community players themselves made this decision, as described below. These tangible music objectives of performance and recording were prominent features of the music projects with each community, and appeared to provide the sense of direction that was identified as meaningful to most young people in their final interviews.

Performances and recordings were incorporated into the music projects of each participating community in different ways. In the drop-in group, there was a culture of performance in the local community. We arranged a casual community performance night at the housing estate where the band performed as one of several local acts. The young people were paid a token 'artists fee' for their participation, as was the culture of this community. In subsequent research cycles, we recorded an original song that players had written, working with a professional music producer. In this group, the performances and recordings served as targets for the young people in the group to work towards. Using performance and recording as a target made sense in the context of this drop-in project, giving players a concrete reason to return to the group week after week.

On the therapeutic camp, the decision to write and record a song was made by the staff members who were players in the research project. This was in keeping with the camp culture, which offered structured group activities. I used a very flexible songwriting structure to allow young people the opportunity to choose their level of participation in the project. This songwriting process culminated in a group recording of the original song at the end of the camp. While all young people were present during the recording, two chose to be spectators in this element of the process. Following on from the songwriting experience, a plan

to perform their song at their end-of-year celebration emerged. Rehearsals and coordination of this performance were undertaken entirely by the community players themselves, using me for logistical support as required. For this group, a recording process was used as the culmination of a concrete group activity; however, the performance was a continuation of the project that emerged out of the process.

At the share home, decisions to record songs and to undertake a performance were made incidentally by the young people themselves. At several points throughout the project young people chose to make basic recordings of their singing or songwriting to share with friends. Additionally, two young people also decided to perform their original work at a community gathering. After enlisting my support to provide equipment and to be one of the performers, the young people arranged this entire performance independently. In this group, the decision to use performance and recordings emerged spontaneously at different points throughout the project, and was driven entirely by the young people's interest and motivation to perform or record their music.

Although working towards performance and recordings was a feature of all three music projects in this study, it is clear that the role of these tangible music objectives varied between contexts and was influenced by the different cultures of the participating communities. At times, performance or recording was used as a target to direct the project, and at other times the choice to work towards a performance or recording evolved out of the process. In both cases the process of working towards something served to bring a sense of tangible purpose to the music projects.

Nerves and performance or recording. In each community, the decision to undertake a performance or recording was made by community players and young people could choose their level of participation in these activities. When given the option, some young people chose to take very prominent lead roles, *“just being in front of that crowd, getting the chance to do that rap, one of the biggest verses, was cool...”* and others chose to engage only as audience members: *“there was no chance (I would perform), like, it wasn't even debatable”*.

The participatory approach to performance and recording allowed the young people to take a role that they were comfortable with. This was important as preparing for performance or recording made some players nervous, as indicated in several of the forthcoming quotes from young people in this section. Players from across all three music projects in this study described feelings of nervousness in the lead-up to their performance or recording. However, all of the young people in this study who reported feeling nervous reflected that in hindsight the experience had been positive for them. *"I was very nervous at the start, I didn't want to do it, but it was fun."*

I propose that the participatory approach taken to the performance contributed to the positive experience on the performance and recordings described by young people in this study. It is possible that players' active role in the decisions leading up to the performance and their control over their own participation were protective factors that promoted this positive experience of performance for players.

Young people's different perspectives on a sense of purpose. As outlined above, the way performance and recording were used in the music projects was context-dependent. However, the meaning of working towards something did not appear to be context-dependent for the young people in the study. Instead, it appeared to be related to the factors that motivated individual young people. Eight young people from across all three groups identified that working towards something helped give them a clear purpose for the music project. For three of these young people, having a tangible purpose served to keep them on track and *"heading towards a direction"*. The direction created by the process of working towards something was important for them. One of these young people described how having a recording to work towards motivated him to participate more actively in the process:

I wanted to do the recording but I was nervous because I didn't want to stuff it up, so I practiced more...

This reflection suggested that working towards a recording helped this young man to better define what was expected of him, and what he expected of himself. Having a tangible objective to work towards enabled him to set himself a standard to live up to. It appeared that the purpose created by the recording motivated this young person to be more involved in the music project. In addition to being motivating, two young people also described how working towards a performance or recording gave them a sense of achievement. Reflecting on working towards a performance, one young person states:

"...I was so nervous I was thinking, why did I choose to do this? And then when it was done, it was like, even though I feel very overwhelmed, I feel like I've actually achieved something, you know..."

Another player reflects on the idea of achievement in relation to developing a recording:

"...(recording was) sort of exciting, like a sense of accomplishment, yeah.. it's like you've set your goal to do something and then actually recording is kind of like locking it in place that you've actually done it."

This player commented on how a final product or experience created a sense of completion or closure in the music project. This was valuable when taking a collaborative approach to the music projects, where the mechanism for closure was not established from the outset. The use of a final product or event offered an effective way to define the end of the project.

For two players, it was the product created through working towards something that mattered to them. For one player, this was the money he received as his 'artists fee' for participating in the performance. For another young person, it was the recording she could play at home to remember her experience and connect to the group after the music project was over.

"I've got the CD in my room and I play it before I go to bed every night... It's good... it makes me think about (the group), coz when I'm not at (the program) I get all depressed and sad, so I listen to it and think about it..."

It appears that for many of the young people in the project, working towards a performance or recording gave them a clear purpose for the project that they identified as a useful part of the process for them. Three players described how the *process* of working towards a tangible music goal contributed to this sense of direction. Two players described how working towards a tangible music goal – an *outcome* – contributed to this sense of purpose. This outcome was a sense of achievement or closure for some young people, or a tangible music product for others, such as a CD. However, for three young people, working towards something was not necessary. For them, the forum of the music project itself was enough to provide a tangible purpose. For these players, the music project generally was a space for players to *"come together for a good reason"* and to *"practice practice practice"*, and this participation in and of itself created a sense of purpose. One young woman describes this, saying:

"...just in general, like, you've given us things that we can do and work on together. You've given us things to look forward to in the week, or two weeks, and you've just, I don't know, in your own way you've kind of changed the way that we all work throughout the house..."

For this young woman, collaboration in the music project itself provided a meaningful purpose and opportunity for development that she could look forward to. This quote highlights the interpersonal nature of the space created by the music therapist. She identified the role I play in the project and indirectly the role of other participants in her reference to the group's experience. For these three young people, this interpersonal forum of music project was adequate purpose for their participation.

In summary. Seven of the nine young people from across all music projects saw importance in having a sense of purpose in their music project. Four of these

young people identified that working towards a tangible music objective could help to provide this sense of purpose. For some players, the forum of the music project itself was sufficient purpose; for other players, the direction provided by working towards a performance or recording provided that purpose; for other players, the product of the performance or recording provided that purpose (See Figure 5). These different perspectives were experienced by young people engaged in the same music project. This suggests that participatory music projects such as those in this study have the potential to accommodate these different perspectives on the purpose of participation within the same music project.

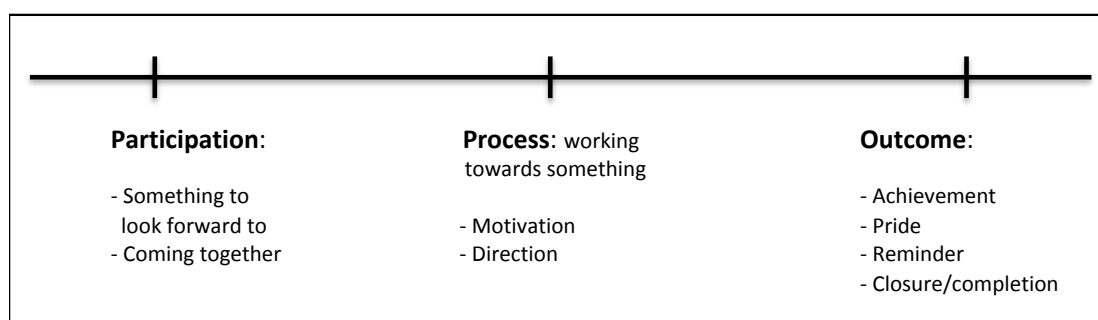


Fig 5: Dimensions of purpose. These three dimensions of were identified by different young people as providing them with a sense of purpose for the music project.

Pathways: Moving Towards Independence

"...most (players) think that they can't play or can't sing, but once they came here, you showed them how they have a future you know? They have, they're going to start planning something. So if they get interested in an instrument they want to keep on playing..."

For many players, it seemed that their experience of collaborating in the music project gave them a chance to imagine a possible future for themselves related to music. Six of the nine players interviewed reported that the music project gave them an idea of the possibilities for continuing music independently in the their future lives. For some players this was a general idea:

"... it just depends on where I go from here. There's always different opportunities and roads that take me wherever, so yeah, (continuing on with music) is a possibility. I'm just happy to go with the flow, see where it takes me."

Other players could see a clear pathway forward from the end of the music project that would continue their development on a musical path.

"I'm probably ready to go on a bit, and probably VET (music study) would probably be a real way to do it, coz they do a lot of performances and all that..."

For this player from the drop-in group, the music project presented a tangible opportunity to continue his growing interest in music independently. He used his participation in the music program as the basis for an audition to apply for a selective high school music class. Together we wrote a letter of recommendation from me, based on his yearlong involvement in the music project, and after a live audition he was accepted into the program. In his final interview, this young person identified that he was ready to move on to this new step, the music project having served as a pathway to this new music opportunity.

It seems that young people's confidence and interest in independently continuing to develop their music skills varied between players from all groups, and was largely a personal experience related to individual motivation and interest. However, it appears from players' statements that real-life contextual factors such as time constraints impacted on the extent to which young people felt empowered to pursue their music interests independently. This was demonstrated in the experience described by all three young people from the share house group. In final interviews with players from this group, they identified that they could see further scope to continue and expand the music project, but were not yet ready to take on that responsibility on for themselves.

"...I think when it comes to me it was just, it was pretty cool. It was awesome, I'd do it again. I'd prefer it if you didn't like stop, and, like, leave, because... it's awesome to

like, look forward to that and, you know. To just keep expanding on what we're already done and be able to, like, do more things or, yeah, I don't know..."

With this group it took five months of coordination and changes in plans before I was able to begin the project with these young people. The share home environment was unpredictable, and it was difficult to arrange a time to meet with the young people to invite their participation. Given the time constraints of the PhD timeframe, I questioned whether we would have adequate time to undertake a music project at all, but together with players we decided to run a three-month, fixed term project. These time constraints were not ideal, however, having informed the young people of the pending opportunity, we considered it preferable to cancelling the project altogether.

Unfortunately these time constraints prevented us from continuing the music project, in spite of a continued interest from players. While players reported being prepared for the process to end, they did not want it to. Interestingly, all of the young people from the share home saw the potential to continue working with music in their lives, but they did not all feel adequately empowered to actively pursue music without me. It appears that for this group, real-life constraints of time limitations impacted on the degree to which the young people felt able to take the skills gained in the project and use them independently.

"I wished it could have you know gone on a lot longer, so therefore, you know, I could have done more with different songs and you know, I would have liked the other guys to, to try something out with my other songs as well. So yeah, I, it would have been, I mean, I would have liked to stay in there longer and seen how things progressed..." -

Reflections on the share home music project suggested that even where motivation and interest was present, to continue exploring their music independently, players needed a level of general belief in their ability to do so. This took time to develop in this study. Without adequate time to foster a sense of independence and ownership over their musical future, some young people from

the share home group appeared to see their possibilities for the future as linked to the music project and music therapist, rather than considering themselves able to independently pursue their interest. This was an important learning, that while participatory music projects have the potential to present a pathway to independent musicking possibilities for participants, as with individual young people from the therapeutic camp and drop-in groups, real-life factors such as time constraints may impact on the extent to which this potential is realised.

In summary. Their final interviews indicated that young people's attitudes to accessing music independently after the music project varied from having a clear, specific vision of their next step, to being happy to wait and see what opportunities arose in the future. This varied between individual young people, and appeared largely based on each player's vision for the future role of music in their life. However, for some players, the degree to which they felt empowered to independently enact on their personal vision was limited by time constraints.

From all three music groups, six of the nine young people interviewed reported that the music projects opened their eyes to new possibilities for continuing music independently in the future. This suggests that participatory music projects aiming to promote empowerment and ownership may offer young people new perspectives on the potential role of music in their futures. This learning provides important information for music therapists choosing to engage in this type of music project. When engaging young people in a collaborative music process promoting empowerment and independence, part of this process must be to support the young people involved to explore and understand options for how they might access the resources they need in the future to continue playing music if they choose to.

Collaborative Support Style: The Role of the Music Therapist

"...which person out there does that? Like brings their tools, all their equipment over and lets us go at it with no experience? It was fun."

Players from all of the three groups commented on my role in the music projects. It appeared that one of the main ways the young people identified with me was as a musician, and therefore an 'expert' in the area of music. They saw me

as a person who could teach them new skills, give them access to new equipment and bring different ideas.

"...you've been helping us with the music and motivating us and helping us learn..."

"...you gave me things that I could do, you helped me with things I wanted to do... when you came in you gave me different things that we could work on, like a list of different things that we could do, and I've actually been able to do it with someone else, rather than basically on my own..."

This role as a 'musical' person appeared to be fundamental to the way the young people in all the groups saw me. This was not surprising given that music was the medium through which we developed our relationships in the music project. One player reported how my role as an 'expert' musician gave my feedback and support of her playing more weight in her eyes.

"...(Lucy gave) support and encouragement and the words, like how she'd come up to us and tell us how good we're doing and stuff like that, kind of made me feel a bit better with it. I was more confident because the feedback that we were getting from her, like, as in, just made me feel more confident in doing it. Knowing that she can actually recognise what I'm doing and... then knowing that if the musician thinks that sort of stuff, then you know maybe I am alright at it..."

That the young people saw me as an authority in music, and as such placed trust in my opinion, was an important learning from this study. This put me in a powerful position needed to be acknowledged and treated with authenticity and integrity. Music therapists often have a proclivity to recognise and relate to the 'musical' in everyone. When working with able young people with a focus on empowerment and independence, it was important to celebrate and frame these young people's skills in a realistic way, based not on my embracing concept of musical capacity but on that of general society. This required the tact and sensitivity of my therapy skills, but I believe this was an important aspect of this kind of work. The statements from young people in this study suggested that they

valued and trusted my feedback about their musical abilities. It was important not to build the young people up to have unrealistic expectations, or I would risk setting them up to be ridiculed or rejected outside of the safe music project environment, subverting any therapeutic benefit of building their self-belief in the first place.

The players described my other role in the group as facilitating the process of working together. Players from all groups referred to my collaborative approach, but the way and extent to which they saw me as a person who facilitated collaboration varied between the groups. For the therapeutic camp group, who undertook a shared group songwriting process, my role in facilitating collaboration was identified in the way I sought to include everyone's opinions and perspectives in the group activity:

She did a pretty good job handling it all. She got everyone's input and seemed really fair.

Players from the drop-in group, who had formed a band in their music project, saw my role as coordinating and keeping them on track once they had made a decision, to make sure they were able to achieve what they had hoped to.

"...we got to choose which, like, what we wanted to do, but then you just kind of guided us towards that direction..."

"...you, kind of like how a band has a manager, making sure everything is kept up to date and making sure that everything is ready... it was kind of, like, good that we had someone that kept track of what we were doing and making sure that we rehearsed and all of that, coz we probably wouldn't have been ready for any of the performances or anything if you actually didn't make us..."

For the share home group, the music process was a collection of individual and small-group projects. In this group the young people identified my role in facilitating collaboration in the way that I followed their lead and tailored the projects to suit them.

“you worked with us individually and, you know, with other people, and you know worked on what we were interested in vocally, singing, writing...”

“...I think for everyone it’s individualised to suit them. Which is, you know, awesome. So for some people, they may want to do one thing, like... do songs and record that, and (for) other people you maybe bring in, like, guitar tabs and stuff like that...”

One young person clearly articulated the difference in taking this collaborative approach to other music experiences in her past by saying:

“...when I did music when I was in school it was completely different they would turn around and they were like you’ve gotta do this, whereas you’re like hey what about this or what about that, instead of do this this this and this, which is what I’m used to.”

For each of the different groups of young people, the way in which they experienced my role in facilitating our work together varied. This was likely influenced by the different projects chosen by the different groups, which required different modes of collaboration. Another variation between the groups that may have influenced this was the fact that some groups were focused on a whole-group process and others undertook a more individualised approach. The degree that players in different groups identified me as a collaborator or coordinator appeared to relate to the amount to which they saw or experienced the process as being tailored to them individually.

In summary. Overall the young people in this research project described me as having two main roles in the music projects. The first was as a music ‘expert’ who brought resources in the form of skills, equipment and musical expertise – a role requiring authenticity and honesty. The second was as a participatory facilitator who supported the group to work together. The degree to which this was perceived by young people to be a coordination role or a collaboration role appeared to depend on the structure of the music project and

the extent to which they perceived the process to be targeted to their individual goals.

My role as academic researcher. The young people didn't relate strongly to my role as an 'academic researcher' in this process. Although they were actively involved as co-researchers throughout the process, most young people did not refer to this in their interviews, suggesting it was not a meaningful part of their experience. In fact, a young man from the drop-in group stated that he felt the periodic reflections throughout the process were probably more useful for me than for them. This was interesting, as I had observed that the reflections with his group often reenergised and re-engaged the young people in the music project.

However, two young women from the share home provided important reflections on the academic research element of the music project. One of the young women reflected that while she was happy to be part of the research project throughout, it felt uncomfortable for her that the results would be shared more broadly in publications and presentations. She describes this by saying:

'...you feel very not, like, private, although it's not you, or like, even though you don't have video recordings or anything... its still you, does that make sense? Like you still know that somewhere out there someone is talking about you, which is a bit creepy.'

After this interview I followed up with this young woman and offered her the opportunity to withdraw from the study, however she chose to include her interview. In spite of her active involvement throughout the project, it appeared that her discomfort was an unexpected response to being asked to reflect on the academic research element of this study in the final interview. Although we had talked about the research throughout the process, she reflected that "*you don't really process this kind of stuff until after it's happened*".

Another young woman from the share home reflected on being part of the research by saying:

"In a way, I kind of feel like, not in a bad way, I kind of feel like a lab rat... Because like you've come in and you've asked if you can do like some research and given us ideas that we can do and things that we can work on, and like at the same time in a way you changed who I am, like confidence wise and etcetera, as I've said about 300 times now... it's not in a bad way, like generally lab rat would be like yeah I'm going to do a shitload of chemicals and things like that to you. No, in a good way"

This statement was a response to being asked about the research aspect of the music project. Although the young person reflected positively on her experience in this statement, the term 'lab rat' implied a disempowered association with the academic research aspect of the study, as research is generally done *on* rats, rather than *with* them. This inferred power imbalance was in distinct contrast to this young woman's descriptions of other aspects of the music project.

In summary. It seemed from these two young people's descriptions that for some young people, the academic research element of the music projects was a factor that created marked distinction between these young people and myself. This is noteworthy because my choice of an action research design was primarily informed by my belief that research should be undertaken with players, rather than on them. In choosing this research design, I actively sought to mitigate the power imbalance inherent in academic research with vulnerable people. It appeared from these responses that this intention was not fulfilled for some of the young people.

Changed Self Concept: Developing New Ways of Looking at Oneself

In their final interviews, the young people reflected on both their group's involvement in the study, and also on their personal experience of being a participant in their music project. Of the nine young people who undertook final interviews, five described how collaborating in the study gave them a new way of looking at themselves. This experience of a changed self concept was described by young people from across all three participating communities. One player stated:

"...you've made me become a better person because, you know, it's like I didn't have a future about music when I came in here. I never really did like to play instruments... then when I first played bass guitar I just fell in love with it so I started playing, then got used to it."

This young person states that the opportunity to collaborate with me in the music project gave him a new way of looking at himself, as a bass player. This player also says that this opened up a new relationship with music that was a positive addition to his life. A relationship with music was new to this young person, which was unusual amongst players in this study. A player from the share home reported a similar experience, but for her, the music project gave her the confidence and the opportunity to renew an old relationship with music as a positive part of her life.

"I guess it's actually really helped with my confidence and helped me realise that music was a good part of my life... and technically still is"

Through their experience of collaborating in the music project, several young people reported that they discovered they could do things they didn't know they could do.

"(Lucy) kind of showed me a couple of ways to play it and then I just sat there and started thinking about things, that made beats and stuff come into my head. I don't know. It was weird, I fully just kept going at it and then got better and better at it..."

With this new, broader idea of who they were and what they were capable of, players reported a sense of pride in what they were able to achieve.

"...being able to write something and then make it sound as awesome as that did, that I felt really proud of myself and the rest of us for being able to come up with something like that"

"It didn't go to my head, but you know, I felt very proud of the fact that I was able to create something like that."

Several young people from across all the groups reported that their involvement in the music project allowed them to look at themselves in a new way. For one player, performing in the music project prompted her to consider the way other people saw her in a new way as well, which helped her to believe in herself and her abilities. She described this very articulately by saying:

"it's just helped me overcome my shyness and helped me realise things that I didn't realise beforehand...with the fact that I was terrified of singing in front of people... it's helped me realise that everyone has their own interpretation of music and everyone's open to accepting what they will and what they won't, and if someone doesn't like my voice then that's their issue, not mine."

The chance to look at themselves in a new way was a personal and individual process described by five players from across all three communities. These young people described a sense of pride in their achievement, increased confidence in their abilities and feelings of self-belief. These player's experiences suggested that the music projects gave some young people the chance to push the boundaries of what they believed they were capable of.

Examining these young people's perspectives on this category, it appeared that this new way of looking at themselves emerged out of the process of developing or expanding their relationship with music through their collaboration with me and other players in the music projects. The young people reflect on this as an interpersonal experience, and acknowledge that my contribution as a music therapist was an important aspect of this process. *"I've actually been able to do it with someone else, rather than basically on my own."* The young people described how working together on the music projects offered them access to new ideas and experiences with music that led to a wider understanding of themselves and who they could be.

However, as one player recognised, this was an individualised process. She noted that she already had a deep and satisfying relationship with music and

chose not to use the music project for that purpose. She indicated that she may have liked to broaden her experience with music at some point in the future through recording, but as that stage was too shy. She participated through singing and song sharing but repeatedly rejected attempts by myself or other young people to engage her in new music experiences.

When I consider the five young people who described having experienced a new way of looking at themselves through participating in the music project, a shared feature of all five players was their interest in using the music project to try new things and expand their life experience. In all three music projects, these opportunities were offered to all participants, but young people themselves were free to choose the degree to which they took up that offer. All of the five young people who reflected on this category demonstrated a high level of engagement in the music projects, and each of them reported a personal experience of growth or achievement within the broader group process of the music projects.

For example, one young man from the share home group organised a performance of a song he had written at an awards ceremony in front of the entire Melbourne-wide share home community. A young woman from the therapeutic camp took the opportunity to improvise on the drums and discovered a natural sense of rhythm and coordination she had not been aware of. It appears that it was those young people who engaged closely with the opportunity to explore new ways of being who reported that the music project changed the way they saw themselves.

In summary. The young people's reflections on this category suggested that participatory music projects such as those in this study – in collaboration with a music therapist – have the potential to provide a forum for young people to explore a new way of looking at themselves. However, this appeared dependent on individual young people making the choice to engage in the music project as an opportunity to explore new ideas and possibilities. Thus the extent to which this potential is achieved which may depend on why individual young people engage in a music project, and what they want to get out of it.

Skill Development and Mastery: Growing as Musicians

For seven of the nine young people in this study, a key element motivating their involvement in the music project was their interest in building their skills as musicians. As part of the collaborative process we developed group goals for each project, and for both the young people from the share home and the young people from the drop-in group, the project goals were primarily music-based.

Additionally, all but two of the young people who undertook final interviews identified themselves as ‘musical’ or having a strong interest in music from the outset of the process. In spite of this pre-existing interest in music, many of the young people did not have access to opportunities to practically develop these interests.

“(the program) means a lot because I don’t have the opportunity to learn, because, like, I have to pay for lessons and I didn’t want to do that, so it’s free here...”

For many of the young people involved in this study, the music project provided access to music experiences and equipment that would otherwise have been unavailable to them. Some of the players had never had the chance to learn a musical instrument, and these players reported that the opportunity to develop new music skills was an important part of their process. In particular, the sense of mastery involved in learning something new appeared to be significant to the young people.

“I didn’t know how to play at first, so then after you taught me what the notes mean I started picking it up very fast and I knew.”

For those people with existing musical ability, the music program was an opportunity to revisit and build on their skills, giving them new approaches to advance their skill and interest. Players from all three communities reported that as they became more skilled they began to develop a sense of their own individual musical style, and were more inclined to try new things.

"Oh yeah, it's probably got me into rapping a bit more than what I used to be. Yeah, now I'll try and make up my own words"

Some players reported that as they became more confident in their ability as musicians, they became surer of themselves and took themselves more seriously. This was reflected in the fact that it became easier to perform or play in front of others.

"I think working through (the project) has made me a lot more, a lot more, it's a lot easier for me to get up onstage and perform."

"I used to just be stupid about the way I sung, I'd mess around with my vocals and I'd just make it sound like I wasn't trying, and now, like I actually sing properly, and I'm not as shy as I used to be. Like I'd walk around the house and I'd just start randomly singing..."

Two players who felt they had grown a great deal as musicians described being able to take the personal skills they developed through being in the music program and use them at other times in their life. As one player stated:

"(I have) more confidence when performing, its not just with singing. I found it a lot more easy to just like ah, just to do whatever. Just like, do any type of performing type thing, whether it be some drama, something dance-wise..."

In addition, it appeared that for young people who already saw themselves as musicians, the music project offered the opportunity for them to take themselves more seriously and explore the dimensions of their musical identity. For three young people in this project this led to positive feelings of self-worth. These three players reported feeling more self-assured and confident as their music skills developed. Of these three young people, two described how they took self-belief fostered in the music project and actively applied it to other related areas in their life. These three young people identified themselves strongly as

potential musicians upon entering study, and refined their individual sense of musical identity throughout their participation in the music project.

In summary. The importance of developing music skills was a common feature in the final interviews with young people across all of the groups involved in the study. Seven of the nine young people who undertook interviews described having this experience, to varying degrees. These players' statements suggest that as the young people's sense of their identity as a musician increased in the music project through mastery of musical skills, this had positive implications for their sense of self.

This sense of mastery seemed to occur progressively (see Figure 6), and different young people identified themselves at different stages along this progression. The most basic step identified by the young people on this 'progression of mastery' was access to equipment through the music project. Young people described how this progressed into a mastery of basic music skills in playing and singing. From here, the young people described how their playing became increasingly individualised and experimental over the course of the music project as they cultivated their own sense of musical style.

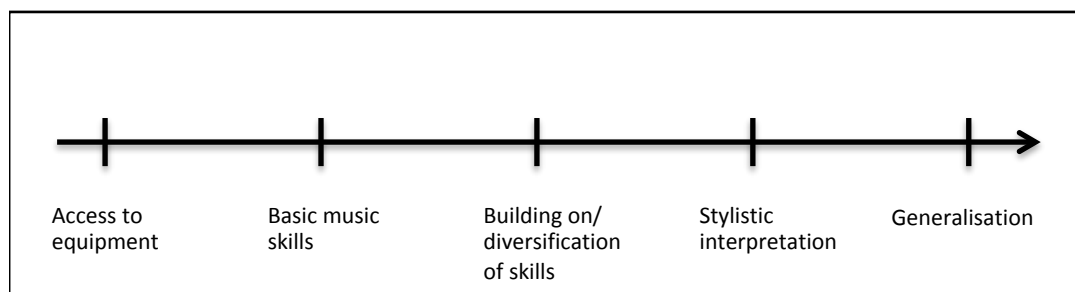


Fig 6. The progression of mastery. This progression indicates the progressive change in young people's perceived mastery of music skills.

The point along this progression that different young people located their experience appeared to depend on individual young people's musical goals for the project, their existing music skills and their sense of musical identity upon entering the project. For young people who had never played before, the development of skills itself was an important feature of the music project. For young people with existing musical skills, a diversification of these skills was what the music project offered. Irrespective of how far their skill development

progressed, young people from all three participating communities identified that this was a meaningful part of their experience.

Personal growth: Linking ‘changed self concept’ and ‘skill development and mastery’. Reflecting on the young people’s experiences described in ‘changed self concept’ and ‘skill development’, a link between the two categories emerged. In both categories, young people described individual experiences of personal growth, through the development of self-knowledge and practical knowledge. In ‘changed self several players described how participation in the music project changed their self-concept by engaging them in different experiences that pushed the boundaries of who they thought they could be. In ‘skill development’ young people described how participation in the music project allowed them to explore and cultivate their musical identity through their mastery of musical skills. For both of these categories, players who reported developing a high level of self-knowledge or practical knowledge reported that this resulted in increased confidence and self-belief.

Young people’s voices from all three communities were quite evenly represented in these two categories. Rather than reflecting on the experience of their group as a whole, in these categories the young people identified their own individual outcomes of collaboration. It appeared that these individual personal growth outcomes were linked to each player’s personal engagement in the process, rather than the context of each music project. In order to better understand what features of the young people’s participation may have contributed to these personal growth outcomes, I drew on both the young people’s descriptions of personal growth in their final interviews and my experience as a co-participant in the music projects.

It appeared that young people were more likely to report positive experiences of personal growth if they had been highly engaged and felt personally connected to the project. This level of engagement and personal connection to the project appeared to be dependent on interplay between certain pre-existing and experiential factors. Pre-existing factors that promoted a high level of engagement and connection to the project were an interest in musical development and a willingness to engage in new experiences, broadly identified

as personal interest in engagement. The experiential factor that supported engagement and connection was the degree to which players perceived an increase in their individual mastery of skills. In this study it appears that young people who displayed high levels of personal interest and who perceived that their mastery of skills increased in the project reported experiencing a greater positive impact on their confidence and self-belief through their participation in the music project (see Figure 7).

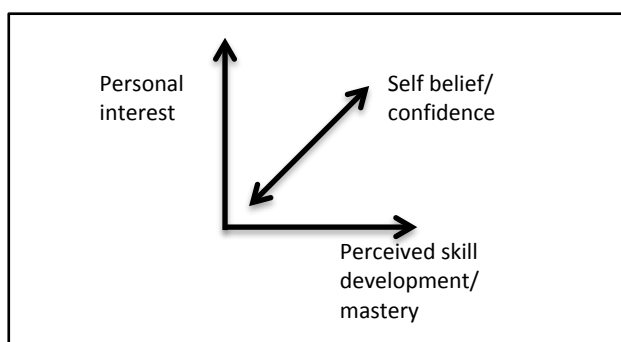


Fig. 7. Variables impacting potential for increased self-belief and confidence. This figure indicates the relationship between young people's personal interest in engaging in the program and a perceived skill development in promoting increased self-belief and confidence.

That a level of personal interest or motivation to participate is required by the participants in order to experience positive personal development in a participatory music project is very interesting. Reflecting on the young people in this study, players may be motivated to engage for different reasons. For some young people it was the opportunity to develop a pre-existing interest in music; for others it was the opportunity to try a new experience; for others it was the change to hang out and be part of the group. These personal interests may be musical, social or personal, and depend on the context and the structure of a given music project.

It could be suggested that a base-level of personal interest is an obvious necessity for participation in music therapy. This may be considered particularly important in participatory approaches to musicking as the nature of a participatory approach requires players to decide and negotiate their role in the music project. In order to effectively engage in such collaboration, young people

must have some interest that motivates their engagement. This learning speaks to the role of the music therapist in the collaborative process. As music therapists we have the professional capacity to foster and explore player's personal interests with them, and to help them identify and articulate what their motivation for engaging in a music project may be. The implications of this learning for participatory approaches to music therapy practice will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Six.

Peer Connection: Strengthening Connections within the Group

Six of the young people reported in their final interviews that working together on the music project strengthened connections between members of their group. The three players from the therapeutic camp group identified the music project as an opportunity to reflect on the shared experience of being part of a youth program. This experience reinforced the bonds between group members, and validated their experience as part of the program.

"...I liked (the song) because you saw what other people thought of (the program) as well, the way that they see it. To see it was the same as how you see it, and then, I don't know, a lot of the things that everyone said was how I felt as well, so it kind of made me feel better knowing that a lot of people feel exactly the same way and the way that I feel about it is real. Like it's not just a fantasy in my head I guess, it's actually like a real feeling that other people feel as well..."

For the two other players from this same group, it was not only the shared reflection generated in the music project that connected them, but also the process of reflecting and making music together itself. As one stated:

"Oh, it's made us all connect a bit more... because of how it all started. We were all sitting there, and then one by one we all started getting closer and closer and more people joined in and done the whole song, and it got us all together..."

The three young people from the share home reported a similar experience of connection through shared musicking. All described how the music

project provided a forum that brought players together. As stated by one young woman from the share home:

"...it just brings more people together. Like, with this (group), no matter what, you know that once every fortnight everyone's going to get together and play music, which is pretty cool."

In the share home, the players found that collaborating with me and one another in the music project gave them a shared focus that connected them as a group. It became something that they had in common and a concrete activity for the young people to use to relate to one another.

"...you've given us things that we can do and work on together. You've given us things to look forward to... in your own way you've kind of changed the way that we all work throughout the (group), like we're all a lot more confident with each other now..."

The descriptions from young people on therapeutic camp and at the share home suggested that developing participatory music projects with two groups created a shared forum through which the young people could strengthen their connections with one another. This was described by all six of the young people interviewed from these groups, indicating that it was a meaningful aspect of the music projects in these communities.

In distinct contrast, none of the young people from the drop-in group described having experienced a connection with peers in the music project. These player's reflections focused on their individual experiences, rather than the group as a whole. For example, one young man referred to group's original song as *"my masterpiece"*. Having taken a leading role in the process he saw the song as his, rather than as a group effort.

In fact, all of the young people in the drop-in group reflected on working with peers as a challenge to be negotiated rather than a positive outcome of the music project. When reflecting on this challenge, one of the young people described how at one point the group *"broke apart"*. This language is in stark

juxtaposition to the language of connection used by the young people from the therapeutic camp and share home groups. When asked what it was like for him when everything 'broke apart', this same young person stated *"I don't really care, coz as long as I learnt, you know?"*, providing another example of the individualised way the young people in the drop-in group described their experience in the music project.

It is not clear whether the reflections by the young people from the drop-in group took an individual focus because the young people did not connect as a group, or whether the individual goals of the young people in this group contributed to a lack of connection between peers in this music project. It is likely that the open structure and constantly changing group of young people accessing this program was not conducive to fostering strong connections between young people. The drop-in style of this program was also likely to appeal to young people who were attracted to the flexibility of a program that does not require an ongoing commitment, which may make them more likely to be motivated by individual rather than social goals.

In comparison, the therapeutic camp and share home environments had a relatively consistent group of young people involved in their programs, and the players in these communities identified the programs as a space shared by young people who had had similar life experiences. It is possible that the culture created by these factors fostered a more intimate environment that predisposed the young people in these groups to be open and interested in building connections with their peers. The leadership styles in the three facilities was also diverse, and it seems likely that this impacted the ways young people engaged in the program, although it is beyond the bounds of this project to hypothesise further.

The responses of the young people from the share home suggested that it was possible for young people who bring individualised goals to a music project to experience a sense of connection with peers, despite the fact this was not so in the drop-in group. The young people at the share home had very individualised goals for the music project, and this was accommodated in the structure of their music project, which involved developing a number of little projects rather than a big group project. This structure evolved in this group when we realised together

that the all young people had very different and very clear ideas of how they wanted to use the music project to meet their goals.

At the share home, the young people all reported a strengthened sense of connectedness between them, in spite of working on individual and small-group music projects. In the drop-in group, the band structure chosen for the music project was less able to accommodate individualised goals and expectations. The comparison of the young people's perspectives from these two communities suggested that increased connection between peers was not linked to whether or not the group members have individualised or social goals. Instead, it appeared to relate more to whether or not the structure chosen for the music project was able to accommodate different players goals for the project.

In summary. Based on the learnings from this analysis, the experience of strengthened connections described by the young people appeared to be context-dependent. It was identified as a meaningful by all the players interviewed from the therapeutic camp and the share home, but was not reflected on at all by drop-in group players. In each participating community, the young people involved had pre-existing relationships that they brought with them into the music project. For two of the groups, engagement in the music project strengthened and deepened these relationships and working together in the projects became a point of connection between players. It appears that music projects may have the potential to increase connections between young people, however, whether or not this potential is realised in any group may be impacted by existing characteristics of the group context. This interpretation of the young people's perspectives on this category suggests that characteristics supporting increased connectedness are: the consistent and committed participation of group members; and, a music project structure that can accommodate the various motivations of group members.

Acknowledgement: Showing and Telling the World

In their final interviews, five young people described how the chance to share their music with others outside the group was meaningful for them. One individual young person wanted to do this by putting their group recording on the Internet, but the way this was done that was common to all projects was through

performances for family, friends and the local neighbourhood, as described in the previous section. Communities required varying amounts of support from me to undertake their performances. This took the form of equipment and backing tracks, motivation to rehearse, or my involvement as a performance participant. However, community members themselves largely coordinated the preparation of all three performances.

Performing their music for others had a number of meanings for the young people in the project. Two players found meaning in the experience of sharing the messages contained in the music with others beyond the group. One player from the therapeutic camp discussed how the message in their original song described their experiences and identity as a group:

"...(the song) describes the life of (this group) and just, I don't know, in a couple of sentences and a couple of paragraphs it explains what we do and who we are and that's I think the main thing that comes in a song. That's what you need to be able to do, to express kind of what you're trying to tell the story about, and the song was about (us) and it did that..."

For this player, the chance to perform for others was an opportunity to communicate about her life and be heard and understood. When sharing her song with a significant person to her, she found:

"the song was the best way of describing (the program), because I sucked at describing it... It's so hard to explain it but now that he's heard that he explains it in his own mind. He understands it now."

For another player, the music he created shared a message about his emotions:

"...(music is) the best way to try and express how you really feel. I mean, through words. And trying to share a part of your soul through music and being able to share that with other people, I think that's pretty important. That is what I think

music means to me, it's being able to express how I feel and able to share it with others..."

For this young person, having other people acknowledge his message, and through that his feelings, was an important outcome of having his music performed.

"... people complimented me on the lyrics, and I was just very overwhelmed. I had to step outside for a minute, so I think that was, you know, I got a lot out of that experience."

The two players above describe the significance for them of being acknowledged for the message in their music: they valued telling their story and being heard. In contrast, three other players identify that the important part of performance for them was showing the world their skills as musicians and having these skills acknowledged.

"...(through the performance, I) managed to get people to actually know that I do sing, which not a lot of people within the company knew."

"...it was the night, in front of everyone with that mic... just being in front of that crowd, getting the chance to do that rap, one of the biggest verses, was cool... yeah, it gave me the opportunity to show people that I can rap."

Five of the nine young people interviewed identified that being acknowledged by other people was an important reason for performing for others. This suggests that communicating about their identity and having this acknowledged by others was meaningful to many of the young people. For some players, expressing their identity was linked to the act of showing people their skills, whilst for others it was linked to the reflective process of telling the world a message about their experience of life.

Whether young people identified with an active or reflective approach to sharing their identity did not appear to be linked to the music project they were

involved with. Instead, it appeared to be linked to the role they saw themselves as playing in the project, and their view of the purpose of the project. This suggested that the importance of performance was specific to individual players and dependent on what element of the process was most meaningful for them. It also suggested that it was possible for one music performance to offer a variety of different ways for young people to share their identity and have it acknowledged, depending on what they saw as the purpose of the music project, and what role they had chosen to play in the process.

Although the type of acknowledgement the young people preferred appeared to be an individual preference, whether or not this experience of being seen and heard was meaningful for players did appear to be linked to context. The five young people who identified this as meaningful were from the therapeutic camp and share home groups. In fact, all of the young people who were interviewed from these groups saw this as a significant part of the process, aside from one young woman who chose not to engage in the performance as she was too shy. On the other hand, this theme was not touched on at all in the interviews with young people from the drop-in group.

This discrepancy between different participating communities was not surprising. Both the therapeutic camp and share home communities had a strong psychosocial support focus and the supporting communities were committed to the psychological wellbeing of the young people. On the other hand, the emphasis at the drop-in group was on community building and there was less focus in the community on the individual support needs of specific young people. With these differences in mind, it is quite likely that the community response to the performances in the therapeutic camp and share home communities was more focused on supporting and acknowledging the young people, as this was a particular role of these communities. It is also likely that the young people in the drop-in group did not experience particular acknowledgement from their community as this was not emphasised in that community context.

In summary. This interpretation of the young people's responses indicated that being seen and heard may be a meaningful aspect of collaboration in a participatory music project. It also indicated that a single music performance may be meaningful for a group comprised of young people who want to share their

identity by both showing and telling the world. However, whether or not this is achieved in a group does appear to depend on the audience for the performance, and the degree to which the community culture has a psychosocial support orientation.

Summary of Young People's Voices from Interpretation of Categories

My interpretation of the learnings for each category indicated that young people engaging in participatory music projects valued having a sense of purpose to guide their participation in the process. They also indicated that they prioritise skill development and mastery as one function of music projects, and they valued the opportunity to make choices about their level of participation and their role in the process. Young people from all three participating communities identified these priorities, however, the way in which different young people related to and experienced each of these priorities varied between individual players. Additionally, it appears from these young people's experiences that the flexibility of a participatory process meant that one participatory music project could potentially accommodate these different experiences and priorities of individual group members within a single shared project.

Learnings from the analysis also indicated that it was important to not underestimate the impact of the music therapists' input into the participatory process. Music therapists taking a participatory approach to practice may inadvertently minimise the significance of their own role in the process in an attempt to prioritise the contributions of other collaborators and promote 'equality'. To place sole value on the young people's contribution and undervalue the therapist's own input in this way may undermine the intention for collaborations to be mutual and shared. Learnings from the young people from this study indicated that the input of the music therapist in the process was a meaningful part of their experience, requiring care and thought. A denial of the importance of my contribution to the project for some players would have been naïve and irresponsible in this study.

Several young people described how a participatory approach to music therapy had the powerful potential to promote strengthened connections between peers, increased confidence and self-belief, and empowerment. However,

the extent to which different young people experienced these positive outcomes varied between players. Implications of this are explored further in the forthcoming section of this chapter. This summary has emphasised young people's descriptions of their experience. In the final section of this chapter, I propose how of my interpretation of these descriptions may contribute to a broader understanding of collaboration in participatory music projects with communities.

Implications of Learnings from Young People's Voices

In this analysis of empirical material, I sought to represent the young people's perspectives on what was meaningful in their experience of collaboration in participatory music projects. Through the iterative analysis process I identified and subsequently explored eight categories representing aspects of the music projects that were meaningful to the young people. These categories referred both to aspects of the process and outcomes of collaboration, outlined in depth in the previous section of this chapter. In this final section of the chapter, I propose overall implications of these learnings for the understanding of collaboration in music therapy.

Learnings from the young people's voices provided valuable insight into the process and potential outcomes of collaboration in participatory music projects:

Overall learning about collaborative process: The collaborative emphasis in the music projects in this study prioritised flexibility and player involvement in decision-making. Learnings suggest that using this collaborative approach, it was possible for young people's varied expectations and goals, and different levels and styles of participation to be accommodated within a single music project structure.

Overall learning about potential outcomes of collaboration: The young people's voices in this study indicated that collaboration with a music therapist in a participatory music project offered potential positive growth opportunities for players involved. Based on this analysis, this potential for positive growth

involved opportunities for strengthened connection with peers, increased self-belief and confidence, and empowerment.

My use of the words 'possible' and 'potential' is significant in the overview of learnings articulated above. It appeared from this analysis that certain factors impacted on the degree to which participatory music projects could flexibly accommodate player's varied input, and the degree to which the positive growth potential of the music projects was realised. My interpretation in this analysis identified that these impacting factors were comprised of both contextual and individual factors.

Individual factors related to player's motivation to participate and commitment to the process. Reflection on the young people's participation in this study suggested that the more engaged young people were as players in the collaborative process, the greater the extent to which they reported experiencing positive growth outcomes. Contextual factors related to cultural, logistical and interpersonal aspects that were unique to each participating community. Learnings from this analysis suggested that these factors impacted on the way music projects were enacted in each community, and the extent to which this supported the various expectations that different players had for their music projects.

A shallow look at this overall summary of learnings suggests that there are particular young people who are more appropriate candidates for a collaborative approach to music therapy, and particular communities that are more conducive environments for conducting participatory music projects. However, a deeper look at the learnings from this analysis suggests that it is more complex than that. Reflecting on the music projects in this study, it appeared that the extent to which the positive growth potential of the music projects was realised for players was dependent on the degree to which the chosen music project in each community was able to accommodate the expectations and interests of individual players within the scope of the particular community context that the project took place. In other words, the amount of positive growth potential in each participatory music project was dependent on the amount of alignment between the young people's interest and expectations, contextual factors, and the chosen structure

for the music project. Figure 8 provides a visual representation of this overall learning for the analysis.

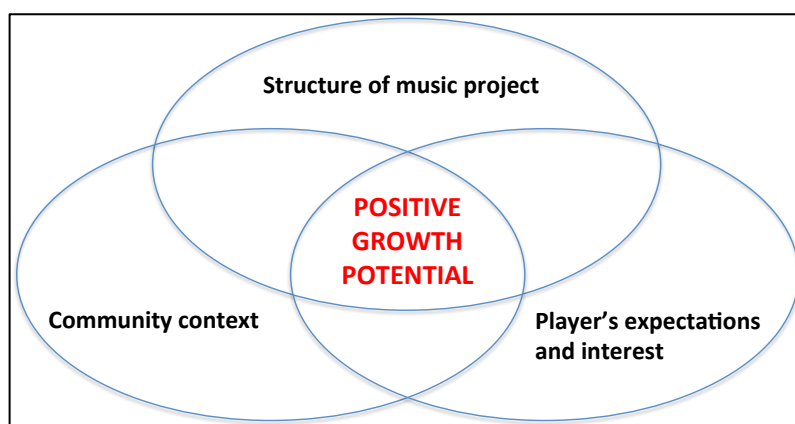


Fig. 8. Factors impacting the positive growth potential of participatory music projects. This figure demonstrates how the amount positive growth potential of music projects is impacted by the amount of congruence between community context, music project structure, and individual player's expectations and interest.

This suggests that in order to maximise the positive growth potential of participatory music projects with communities supporting marginalised young people, it is necessary to maximise the alignment of the music project structure with player's expectations and the culture of the community. To achieve this alignment necessitates collaboration with communities to understand and negotiate the dynamics and expectations that will impact on this alignment, and subsequently on the positive growth potential of the music project. This learning supports the second objective of this study – to understand and articulate the process of collaboration in participatory music projects with communities. This is explored in the subsequent chapter of this thesis.

Chapter Five: Analysis Two - Understanding and Articulating the Process of Collaboration

In the previous chapter I presented my interpretation of the young people's voices in this study. In doing so I addressed the first of two research objectives for this study (outlined in the introduction to this thesis on p6). This objective was to understand the elements of collaboration in a participatory music project that were meaningful to the young people involved. In this chapter I address the second research objective for this study: to understand and articulate the process of collaboration in participatory music projects with communities supporting marginalised young people, in a way that accounts for variation between community contexts.

In this analysis, I aimed to generate practical knowledge about the process of collaboration between music therapists and communities supporting marginalised young people. I sought to inform future collaborations and provide music therapists with adequate knowledge about collaboration too support them to effectively and safely 'hold' an emergent collaborative process with communities. Therefore, the music therapy profession is the key audience for the analysis in this chapter, and my voice as a music therapist is the primary voice represented in this interpretation.

Interpretative Lens Used to Examine the Process of Collaboration

The dimensions of the interpretative lens used to frame this analysis are outlined in Table 5 (p162). Similar to the previous analysis of young people's voices, I used my interpretative lens for this analysis as a basis for my interpretation of empirical material. This lens is based on the overall objective of this analysis, as presented in the introduction to this thesis in Chapter One.

Analysis two: Process of collaboration	
The aim of this analysis	To understand and articulate the process of collaboration in participatory music projects with marginalised young people and their supporting communities
The agenda informing this analysis	To develop an understanding of collaborative process between music therapists and communities supporting marginalised young people that accounts for variation between contexts To find the most logical and useful way of representing collaborative process to inform future collaborations between music therapists and communities.
The priorities informing interpretation in this analysis	To identify what collaboration looked like and the factors impacting on the trajectory of collaborations with communities To identify variation in the collaborative process between contexts and the factors impacting on this variation between contexts
The approach to interpretation taken in this analysis	I explored multiple ways of structuring the learnings about the process of collaboration with communities to develop the most useful and comprehensive construct for representing collaborative process I compared the process that occurred with different communities to identify factors contributing to contextual variation and incorporated this into the construct. I actively explored both the things that supported and impeded the process of collaboration with communities
Empirical material used in this analysis	Twelve comprehensive mindmaps representing the combined learnings from each action cycle in the study.

Table 5. Dimensions of the interpretative lens informing the analysis of collaborative process. The factors framing the overall purpose of this analysis that inform the interpretation of learnings.

Empirical Material Used to Examine the Process of Collaboration

The process of collaboration in the music projects with communities was represented in all of the empirical material generated in the cycles of action and reflection throughout this study. As described in Chapter Three, this was a large body of empirical material that took many different forms (see Table 2, p98). I had synthesised this empirical material into two comprehensive mindmaps at the end of each action cycle, which represented my interpretation of the process and the learnings in each cycle (see Appendix 13 and 14).

This was an initial layer of analysis in this study that had occurred with communities throughout the action research process, and resulted in twelve mindmaps overall. These interpretations had been progressively shared with communities for their input throughout the study (see p99). Therefore I was confident that they were a reasonable representation of our combined learnings as collaborators. Hence these twelve mindmaps became the raw empirical material for this analysis. An example of these mindmaps are available in Appendices 14 and 15. In addition to the raw empirical material that was the basis for this analysis, my experience of the collaborative process with each community was central to the interpretation that emerged. As described in the Chapter Three, I drew on my observations and experience as a collaborator, and as a music therapist, to compare the collaborative process with different communities and interpret an overall comparative understanding of the process of collaboration (p106). In-depth descriptions of my experience of the collaborative process with each community are available in Appendix 6.

Structure of this Chapter

As described in Chapter Three, I used an emergent, iterative approach to analysis in this study (p106). In this chapter, I describe the progression of the analysis of collaborative process in this study, and present the learnings that emerged. I demonstrate how these learnings built progressively upon one another, towards an overall understanding of collaborative process (proposed on p207). In this chapter, I present this process, and subsequent learnings, in three successive sections:

1. **Abstracting the empirical material:** This section describes the coding process used to abstract the raw empirical material into concepts and categories.
2. **Developing a general structure of collaborative process:** This section describes the way these concepts and categories were organised into a general structure of collaborative process. This became the basic conceptual understanding of collaborative process that emerged from this analysis.

3. **Elaborating on contextual variation in the structure of collaborative process:** This section describes how this general structure occurred in the music projects with each community in this study. This was a comparative reflection used to articulate variation in the collaborative process between contexts. This was incorporated into the general structure of collaborative process to develop an overall conceptual understanding of the process of collaboration that accounted for contextual variation between communities.

The overall learnings from this analysis emerged progressively in cycles as the empirical material was abstracted and core learnings were elaborated on and contextualised over the course of the analysis. In the first two sections of this chapter I focus primarily on the general structure of the collaborative process, based on the empirical material and drawing on my experience in communities. More specific and in-depth accounts of the way this occurred in the music projects in this study are offered in the third section of this chapter, once the general structure of collaborative process had been proposed.

Abstracting the Empirical Material

I began this analysis with the twelve mindmaps that constituted the raw empirical material for the analysis. I used the selective coding process described in the Chapter Three (p106) to extract information from this empirical material that related to the process of collaboration, and abstract it to develop a conceptual understanding of the process of collaboration. This occurred progressively over two cycles of analysis, where I developed concepts from the raw empirical material, grouped them into categories of related concepts. In this section of the chapter I describe the progression of this coding process.

Developing Concepts

To begin the coding process, I immersed myself in the empirical material, studying each mindmap multiple times to ensure no information was overlooked. I identified and extracted all information that offered insight into the process of

collaboration with communities. I wrote a brief phrase or keyword to describe each piece of extracted information, and these became the concepts that emerged from the empirical material.

Some of the extracted information referred directly to the process of collaboration itself, either with a particular community or between communities. Other pieces of information related indirectly to the process of collaboration, referring to outcomes of collaboration, or factors that impacted either positively or negatively on the way collaborations evolved with communities. Subsequently, the concepts developed offered insight into different aspects of the collaborative process. Table 6 (below) offers some examples of concepts that represent some of these different aspects of collaboration.

Origin of empirical material	Original quote from empirical material	Concept developed	Relationship to process of collaboration
Example from action cycle 5	'the presence and placement of computers in the space significantly affects the young people's engagement in other activities'	Competing activities sometimes impeded young people's engagement	Factor impacting on collaborative process (negative)
Example from action cycle 4	'I needed to give the young people some idea of what they were collaborating with first'	Introductory music experiences necessary pre-collaboration	Process of collaboration
Example from action cycle 5	'Different staff and organisational paradigms impacted on how the community perceived my role and engaged with it'	Variation in engagement with music therapists based on pre-existing community culture	Differences between process of collaboration in different communities

Table 6. Examples of concepts. This table offers three examples of concepts generated in this analysis, demonstrating the different ways concepts related to the process of collaboration.

My experience as a player in the research process informed my choices and interpretations when generating the concepts in this analysis. This is valued within the participatory ethos of this study, which identifies me as an active collaborator in the research process (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). It is particularly appropriate as mine is the intended primary voice for this particular analysis.

After the empirical material from all action cycle mindmaps was coded, the concepts generated were brought together in a brainstorming document. This took the form of a large poster-sized mindmap that incorporated all of the identified concepts.

Developing Categories

In the second cycle of the analysis, I sought to abstract the empirical material beyond the individual concepts from cycle one. I did this by grouping concepts that related to one another into categories. To achieve this, I immersed myself in the concepts from cycle one and examined the different ways these insights into the process of collaboration were connected. I then created categories to represent groups of related concepts.

I recognised that there were many possible ways to interpret connections between concepts. In order to avoid becoming 'locked in' to a certain interpretation, I undertook this process multiple times. Each time, I began with the original concepts and explored different ways of categorising the concepts from different perspectives. Three examples of this process are outlined below.

Initially, I took a temporal approach to the analysis, which identified relationships between concepts based around different stages of the collaborative process with communities. This perspective provided a chronological frame for the relationships between concepts. I then began the process again, taking a causal approach to the analysis. This interpretation identified causal relationships between the variables and experiences impacting collaboration and the outcomes impacted by collaboration. This perspective provided a causative frame for the relationships between concepts. I also took a context-based approach to the relationships, where I considered the links between concepts as they related within and between community contexts. This perspective provided an ecological frame for the relationships between concepts.

I used this approach to explore as many ways of categorising the concepts as possible. Some interpretations were comprehensive, such as those described above. Others were brief and incomplete, when it emerged that the perspective taken did not relate closely to the empirical material, or related to only some of the concepts.

With such a large amount of empirical material, there were rarely 'neat' interpretations where all of the concepts fit neatly into categories. However, six prevalent categories emerged through repetition of the process in this cycle. These categories were consistently represented in different ways in the many interpretations of the empirical material undertaken. These were: *project structure; expectations; relationships with community; flexibility; shared purpose; and, commitment.*

Due to their prominence in all interpretations of the empirical material in this cycle, I identified these as categories that were important to the understanding of collaborative process, which was the focus for this analysis. For this reason, these became the final categories for this cycle of analysis. These six categories and the respective concepts underpinning them were documented on a large poster-sized mindmap.

Developing a General Structure of Collaborative Process

Having identified six categories of concepts in cycle two of the analysis, I then sought to organise the learnings into a structure that represented the understanding of collaborative process that had emerged from the empirical material in this analysis. This became the basic conceptual understanding of collaborative process (presented on p177) When developing this structure, I aimed to present the learnings in a way that would be useful to music therapists interested in collaborating with communities supporting marginalised young people. I used my discretion as a music therapist and academic to determine the usefulness of the structure developed. This emphasis on 'usefulness' of results is fundamental in action research, which places primacy on the practical applicability and relevance of research findings (McIntyre, 2008; Herr & Anderson, 2005).

This cycle was a dynamic process of exploration. I worked with the categories and concepts, trying out different patterns and structures for relating the categories to one another. Sometimes this involved working with the empirical material at the level of discrete categories. At other times I looked at

relationships between concepts from different categories to deepen my understanding of how the categories were linked.

When developing categories (p166) I had explored the empirical material from one perspective at a time. I now explored how these different perspectives on the categories related to one another, to develop an overall structure of collaborative process that incorporated these perspectives into a single conceptual understanding. This was represented into the structure that emerged, which included temporal, contextual and interpersonal elements. These different elements of the structure are elaborated throughout this section of the chapter.

Up until this point the analysis had been focused primarily on the raw empirical material from the mindmaps. At this time I began to draw on my experience as a collaborator in this study as well (as represented in Fig 5, p133), I used my knowledge and observations of the music projects in this study to structure the categories and concepts in a way that reflected the collaborative process with the three communities in this study. This is reflective of the hermeneutic approach that informed the analyses in this study (see p106).

Identifying Key Principles of Collaboration

What emerged from this dynamic work with the empirical material was a re-structuring of the learnings based on both the concepts and categories from the analysis, *and* the processes of collaboration that occurred with communities in this research project (described in Appendix 6). The re-structuring organised the learnings around three key principles of collaboration that emerged as common to the collaborative process with all three participating communities in this study. These were: *Building relationships, ongoing negotiation of purpose, and developing expectations and structure.*

These three key principles represented different aspects of the collaborative process. They became the basis for the general structure of collaborative process developed in this analysis. Based on the information provided by the categories and concepts, a description of each of these aspects of collaboration is outlined below.

Building relationships. Building relationships related to the process of developing a mutual and honest dynamic between community players and myself upon which to foster a collaboration. Learnings from this analysis suggested that this was a two-way process that required time to develop, and was a necessary precursor to embarking on a collaborative music project. Through the process of building relationships, players and I learnt about one another. This involved spending time with the community, participating in group activities and sharing my ideas and skills as well. Sometimes this involved playing, listening and talking about music; at other times it involved engaging in other community activities, such as having dinner, playing basketball or going swimming with the dolphins.

As I established my identity within each community, players discovered who I was and what I might have to offer them, in order to decide if they wanted to collaborate with me. At the same time, I learnt about the culture, the politics and the logistics of each community, and explored the needs and interests that could potentially be explored in the music projects. Through this shared process of building relationships, we figured out the music project possibilities that existed in each community, based on the interests and needs of players, the culture of the community, and the time and resources available.

Ongoing negotiation of purpose. As identified in the previous chapter, young people identified that having a purpose and direction for the music project mattered to them. The ongoing negotiation of purpose was the process through which we decided what we wanted to do in the project and what we hoped to achieve. Rather than occurring just once at the beginning of the collaborative process, the empirical material in this analysis suggested that this was an ongoing discussion that occurred repeatedly throughout the project. This required flexibility to change or alter the music project in response to this ongoing negotiation as it unfolded over the course of the collaboration.

The purpose of each music project was based on the reasons that players had engaged in the music project, and what they hoped to achieve by being involved. We used these reasons as the basis for choosing the type of music project we would undertake, and renegotiated the plan in response to learnings and experiences throughout the process. The purpose was also renegotiated in

response to changing levels of interest or commitment by players, or due to changes in circumstances, new opportunities that arose from the project, or conflicting time commitments or activities.

Developing expectations and structures. Developing expectations and structures related to the way we put the chosen music project into action. Developing expectations referred to the process of negotiating what each player was expected to contribute to the music project, in order to achieve our chosen purpose. Through this process, the roles and responsibilities of different players were established in each music project. We also established the amount and the type of structure necessary in each music project for it to progress and develop.

Like the ongoing negotiation of purpose, developing expectations and structures emerged as an aspect of collaborative process that was ongoing throughout the music projects. The empirical material in this analysis indicated that expectations and structures changed and evolved as the music projects developed over time. This was in response to learnings and new ideas that emerged from the collaborative process and impacted on the level of structure required in the process, and changes in roles that occurred as players' level of commitment, interest and confidence evolved over time.

Summary of the key principles of collaboration. The descriptions above outline the basic understanding of each key principle that was interpreted from the concepts and categories generated in this analysis. These descriptions of the key principles indicate what was common to the collaborative processes between the three participating communities in this study. A brief summary of each of these key principles is provided in Table 7 (p171).

Key Principle	Description
Building relationships	Time taken for mutual learning between community players and music therapist to develop shared understanding of one another, upon which to foster a collaborative dynamic for the music project; develops into collaborative process
Ongoing negotiation of purpose	Ongoing discussion and decision-making to negotiate what players want to focus on and get out of the music project; evolves throughout collaborative process
Developing expectations and structure	Building and adapting an approach to undertaking the music project that motivates players' engagement and commitment; evolves throughout collaborative process

Table 7. Key principles of collaboration. Descriptions of the key principles common to collaborative processes between communities

Factors Impacting on the Key Principles of Collaboration

The key principles presented above formed the basis of the general structure of collaborative process developed in this analysis. Further analysis of the empirical material identified temporal, contextual, and interpersonal factors that impacted on these key principles, which also informed the structure developed. The way each these factors were explored and incorporated into a general structure of collaborative process is presented in the forthcoming subsections of this chapter.

Temporal factors impacting on key principles of collaboration.

Exploration of the concepts and categories underpinning this analysis revealed that the three key principles of collaboration occurred over two successive time periods. In other words, the process of collaboration was comprised of two stages, which I have labelled the 'hangout period', and the 'collaboration period'. Building relationships occurred first, in the hangout period of the collaborative process, before collaboration in the music projects 'proper' commenced. Learnings from this analysis identified that this hangout period was a critical precursor to the music projects. It was through building relationships in the hangout period that a shared understanding and collaborative dynamic was created between all players, through which a collaborative approach to the music projects was made possible.

The process of collaboration then evolved into the ‘collaboration period’. In the collaboration period, the processes of negotiating purpose and developing expectations and structure occurred concurrently, in interaction with one another. These two processes were ongoing throughout this period. The empirical material in this analysis showed that it was in this collaboration period that community players and I worked together to develop and enact our music projects, drawing on the relationships that had been built in the hangout period.

Learnings from the empirical material suggest that both of these stages were critical to the overall process of collaboration with the communities in this study. Figure 9 (below) demonstrates how these temporal factors were incorporated into the general structure of collaboration being developed in this analysis.

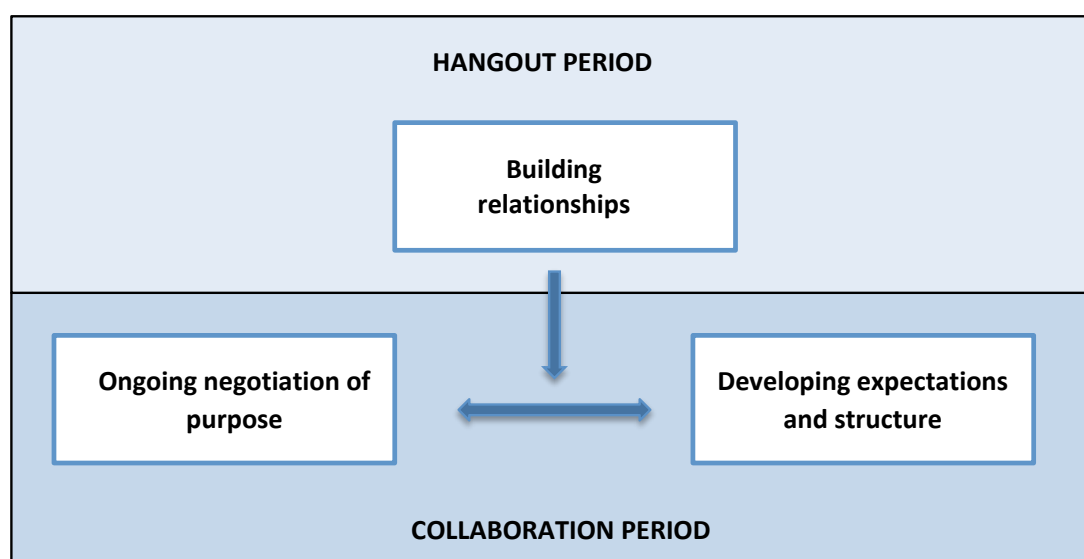


Fig. 9. Impact of temporal factors on key principles of collaboration. This figure depicts the two successive time periods of the collaborative process and how they relate to the key principles

Contextual factors impacting on key principles of collaboration.

Working further with the empirical material, I observed that while the key principles of collaboration were fundamental to the collaborative process with each community, the way that they occurred in each community varied. I identified variables for each key principle that referred to variation in the way key principles played out in different collaborative processes between communities

and myself. In order to clearly demonstrate this variation between communities, these variables and the way they manifested in the process of collaboration with each participating community are summarised in Table 8 (below).

Key Principle	Variable	Drop-in Group	Therapeutic Camp	Share Home Group
Building relationships	Time - How much time was required?	Occurred over a period of three months of weekly contact	Occurred over the course of a one week-long camp and one weekend camp, where I was in 24-hour contact with the young people	Completed over the course of a single evening, in four hours
	Format - What did relationship building look like?	Involved preparing for and executing a community-based performance with the young people.	Involved engaging in the general structured activities of the therapeutic camp, such as horse-riding, cups of tea, and conversation	Involved having dinner together where we shared discussion and some music
Ongoing negotiation of purpose	Project type - What kind of music project was developed?	The music project took a band structure, based around rehearsals and performance.	The music project took a songwriting format, working towards a single group song.	The music project involved a variety of small, individual projects - sometimes joining together and sometimes working independently.
	Approach to collaboration - What form did the collaboration take?	A formal approach to collaboration was used, involving individual and group discussions with young people to plan and reflect on the project	Camp staff made some initial decisions about the overall purpose of the project in a formal planning session; young people were invited to collaborate incidentally and informally in the project once the overall parameters had been established.	Collaboration was incidental and informal with individual young people, based on each young person's chosen project.
Developing expectations and structure	Responsible player - Who took responsibility for setting expectations?	I took responsibility for setting expectations about players' engagement.	Pre-existing expectations for participation set by the camp staff; these were applied to the music project.	The young people themselves were the responsible for setting expectations for their engagement
	Degree of structure - How much structure was needed to meet expectations?	Some structure was identified as necessary for the young people to engage consistently in the music project.	The music project would be structured within the frame of a pre-defined activity as with all other camp activities.	The music project was entirely unstructured

Table 8. Contextual variation between participating communities. Key principles, variables and how they occurred in different participating communities in this research project.

These variables represented an important learning from this analysis, and were incorporated into the general structure for collaborative process (presented on p177). For the purpose of clarity, the key principles and respective contextual variables that emerged from this iteration of the analysis are summarised in Table 9 (below).

Key Principle	Variables
Building relationships	- Time - <i>How much time was required?</i> - Format - <i>What did relationship building look like?</i>
Negotiating purpose	- Project type - <i>What kind of music project was developed?</i> - Approach to collaboration - <i>What form did the collaboration take?</i>
Developing expectations and structure	- Responsible player - <i>Who took responsibility for setting expectations?</i> - Degree of structure - <i>How much structure was needed to meet expectations?</i>

Table 9. Summary of key principles and contextual variables. Variables impacting on the manifestation of key principles of collaboration.

Interpersonal factors impacting on key principles of collaboration.

After these variables had emerged from the analysis, I returned to the empirical material again. I sought to identify any factors that may account for this variation in the way the key principles of collaboration occurred in different communities. From this exploration of the empirical material I recognised that each key principle was, in fact, an interpersonal interaction between community players and the music therapist. As such, the quality and nature of this interpersonal interaction impacted on the way key principles were enacted in each music project, resulting in the variation that had emerged in the analysis.

To demonstrate this I offer a simple comparison of two participating communities. For the key principle of ‘developing expectations and structure’, the person who took responsibility for setting expectations – the ‘responsible player’ – varied based on the nature of the relationship between players and I. In the

drop-in group, the young people saw me as the 'band manager' in the music project, and as such, I set the expectations in the group. I told people to come to rehearsal and, in the words of one player, kept the project 'on track'. In distinct contrast, in the share home group, I was a guest the young people's home, coming into their private space. The nature of this relationship fostered a dynamic whereby the young people set the expectations for what would happen in the group, and how they would participate on any given day.

This learning recognised each key principle as an interpersonal interaction made up of contributions from both community players and myself as the music therapist. The nature of the contributions community players and I made to these interpersonal interactions impacted on the way key principles manifested in different music projects. This learning was incorporated into the general structure of the music project (see Figure 10 below). Two interlinked circles signify the interpersonal relationship between the community players' input and the music therapist's input into the collaboration. The key principle is represented in the overlapping space between the two circles. This format is used to represent the learning that the key principles do not exist independently of community player and music therapist contributions, but instead are a product of the interplay between this input.

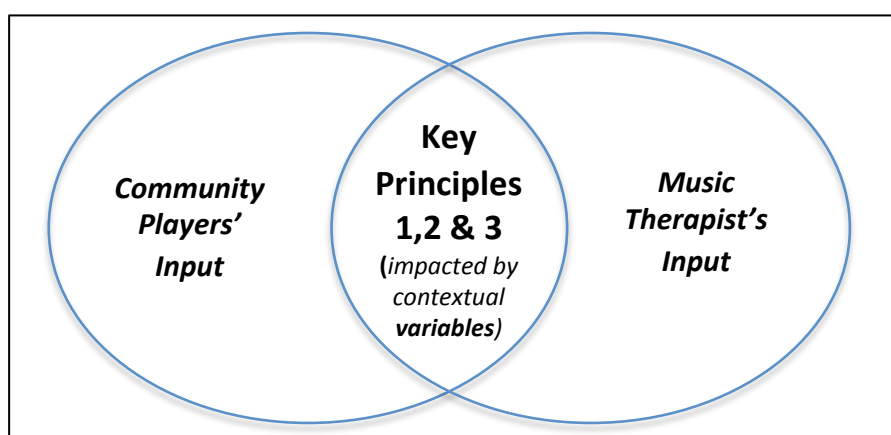


Fig. 10. The interpersonal nature of the key principles of collaboration. Interlocking circles represent how key principles are enacted through the interpersonal interaction between music therapist and community players.

Combining the Learnings into a General Structure

In these first two sections of the chapter, I have described the iterative process of working with the empirical material in this analysis, and the learnings that emerged about the process of collaboration. I briefly summarise this process below:

Abstracting the empirical material

1. I began with twelve comprehensive mindmaps that were the raw empirical material for the analysis.
2. I extracted information from the mindmaps that provided insight into the process of collaboration, and these became concepts.
3. I explored the way concepts related to each other from different perspectives, to identify the different ways they could be grouped together into categories. Six categories emerged consistently from this process and became the final categories for the analysis.

The concepts and categories that emerged from the empirical material represented the factors that influenced or provided insight into the process of collaboration with communities in this study. I then sought to organise these learnings into a structure of collaborative process that could inform future collaborations between music therapists and communities supporting marginalised young people.

Developing a general structure of collaboration

4. I re-organised the concepts and categories to identify three key principles that were common to the collaborative process with each of the communities in this study. These key principles represented different aspects of the collaborative process and became the basis for the general structure of collaborative process being developed.
5. Returning to the categories and concepts and drawing on my experience with communities, I identified that there were temporal, contextual and interpersonal factors that impacted on these key principles.

6. The learnings about each of these factors were incorporated into the general structure of collaborative process, which became the basic conceptual understanding for this analysis.

I conclude this section of the chapter by presenting the general structure of collaborative process that combines all of these learnings (presented in Figure 11 below).

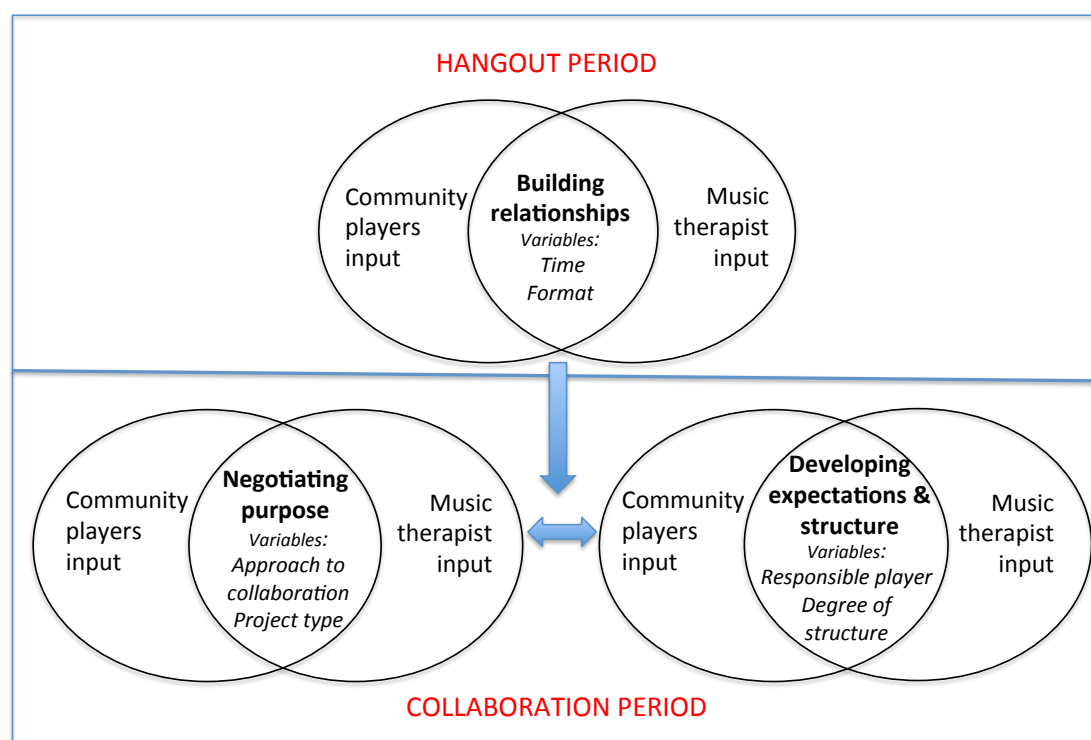


Fig 11. The general structure of collaborative process. A structure representing collaborative process, incorporating the temporal, contextual and interpersonal elements identified in this analysis.

This general structure of collaboration represents what I interpreted to be the most logical and useful way to present the learnings that emerged from this analysis. Through this structure I proposed a way of understanding and articulating the process of collaboration with communities supporting marginalised young people, based on the collaborations in this study. This was the overall objective of this analysis.

Embarking on this analysis, I sought to generate an understanding of collaborative process that accounted for contextual variation. Contextual variation is partially represented in the general structure by the variables identified for each key principle. However, in this analysis I also found that the

interpersonal process, comprised of input from both community players and myself, influenced the way these variables manifested in each music project. The nature of this input for each key principle was not articulated in the general structure proposed above, and was therefore the focus for the final stage of this analysis.

Elaborating on Contextual Variation in the Structure of Collaborative Process

In this third section of the chapter I present a comparative reflection that was used to understand what characteristics of the input by community players and the music therapist impacted on the way collaboration occurred in different community contexts. I compare and contrast my experience of the three key principles of collaboration – building relationships, ongoing negotiation of purpose, and developing expectations and structure - with the three communities that participated in this study. For each key principle, I use the contextual variables presented in the previous section of the chapter as the foci for this comparison.

I first present the characteristics of the community players' input that impacted on the collaborative process. Subsequently I present the characteristics that I brought to the process. The comparative reflections in this part of the analysis are my interpretation, based on my experience of collaborating with each of the participating communities in this study. Examples from the music projects are incorporated into this section of the chapter.

Articulating Community Players' Input into Each Key Principle

The comparative reflection described in this section revealed a number of ways that community players contributed to the interpersonal process that was each key principle of collaboration. The characteristics of these contributions differed between communities, as described in the forthcoming subsections of this chapter. To reflect this variation in the characteristics of different communities, I have chosen to articulate community players' input for each key principle as questions, rather than statements. These questions relate to the

learnings about community players' input that emerged from this comparative reflection. By proposing these learnings as questions, I allow for the fact that the answers will inevitably vary between community contexts. In this way, I seek to articulate the process of collaboration in a way that accounts for contextual variation, as this was stated as a priority from the outset of this analysis (see p161).

Comparing community players' input into building relationships.

Earlier in this analysis, I identified two variables in the process of building relationships with the communities that participated in this study: The **time** required for the hangout period; and, the **format** of the hangout period (as indicated in Table 9, p174). The impact of community players' input on these variables is explored here.

Comparing variations in time of the hangout period. The time needed to build relationships through which to establish a mutual collaboration varied significantly between communities. With the drop-in group, the process required four and a half months of weekly contact, during which we worked together towards a community performance. With the therapeutic camp group, I spent the duration of two camps in 24-hour contact with the young people, before undertaking the music project on my third camp. For the share home group the hangout period took only one evening, where I met the young people and joined them for dinner. When comparing the hangout periods between communities, a key factor that appeared to have impacted on time required to effectively build relationships was the complexity of the community involved. By 'complexity' I refer to the number of different people, services and structures that surrounded and were involved with the young people, comprising their supporting community.

The estate community linked to the drop-in group was extremely complex. Residents from diverse cultural backgrounds, as well as community workers, youth workers, government staff, and case managers, made up the many different players in the community. Additionally, the community was multi-layered, with ongoing interaction between individual residents and interest groups, as well as

multiple community organisations and government agencies. The ongoing interplay between these players and layers led to complicated dynamics within the community. The complexity of the players, layers and politics in the estate community impacted on the time taken to build relationships, resulting in the need for a long hangout period with the drop-in group.

Compared to the drop-in group, the supporting communities for the therapeutic camp and share home were relatively less complex. Rather than being based on a network of services, the supporting communities for these two groups were each based around a single organisation. These organisations were also part of a wider system of support services for the young people, which included several government agencies and caseworkers. However, unlike the drop-in group, these external supporting players were not closely integrated into the youth programs through which the share home and therapeutic camp music projects were run. With fewer players, layers and politics impacting directly on the programs, less time was needed for relationship building in these communities.

With the share home, the fact that the layers and players of the community were not closely integrated had another impact on relationship building. Engaging the supporting community workers to get permission to approach the young people about the study was a fast process. However, due to the structure of the share home, it then took many months and six cancelled visits before I managed to meet the young people to invite them to participate in the research project.

The share home functioned as a household, where everyone supported each other but had individual, independent lives. This was distinctly less integrated than the other two projects, where players came together as a group to undertake an existing youth program. In contrast, while the young people from the share home lived together, they didn't necessarily gather to do group activities together. Subsequently, it took a lot longer to find a mutually agreeable time to meet the young people and start the relationship building process.

However, once I met the young people, the hangout period was extremely short. After an initial four-hour visit, the young people appeared to have understood the proposed research project and decided to participate. They also

seemed to understand the concept of a participatory approach and collaborative focus we would take. Reflecting critically, I believe that the fact that the share home community had very few layers, players and politics to negotiate contributed to this short hangout period. In this community, I was able to quickly establish my role and identity in the community and clearly explain the participatory approach and the research process from the outset. It is also noteworthy that the young people in this community were older than the players in the other two groups. Their relative maturity may also have helped them to quickly grasp the nature of the research project and decide whether or not they wanted to engage.

Comparing variations in the format of the hangout period. The format of the hangout period with each community was the second variable identified for the key principle of building relationships. After reflecting on differences in the hangout period with each community in this study, I recognised that the format used to build relationships with each community was based on what the concept of 'hanging out' looked like in each community. In each community, I worked together with local players to identify and work with the existing 'hangout culture' of the community. The local knowledge of community players was fundamental to developing an effective format for building relationships with the communities in this study.

The community supporting the drop-in group was made up of many varied groups of players. There was no obvious place in the estate where community members regularly spent time hanging out together as a whole community. Instead, these disparate groups of players came together to enact their community at several whole-community festivals and celebrations throughout the year. I learnt from drop-in group staff that these festivals and celebrations constituted the 'hangout culture' of the estate community. We used this culture as a format to build relationships with players from the estate community by preparing for and putting on an open community event. Young people from the drop-in group performed alongside other community groups from the estate. It was after this performance that my involvement with the drop-in group evolved

from hanging out and playing music to engaging collaboratively in a music project.

With the drop-in group, the hangout culture required deliberate planning and coordination, however, for the therapeutic camp and share home communities, the process was more embedded and incidental. The share home was a home environment, so hanging out meant sitting around the table with a cup of tea or a meal and having a chat. On camp, the structure and activities of the camp itself provided the format for the hangout period, so hanging out was often done on horseback, or whilst playing football or even swimming with the dolphins on one occasion. In order to build relationships with communities, the format of the hangout period was informed by these unique hangout cultures in order to 'fit in' with how each group of players in the study enacted community.

In all three communities, musicking together was an important element of the relationship building process, and was incorporated into the format of the hangout period. In the drop-in group, music was prominent as we worked towards a performance. In the share home and on therapeutic camp, listening, singing and talking about music occurred incidentally alongside other hangout activities. However, as well as musicking together, we also did many activities that, at times, seemed to be quite unrelated to music therapy. In this study, these non-musical elements of the hangout period were as much a part of my role as a music therapist as the time spent in engaging in music together.

Articulating characteristics of community players' input impacting on building relationships. From this comparative reflection, I have interpreted three characteristics of community players' input that impacted on the time needed to build relationships and the format of the hangout period. Learnings suggest that building relationships with communities is impacted by both the complexity of the community surrounding the program – the layers, players and politics – and how integrated the program is into this community. A further characteristic impacting on relationship building is the nature of the existing community hangout culture. This interpretation is reflected in the questions below:

1. How complex is the participating community?

The learnings from this study suggest that the greater the amount of layers, players and politics of the supporting community, the more time may be needed to build relationships.

2. How integrated is the program into the surrounding community?

The learnings from this study suggest that the more integrated a program is into the surrounding community, the more time may be needed to negotiate the dynamics of the community and build relationships with players.

3. What is the hangout culture in this community?

a. Is there a space where people hangout together?

The learnings from this study suggest that the format of the hangout period needs to be informed by the hangout culture of the community. The experiences in this research project suggest that relationship building is likely to take longer in communities that do not have an existing space to gather and spend time together. In these communities a more planned approach may be required to target the way in which community is enacted in that context.

Comparing community players' input into the ongoing negotiation of purpose. Earlier in this analysis, I identified two variables in the ongoing negotiation of purpose with the communities that participated in this study. These variables were the **approach to collaboration** that is taken with players, and the **type of music project** that was developed (see Table 9, p174). In this section these variables form the basis for comparing the process of negotiating purpose with the different communities in this study, in order to identify the characteristics of community input that impacted on this process.

Comparing variation in the approach to collaboration with different communities. In this study, the approach to collaboration with each community was based around maximising the young people's active input into decision-making about the music projects. The approach taken to collaboration varied markedly between communities. One factor impacting significantly on this

variation was who took primary responsibility for leading the decision-making process in the different communities.

In the therapeutic camp group, the staff members took responsibility for deciding the type and purpose of the music project. The camp staff negotiated an activity-based structure that was familiar for the young people in this context to engage collaboratively with. The young people's subsequent engagement in the collaboration was informal and ongoing. This incidental collaboration was framed by the pre-existing activity-based songwriting structure negotiated by the camp staff.

Comparatively, in the drop-in group, I took responsibility for leading the decision-making process. As an adult and a worker in the project, this is similar to the staff taking responsibility for the decision-making process on camp. With the drop-in group, I also chose to provide a structure for the young people to engage collaboratively with. This took the form of formal, structured focus groups and interviews designed to overtly solicit input from the young people about the music project.

It is interesting that in both groups where adult players drove the decision-making process, the approach to collaboration involved introducing structures to facilitate the young people's engagement in collaboration. However, these structures were quite different. On therapeutic camp, the structure of a songwriting process created a frame for the music project, and the young people engaged in collaborative decision-making within that frame. Alternatively, in the drop-in group, structured formal reflections were used as a forum for collaborative decision-making. In this group, the music project activities were chosen and developed out of the structured process, rather than within it. This resulted in distinct variation in the nature of the young people's collaboration in these two communities, from informal, incidental collaboration with the young people from the therapeutic camp, to formal, structured collaboration with the young people from the drop-in group.

In contrast, the young people in the share home music project took primary responsibility for leading the decision-making process themselves. In this group, the young people and I negotiated the purpose and format of the music program in informal and incidental discussion throughout the process. These

ideas were then adapted flexibly by the young people in the ongoing process of negotiation with me, one another, and their supporting community.

Reflecting on individual participating communities, there were many possible factors that impacted on the way we approached collaboration in each community. For example, on average the young people from the share home group were older than the young people in the other participating communities. Being between the ages of 18 and 21, it was possible that their maturity supported these young people to take a driving role in negotiating the purpose of their music projects. Such specific individual factors are invariably unique to individual contexts, and were therefore not the focus of this comparative reflection. Instead, I sought to identify any broader considerations that may serve to inform the approach to collaboration in future collaborations between music therapists and communities.

Based on this comparative analysis, I have interpreted that a main difference in the approach to collaboration between communities relates to who leads the decision making process. This appears to impact on the level of structure that is considered necessary to promote collaboration, and the way this structure is used to support collaboration. In the therapeutic camp and drop-in groups, adult players (myself and staff members) led the decision-making process, and structures were put in place to facilitate collaboration; in the share home group, the young people led the decision-making process, and less structure was required to facilitate collaboration. This interpretation led me to further reflect on why particular players stepped up to take leading roles in different contexts.

Both the therapeutic camp and drop-in groups were activity-based programs run by organisations. In these environments, workers were generally responsible for organising and facilitating activities. While both of these communities have a culture of youth participation, this is generally done through consultation that is driven and followed up by the workers. The young people's main role is to offer ideas, but rarely to plan and action those ideas. This pre-existing culture was carried in to the music projects in this study. I propose that as young people in these communities did not ordinarily take responsibility for negotiating the purpose of activities, they did not naturally step up to do so in the

music project. Subsequently, structures were intentionally used in these music projects to promote young people's active and dynamic engagement in decision-making.

Comparatively, in the share home young people already took responsibility for their actions and choices. As a home environment, they were free to decide how to spend their leisure time. While workers provided support as needed, these young people were expected to take responsibility for their home, through cooking, cleaning and negotiating social dynamics with housemates. In the share home environment, players stepped up naturally to make decisions about the purpose of their music project, without the need for formal structures to facilitate collaboration. Their readiness to lead the collaboration meant that I took a more supportive role in negotiating purpose with this group.

This comparison between communities suggested that the amount of responsibility placed on young people in their community impacted on whether or not they took the lead in negotiating the purpose of their music projects. Further to this, in communities where the young people did not traditionally take a leading role in decision-making, an approach to collaboration that included structures to facilitate players' active involvement in decision-making was beneficial.

Comparing variation in the type of music project chosen in different communities. The types of music projects chosen with each group in this study varied considerably between the three participating communities, from a rock band with the drop-in group, to a group songwriting project on therapeutic camp, to a series of individual projects with the share home group. Reflecting on the music projects, it appeared that this variation was impacted by the goals and expectations of players in different communities. In other words, the type of project chosen by players was influenced by what they hoped to get out of their experience in the music project.

In the drop-in group, the young people's interest in the music group was generally music-based. Some players were interested in trying out new and exciting instruments; others had a more enduring interest in developing music skills. The rock band style chosen for their music project served as a tangible and

music-based focus for this group. For the young people from the share home group, some players' interest was music-based and these players sought to build their music skills. Other young people from the share home had a wellbeing focus, emphasising social and personal development goals. In this group our choice to use a cluster of individual and small group projects meant that different young people could focus on different goals in their project. The goal for the music project on camp was for the young people to have an opportunity to explore and articulate what it meant for them to be part of the camp community. This shared group focus for the project leant itself to the group songwriting process chosen with this group of players.

Comparative reflection identified differences in goals and expectations between communities that impacted on the type of music project undertaken. However, further reflection indicated that these differences occurred not just between communities, but also within some communities. In the therapeutic camp group, young people shared a common goal that they brought to the music project. However, in both the drop-in group and the share home, players had very individual motivations for engaging in the music projects. The comparative reflection in this analysis suggests there was variation in the degree to which the types of music projects chosen by different communities could accommodate the expectations of different young people.

For example, the rock band-style project negotiated with the drop-in group proved to be a challenging format because it required commitment from all band members to a shared group goal. This was incompatible with the players in this group, who brought individual and varied expectations to the project. While some were highly committed to the band, others simply saw it as a fun opportunity to try out. In contrast, the series of songwriting sessions with the therapeutic camp group also worked towards a shared group goal. However, on therapeutic camp the young people were motivated to work together towards a common goal, and this style of project proved to be effective in engaging this group of players.

The project with the share home was interesting because, like the young people from the drop-in group, the players appeared to have quite individual motivations for engaging in the music project. However, unlike the drop-in group, the project style with the share home group was a cluster of individual and small

groups projects that were pursued separately, but together comprised the group's music project. This type of music project was very effective in accommodating the varied goals of different players in this group.

This comparative reflection suggested that both musical and wellbeing goals motivated players' engagement in the music projects and influenced the type of music project that was developed with each community. Further to this, I identified that some project types could more easily accommodate varied expectations of players than others. This learning suggests that in communities where players' goals are more individualised, it may be valuable to negotiate a project type that can flexibly accommodate those different goals or be adapted as they change over time.

Articulating characteristics of community players' input impacting on the ongoing negotiation of purpose. From this comparative reflection, I interpreted several characteristics of a community's input that impacted on the approach taken to collaboration with players and the type of music project developed. The amount of responsibility that target players (the young people) had in each community appeared important in relation to the approach taken to collaboration. The perceived purpose of the music project by the players involved, as well as whether or not players shared a common goal or brought individual goals to the project was also critical. This interpretation is reflected in the questions below:

1. How much responsibility do target players have in this community?

The learnings from this analysis suggest that the more responsibility target players have in the community, the more likely they are to take a lead role in decision-making throughout to their music project. If they do not have a great deal of responsibility in the community, it may be helpful to put structures in place to encourage player's active involvement in the collaborative process.

2. Why are players engaging in the music project?
 - a. Music-based goals?
 - b. Wellbeing-based goals?
3. Do players have individual or shared goals?

Learnings from this analysis suggest that negotiating a project type that is compatible with player's goals for the project can benefit the collaborative process. When players bring a variety of individual goals to the project, a project format that can flexibly accommodate these varied goals is helpful.

Comparing community players' input into developing expectations and structure. Earlier in this analysis, I identified two variables in the process of developing expectations and structure with the communities that participated in this study. These variables were the **player responsible for setting expectations**, and **the degree of structure** required to meet those expectations (see Table 9, p174). In this section these variables form the basis for comparing the development of expectations and structure with the different communities in this study, in order to identify the characteristics of community input that impacted on this key principle.

Comparing variation in the player responsible for setting expectations in different communities. The development of expectations and structure in the music projects was intended to support players to engage and commit to the collaborative process in order to achieve their goals for the music project. It was important to balance this expectation and structure to ensure players retained personal choice in their level of participation in the music project. Ensuring that players had this choice impacted on who took responsibility for setting expectations about participation in the music projects in this study.

In the drop-in and therapeutic camp groups, the music projects were embedded into existing youth programs. In these programs, young people independently chose to attend the group, demonstrating a general willingness to participate. Comparatively, in the share home the music project was conducted in the players' living room. They did not actively choose to come and engage in each session, it was brought into their home. It was therefore a priority that they felt free to choose their level of participation on any given evening. For this reason, in the share home group I followed the young people's lead and supported them to take full responsibility for their level of participation, to ensure that they had control over their engagement in the process.

Alternatively, in the drop-in and therapeutic camp groups, players in 'worker' roles, such as staff and I, were more active in setting expectations of player's participation. These were both organised youth programs. As such, in these environments there was an overall understanding that adult workers coordinated and organised the activities. It was therefore necessary for myself and other adult workers to take proactive steps to share control over the music projects with the young people in the drop-in group and on camp.

An example of sharing of responsibility for setting expectations in the drop-in group was when the young people were encouraged to take responsibility for telling their peers to come to band rehearsal. This shift in control was challenging for some young people in this context, and they required my support by actively following up this expectation in my role as band manager. This example emphasised the value of sharing control in this community, rather than completely handing control over to the young people. This suggests that in communities where adults traditionally control expectations, unilaterally handing power to the young people without offering support may potentially disempower young people if they have never have been expected to collectively negotiate this kind of responsibility before.

Comparatively in the share home group, it was the young people who shared control with me. In general in this home-based context, the young people controlled the way they spent their time. This translated to their participation in the music project, and the young people were the ones that took responsibility for placing expectations on our participation in the music project. For example, when several of the young people decided to undertake a performance, they contacted me and arranged for me to meet them for an additional rehearsal prior to the event, and undertook their own rehearsal and planning independently before my arrival.

In this comparative reflection of who is responsible for setting expectations in different communities, several learnings emerged. It appeared that a significant factor impacting on this variable related to whether the players travelled to the music project or the music project was brought to them. In communities where players voluntarily attended the music project, this was interpreted as evidence of their willingness to participate and a greater level of

expectation was placed on them. Alternatively, in communities where I brought the music project to the young people, players were given space to choose their level of participation.

In addition, it appeared that pre-existing understandings of who generally had set expectations for players' participation in each community impacted on the way expectations were set in the music projects. In the collaborations in this study, whomever generally controlled expectations in each community became the player responsible for setting expectations in the music projects. These players also took the lead in sharing this responsibility with others and supporting that process where required.

Comparing variation in how much structure is needed to promote engagement in different communities. The amount of structure required to motivate player's engagement varied between the three music projects in this study. Drop-in group players needed a large amount structure to motivate their engagement, which took the form of planned events for us to work towards. When this structure was lacking, player's participation stagnated and the project lost momentum; when there was structure in place, players demonstrated greater readiness to engage in the project.

On therapeutic camp, the pre-existing structure of the camp timetable meant that within the music project itself, very little structure was needed to promote the young people's engagement. This group had a strong culture of participation, and players came to the music sessions with the general willingness to engage they brought to all camp activities. Subsequently music sessions were very flexibly structured to allow young people to choose their level of participation in the collaboration.

Similarly at the share home, very little structure was required to motivate the young people's engagement. In fact, any plans that I prepared to bring structure or routine to the share home music project were invariably discarded on my arrival in response to the young people's ideas on the day. In this environment, me arriving fortnightly at the house provided adequate structure for the music project.

This difference between the communities prompted me to consider what purpose the structure served with the drop-in group, where it was most needed. A basic interpretation would be that the young people in the drop-in group required the objective to work towards in order to engage, and the structure served this purpose. However, at times players from all three communities sought objectives to work towards in the form of performances or recordings, but the share home and camp groups did not require high levels of structure to engage in this process.

Comparing the culture of the drop-in group with that of the therapeutic camp and share home groups, a distinction between them emerged that may account for the need for structure in the drop-in group. In the therapeutic camp and share home groups, players were all connected by a strong, shared sense of belonging to the group. This sense of belonging prompted the young people to engage with the music project being offered, because that's what the group was doing and they were important members of the group. In contrast, the transient nature of the drop-in group meant there was no strong sense of group identity between participants. Consequently young people were less likely to engage simply because that was what the group was doing, because they did not necessarily identify themselves as members of a group. For players from the drop-in group, the music project itself had to foster a sense of group belonging for the young people to share.

This interpretation suggests that the structure of working towards something together was particularly important in the drop-in group because this structure gave the young people a tangible sense of 'group' to engage with and belong to. This was less important in the other two participating communities where a group identity was already well established. This suggests that in this study, music projects with communities that had a strong sense of group membership and belonging required less structure to promote players' engagement in the music project. However, in communities without a strong sense of group membership and belonging, it was necessary for music project itself to foster that sense of group identity. This required a higher level of structure to give players a tangible group concept to engage with.

Articulating characteristics of community player's input impacting on developing expectations and structure. From this comparative reflection on developing expectations and structures in this study, I have interpreted several characteristics of a community players' input to this key principle that impact on who takes responsibility for player's participation in the process and the degree of structure that is needed in the music project. Learnings from this reflection suggest that developing expectations and structure is impacted by whether or not players choose to come to the music project or the music project is brought to them. Furthermore, it is also impacted by whether or not the participating community shares a pre-existing sense of group membership and belonging. This interpretation is reflected in the questions below:

1. Is the community coming to the music project or is the music project coming to the community?
 - a. Choice in participation?
 - b. Who generally has control over time and action?

Learnings suggest that in communities where players have not travelled to the group, greater emphasis may need to be placed on ensuring players have choice in their participation. Additionally, it appears that pre-existing community culture around who sets expectations for participation is likely to translate to the music project. The person responsible for setting expectations for players also takes responsibility for sharing control over those expectations with other players.

2. Is there an existing sense of group membership and belonging?

Learnings suggest that in communities where there is a strong pre-existing sense of group identity, less structure may be required to promote engagement in the music project. However, in music projects where there is not an existing sense of group membership and belonging, the music project itself may need to create this sense of group identity. This may require a higher degree of tangible structure in the music project for players to identify with.

Summary of community players' input into process of collaboration.

In this comparative reflection I interpreted characteristics of community players'

input for each key principles of collaboration identified in this analysis. These characteristics are summarised briefly in Table 10 (below).

Key Principle	Characteristics of Community Player's Input
Building relationships	- How complex is the participating community? - o Layers? - o Players? - o Politics? - How integrated is the program into the surrounding community? - What is the hangout culture in this community? - o Is there a space where people hangout together?
Ongoing negotiation of purpose	- How much responsibility do target players have in this community? - Why are players engaging in the music project? - o Music-based goals? - o Wellbeing-based goals? - Do players have individual or shared goals?
Establishing expectations and structure	- Is the community coming to the music project or is the music project coming to the community? - o Choice in participation? - o Who generally has control over time and action? - Is there an existing sense of group membership and belonging?

Table 10. Summary of community players' input into collaboration. Overview of community player's input for each key principle of collaboration.

Articulating the Music Therapist's Input into Each Key Principle

In addition to community player's input, my input as a music therapist was also identified as an important element of the interpersonal interaction that is each key principle. This was also explored in my comparative reflection on the three music projects. Based on this reflection, my interpretation of the characteristics of my input to each key principle is outlined in this section of the chapter.

Considering music therapist input into building relationships. The contribution that I made to the hangout period with communities represents the other half of the interpersonal process of building relationships. Reflecting on the experiences with each community, the main resource I brought to the hangout period was my identity. In all communities, it was critical to honestly and overtly

share my identity with players, giving them a clear idea of whom they were being invited to relate to.

This involved bringing many different facets of my identity to these relationships: my identity as a musician, a therapist, a researcher, a woman, and a white, middle-class Australian. All of these aspects of myself informed my choices and responses to the many situations that arose in each music project. This did not involve indiscriminately sharing every detail about myself, but rather being honest and open about whom I was, why I was there, and what was informing my interactions with the community. I did this carefully and reflectively, and used it as way to negotiate relationships toward a mutual and collaborative dynamic. This process is exemplified in an example from the hangout period with the drop-in group.

The players from drop-in group were predominately young men, several of whom came from east African countries. For these young men it was unusual to build a relationship with a woman who was the same age as their mothers and sisters, but was not a family member. Drawing on their frame of reference for women my age, they asked me who was looking after my children while I was with them. I chose to explain that I was not married and did not have children. I shared this information about myself to broaden their perspective on the different roles that older women may play, and to open up a discussion about what they saw as my role in the program.

This process of sharing my identity with players involved the discretionary use of boundaries in response to situations that occurred during the process of collaboration. This was informed by ongoing professional reflection throughout the process. This self-reflexive approach to boundaries appeared to be vital, given the participatory nature of this study. It required me to engage in ongoing reflection on boundaries throughout the relationship building process, to ensure an ethical process that was responsive to the emergent nature of the collaborative process.

In my comparative reflection of relationship building, my musical identity emerged as particularly important to relationship building with all three communities. As early as action cycle 2, when recruiting community programs to the project, program staff regularly asked about my musical interests and

abilities, my 'musical résumé' so to speak. Although this may not seem surprising, it was quite unusual for me. In previous music therapy work, my role had been to foster the interests and abilities of music therapy 'clients'. My own musical identity had rarely been in focus. In these earlier work environments, musical instruments and equipment had surrounded me, 'furnishing' my musical identity. I had often carried my guitar or sung to myself, performing my musical identity incidentally and inadvertently. Music had so clearly been a part of my identity in those environments that I had seldom been asked to talk about it explicitly. Subsequently I had rarely considered my personal musical identity in my work as something separate to the 'clients' I was working with.

In this study, I came to each community as an outsider, into communities with no pre-existing idea of what a music therapist's role could be. Additionally, I was committed to collaborating with communities to decide to focus for the music project and the dimensions of my role in each environment. While I gave examples of my previous experiences and possible ideas for our music projects, I deliberately did not propose a specific musical activity from the outset. This made it more challenging for players to know what I could potentially offer them. When taking this 'open' approach, offering insight into my own musical identity was an important way to help players understand who I was as a musical person, while still leaving space for us to collaboratively develop a musical direction for the project. Sharing my musical identity emerged as an appropriate and intrinsic aspect of my contribution to relationship building.

Music was an important feature of relationship building with each group of players (as described in the rich descriptions in Appendix 6). It emerged as not only an important way for players to understand my role, but as an important way for me to relate the young people and perform my own identity in the hangout period. This was evidenced in the hangout period with the therapeutic camp group. On the first hangout camp, I did not bring my guitar or any musical instrument, and felt that this restricted my ability to relate to the young people. It seemed that a main contextualising feature of my identity was missing. This felt not only limiting, but also misleading – as if I was unintentionally holding back information that was important to building relationships with the young people.

Reflecting further, language also emerged as an important factor in the process of building clear and honest relationships. It was important to me to describe myself in a way that gave young people a clear idea of the different aspects of my identity as a music therapy researcher coming into their community: as a musician; a therapist; and a researcher. For the young people engaged in this study, the term 'music therapist' was unfamiliar and inaccessible language.

I sought to describe my role using terminology that was meaningful to the young people. I wanted them to understand that I was a musician, but that I was also a 'helper' who they could have expectations of, and who may have expectations of them. I wanted to convey the fact that I was a trained support person whom they could use as a resource. In these communities, the most effective term I found to describe my role for this group of players was 'music worker'. This was a context-specific term, based on the fact that young people in this study had many support people in their lives who were called 'workers': youth workers, community workers, case workers and social workers. In these contexts, the term 'worker' was linked to people providing professional support and help, and therefore 'music worker' was an appropriate way to frame my role as both a musician and a professional 'helper'.

The term 'music worker' was proposed as a context-specific role description in this study, a contextual frame to facilitate a shared understanding of what I was there for. When talking about my role with players, I stated that I was a music worker who had trained as a music therapist. As a music worker with a music therapy qualification, I brought different skills and frameworks to the collaborative process than, for example, a community musician or a professional singer-songwriter would bring. This is in much the same way that a social worker, occupational therapist or drug and alcohol counselor would bring different skills to the role of caseworker.

This learning was not that 'music worker' is unilaterally a better word to use than 'music therapist' in collaborative approaches to music therapy. Rather, I identified that it was my responsibility to find a contextually appropriate way to describe my role to players in community during the hangout period of

collaboration – a way that clearly and honestly communicated to players both the therapeutic and music skills that I brought to the music projects.

Articulating the characteristics of music therapist input to building relationships. Based on my interpretation, the learnings from this comparative reflection identified three characteristics of the music therapist's contribution to building relationships in the music projects. These three characteristics are:

1. The music therapist's identity. Eg:
 - a. Musical
 - b. Therapeutic
 - c. Gender-based
 - d. Cultural
2. Self-reflexive boundaries
3. Context-specific role descriptions

Considering music therapist input into the ongoing negotiation of purpose. Reflecting on my contribution to the ongoing negotiation of purpose in the music projects, several aspects of my input into the process emerged. My contribution reflected my role as an active participant in the collaborative process. Subsequently my role in negotiating the purpose in the music projects involved more than simply supporting and facilitating community player's ideas.

My music skills were an integral element of my contribution to the ongoing negotiation of purpose with communities in this study, and each group appropriated these skills in different ways. For example, on therapeutic camp I brought my songwriting skills to the collaboration and facilitated the other players to contribute to that process without necessarily needing any music skills themselves. With the drop-in group, I used my skills in playing band instruments to teach players new music skills.

I also contributed musical ideas to the process of negotiation. My past experience of working on music projects meant that I could offer ideas for possible types of projects that community players may otherwise not have been aware of. This was an important element of my input to the negotiation, because

it broadened the scope of what a music project could be, which opened up new possibilities to groups. This illustrates how my contribution to negotiating the purpose of music projects in this study involved more than only listening to participants input. As identified earlier in this chapter, negotiating purpose was an ongoing, interpersonal process in which all players engaged actively in decision-making.

Music skills and ideas were important resources that informed my contribution to negotiating the purpose of our music projects, however the limits of my music skills also framed this contribution. If we developed plans for a music project that were outside of my musical capacity, it was necessary to consider if we could access the required skills elsewhere in the community. If not, it was necessary to renegotiate the plans for the project. For example, in the drop-in group we decided to record the original song created by the group. Given the many band members and instruments used in the song, this idea was beyond the scope of my basic recording skills and equipment. We therefore engaged a sound technician to work with the group towards that goal.

Reflecting on the music projects, the need to be realistic about the scope of the music projects was another area where I contributed to the ongoing negotiation of purpose with communities. In this study, I brought a realistic perspective on what could be achieved within the scope of each music project. For example, in the drop-in group our plans to perform at a community performance became unrealistic when it became clear that the band was prepared in time for the community event. This prompted me to initiate a discussion wherein we decided renegotiate our plans and work towards a recording instead. This example not only demonstrated how I brought a realistic perspective to the scope of this music project, but also exemplified the ongoing nature of the negotiation of purpose.

Being able to negotiate these changes in the project was one of the ways that I brought my therapeutic skills to the music projects in this study. Throughout these ongoing negotiations I drew on my capacity as a therapist to support and hold group dynamics and respond to presenting needs of the group. I also used my therapeutic assessment skills to identify how to best strike a balance

in different communities between taking a directive and supportive role in the negotiations, in order to maximise the active collaboration of all players.

The fact that I drew my therapeutic skills meant that it was important that I had been overt about these skills when building relationships with players, particularly as I had used the term ‘music worker’ to describe my role. This term was intended to highlight rather than hide my skills and training. However, not using the word ‘therapist’ meant it was critical that both players and I were aware that my therapy training would inform my role in the ongoing negotiation of purpose, so that I was not using my therapeutic skills in the group without players’ knowledge.

Another important way that my skills as a therapist were brought to this process was through the perspective I brought as a trained outsider coming into the community. In this role I brought a different perspective on the potential needs of the community that could become the focus of a music project. I had chosen to engage with communities supporting marginalised young people as I understood that the young people in these communities faced significant challenges in their lives. I recognised that the music projects may be an opportunity for the young people to explore these challenges or take action to change or comment on their experience. This was reflected in the social change orientation I brought to this study (see p14).

Given their intimate involvement in their community, it was possible players did not have adequate distance to identify challenging aspects of their situation as potential needs that could be addressed. As a newcomer to each group, I brought a different outlook on the culture and the challenges of participating communities. This allowed me to bring an outsider perspective on the needs of the young people, which I contributed where appropriate to the ongoing negotiation of purpose in each music project.

Articulating the characteristics of music therapist input to negotiating purpose. Based on my interpretation, the learnings from this comparative reflection identified three characteristics of the music therapist’s contribution to the ongoing negotiation of purpose in the music projects. These three characteristics are:

1. Music skills
 - a. Technical skills
 - b. Knowledge of methods
 - c. Breadth of project ideas
2. Therapy skills
 - a. Realistic perspective
 - b. Understanding of group dynamics
 - c. Balance of directive vs. supportive role
3. New perspective on needs

Considering music therapist input impacting on developing expectations and structure. Reflecting on my input to the development of expectations and structure in the music projects, flexibility and ongoing reflection were the main ways I contributed this key principle. The need for both ongoing reflection and flexibility were critical to ensure that expectations and structures enhanced collaboration, rather than limiting or forcing players' participation. Throughout the music projects I sought to find the balance between setting expectations and offering all players choice in their level of participation. At times this involved increasing expectations or structure, and at times this involved reducing or abandoning them altogether. Ongoing reflection was required to identify if and when these alterations to the collaborative process were needed, and I drew on my music therapy skills in reflexive practice.

For example, around five months into the music project with the drop-in group, sessions had taken on a loose jam session style and momentum around the project has started to stagnate. I was placing very little expectation on the young people to participate, and they did not appear to be motivated to engage of their own accord. My personal reflection on these observations suggested that it was time to discuss with players whether or not they would like to continue the project at all, and if so what support they needed to re-engage. In this discussion the young people indicated they would like to continue the project. Players decided that increasing the level of structure by having an event to work towards would help motivate them to engage in the project, and this became the next plan

for the music project. In addition, I increased my level of expectation on the band members to rehearse, in order to rebuild the momentum of the group towards the planned event.

This example demonstrated how my ongoing reflection prompted a collaborative reflection that led to changes in the expectations and structures surrounding the drop-in group music project. My ongoing reflection was the precipitating factor that prompted this group reflection. This in turn led to subsequent collaborative decision-making, which was fundamental given the collaborative focus of this study. In this study players were not necessarily accustomed to reflecting on their experiences. My professional insight as reflective practitioner was important in identifying the need to adjust expectations and structure within the music projects.

Flexibility was a similarly important aspect of my contribution to this key principle. For example, in the share home I would often make plans for the group and follow up on the expectations developed with young people the previous week, only to arrive and discover that an entirely different group of young people were home on that particular day. My ability to be flexible and responsive to the presenting needs of this changing group was important. It meant that pre-determined structures and expectations were not rigidly adhered to at the expense of dynamic collaboration with players who were there at the time.

This flexibility relates to my ability as a music therapist to work with the dynamics and energy of a group. In the previous example from the share home, this led me to reduce expectations and structure. In an example from the therapeutic camp group, flexibly working with the energy of the group required me to increase the level of expectations placed on players.

The final session of the songwriting process on camp was on the final evening of camp. Everyone was getting sad that they would soon be leaving and were taking it out on one another. They were grumpy, unmotivated and tired after an action-packed week. It had been a challenge motivating them to do anything all afternoon, so I knew that motivating them to come and record would be difficult. However, staff and I knew it was important to finish what we had started with the young people. So we rounded them up, insisting that everyone come and be present in the room for the recording. Once they were all in the

room, everyone mustered their enthusiasm and motivation for the project and most engaged actively.

By insisting that the young people join the group, I increased the level of expectation placed on players to participate. I did this in response to what I perceived the young people needed to support them to achieve the goals for the project. This was another example of how I used my flexibility as a music therapist to develop expectations and structure with participants in this study.

Articulating the characteristics of music therapist input to developing expectations and structure. Based on this interpretation, the learnings from this comparative reflection identified two characteristics of the music therapist's contribution to the development of expectation and structure in the music projects. These two characteristics are:

1. Ongoing reflexivity
2. Flexibility
 - a. In response to changes in dynamics
 - b. In response to players' energy on the day

Summarising Community Player and Music Therapist Input

The comparative reflection of the music projects in this study was the final iteration of the overall analysis of collaborative process described in this chapter. Through this cycle of analysis I used critical comparative reflection of my experience with communities to interpret the characteristics that community players and I contributed to each key principle of collaboration. In Table 11 (p204), these learnings are presented in relation to the key principles and variables identified in earlier iterations of this analysis.

Key Principle of Collaboration	Contextual Variables	Characteristics of Community Players' Input		Characteristics of Music Therapist Input
Building Relationships Time taken for mutual learning between community players and music therapist to develop shared understanding of one another, upon which to foster a collaborative dynamic for the music project; develops into collaborative process	Time - <i>How much time is required?</i> Format - <i>What does relationship building look like?</i>	- How complex is the participating community? - Layers? - Players? - Politics? - How integrated is the program into the surrounding community? - What is the hangout culture in this community? - Is there a space where people hangout together?	The greater the amount of layers, players and politics in a surrounding community, the more time needed for the hangout period. The more integrated a program is into the surrounding community, the more time is needed for the hangout period. The format of the hangout period must be informed by the existing community hangout culture. Relationship building may take longer if there is no hangout space.	- The music therapist's identity. Eg: - Musical - Therapeutic - Gender-based - Cultural - Self-reflexive boundaries - Context-specific role descriptions
Ongoing Negotiation of Purpose Ongoing discussion and decision-making to negotiate what players want to focus on and get out of the music project; evolves throughout collaborative process	Project type - <i>What kind of music project is developed?</i> Approach to collaboration - <i>What form does the collaboration take?</i>	- How much responsibility do target players have in this community? - Why are players engaging in the music project? - Music-based goals? - Wellbeing-based goals? - Do players have individual or shared goals?	Target players with more responsibility may be more likely to drive decision-making. Those with less may need structures that encourage active collaboration Music projects can more effectively engage players when the type of project chosen is compatible with players' goals. When different players have individual goals, a project structure with flexibility is needed to accommodate these varied goals	- Music skills - Technical skills - Knowledge of methods - Breadth of project ideas - Therapy skills - Realistic perspective - Understanding of group dynamics - Balance of directive vs. supportive role - New perspective on needs

Developing Expectations and Structure Building and adapting an approach to undertaking the music project that motivates players' engagement and commitment; evolves throughout collaborative process	Responsible player - <i>Who takes responsibility for setting expectations?</i> Degree of structure - <i>How much structure is needed to meet expectations?</i>	- Is the community coming to the music project or is the music project coming to the community? - Choice in participation ? - Who generally has control over time and action? - Is there an existing sense of group membership and belonging?	In communities where players have not travelled to the group, greater emphasis may need to be placed on ensuring players have choice in their participation. Pre-existing dynamics around who sets expectations for participation are likely to translate to the music project. The person responsible for setting expectations also takes responsibility for sharing control over expectations with other players. Communities with a strong existing sense of group identity may need less structure to promote engagement. In music projects without an existing group identity, the music project may need more structure to create this sense of group identity.	- Ongoing reflexivity - Flexibility - In response to changes in dynamics - In response to players' energy on the day
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Table 11: Summary of key principles, variables and characteristics. Overview of key principles, contextual variables, and community and music therapist characteristics impacting on collaboration.

Summary of Learnings from this Analysis

The overall purpose of this analysis was to understand the process of collaboration in participatory music projects with communities supporting marginalised young people. In addition, I sought to find a way to conceptualise this process of collaboration that accounted for contextual variation and honoured the complexity of the work. In doing this I hoped to inform participatory approaches to music therapy practice with communities in the future.

This analysis emerged as an iterative process of interpretation. It was grounded in the empirical material generated with players throughout the action research process, and drew on my experience as a collaborator in the music projects with the three participating communities from this study. In the first half of this iterative process I abstracted the empirical material to generate a general structure of collaborative process, presented in Figure 11 (p177). In the second half of the analysis I undertook a comparative reflection to identify the characteristics of community player and music therapist input impacting on the collaborative process. Figure 12 (p207) is a synthesis of these learnings, and represents the overall learnings from this analysis of collaborative process.

Figure 12 provides a detailed and comprehensive structure for understanding and articulating the process of collaboration. This breakdown of the collaborative process is intended to inform future collaborations between music therapists and communities, as stated at the beginning of this chapter (p161). It is intended that these learnings can offer music therapists a language and a practical construct upon which to base collaborations with communities, so that they can confidently and safely allow the process to unfold. This structure is designed to be adequately detailed to support collaboration, but adequately flexible to allow the emergent process to unfold in the unique context of each community. This structure also offers music therapists a language and structure to be able to describe to prospective players what they can expect in a way that doesn't anticipate and pre-empt a particular outcome or product.

In addition to the comprehensive learnings represented in the overall structure of collaborative process (p207), some broader learnings emerged from this analysis that are fundamental to collaboration and underpin this detailed process. Collaboration is process made up of interpersonal interactions between all players. These interpersonal interactions are ongoing and decision-making is not a static, one-off occurrence. Negotiations continue throughout the course of a music project, and the trajectory of the music project is shaped flexibly and reflectively in response to this. In addition, collaboration evolves in two general stages, the hangout period and the collaboration period, both of which are critical to developing a participatory music project that maximises the potential for positive growth.

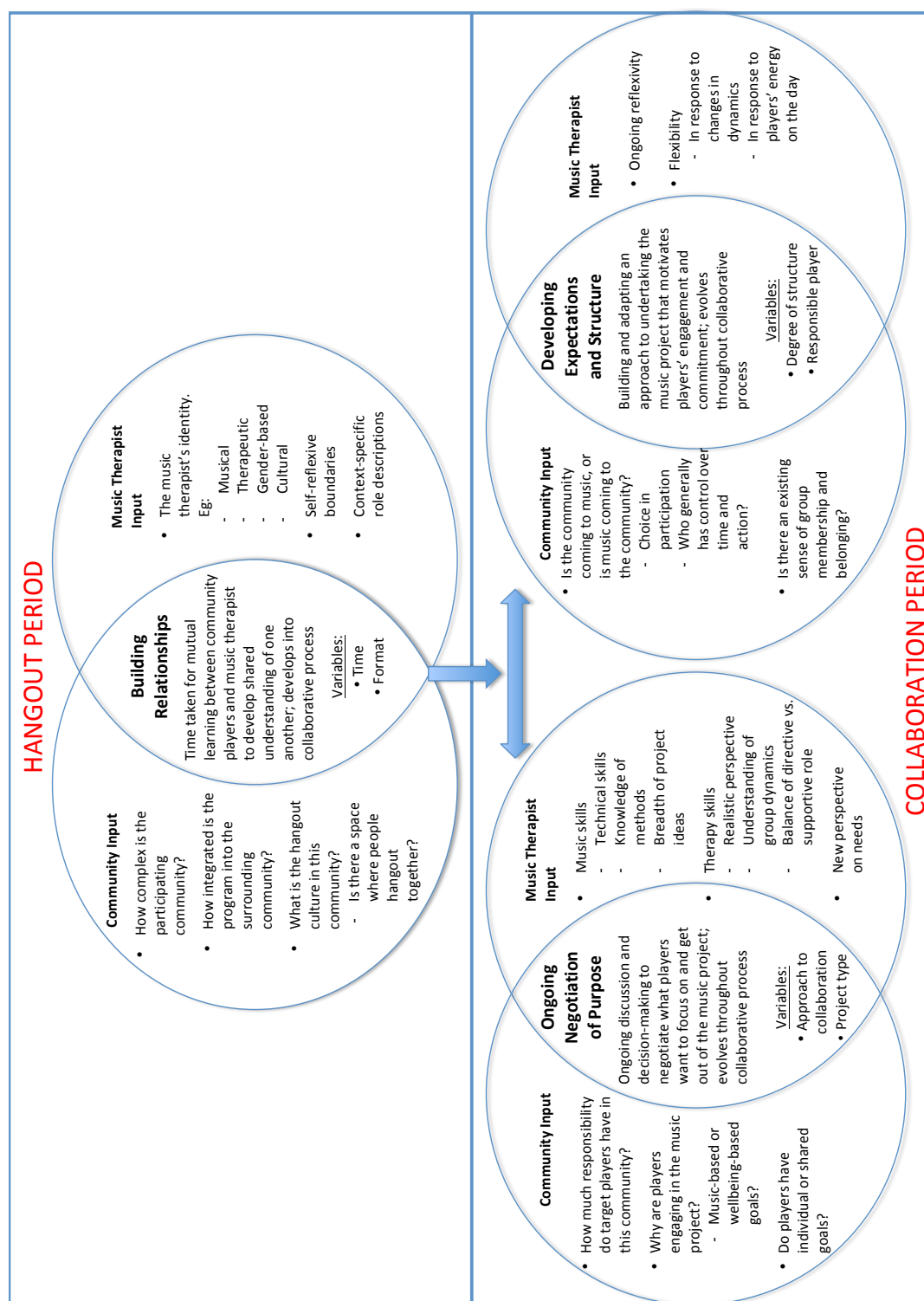


Fig. 12. Overall structure of collaborative process. This construct is a combined representation of the interpersonal, temporal, and contextual elements of collaboration in participatory music projects, and the community player and music therapist characteristics informing the interpersonal interactions for each key principle of collaboration.

In the forthcoming discussion chapter, I synthesise the learnings from this analysis with those from Analysis One (Chapter Four). I present the overall knowledge generated in this research project. I relate my understanding to current literature, and explore future implications of this research.

Chapter Six: Discussion

Music is a way to say what you want to say,
 Music is a way to be who you want to be,
 Music is a way to try something different,
 be a different kind of person
 with a different kind of vision

(except from rap of learnings)

This study is based on a fundamental belief in the potential of music as a space for people to explore ways of being. Ways of being an individual, of expressing themselves, what they can be, and what they want to be. Ways of being with others, connecting and strengthening ties, experimenting with how to belong and negotiating what that means. Ways of being in the world, of showing a skill or telling a story, of commenting on society by celebrating the good and challenging the bad.

The opportunity to explore ways of being is important. It is the way people experiment with how they want to engage with their world, and, through this, how they identify and act upon what they value for themselves and for their community. This can be a personal exploration, a social exploration, a political exploration, or potentially a combination of all three.

I entered this study with a belief that it is through collaboration that people can engage in this exploration in music therapy, and that this collaboration holds potential for positive health and wellbeing outcomes. After exploring the process of collaboration with the marginalised young people and supporting communities – the players – in this study, this belief is now a conviction. I am convinced of the potential of collaboration in participatory music projects to promote positive growth outcomes for young people. I am convinced of the need to clearly understand and articulate what collaboration in music therapy is. Most importantly, I am convinced of the need to overtly recognise the contribution of players themselves as a crucial element underpinning collaboration in music projects.

From this study I have learnt that it is through enlisting and nurturing this contribution that we can maximise the potential for positive growth in music therapy collaborations with young people in community settings. The distinction between participation and collaboration is critical to this study. Being a collaborator, or a player as I have termed it in this study, asks people not only to take part and make in-the-moment choices about their participation in music projects, but also to share responsibility for the direction of their music project. This requires players to be interested in helping to decide what the project will involve and influencing how that will happen.

Chapter Overview

In this research project I set out to build on what is known about what it looks like and what it means to collaborate in a music project with marginalised young people in community settings. In this discussion I present the perspective on collaboration in music therapy that has emerged and concretised throughout this research project. I offer a language to articulate and a way to frame collaboration in music therapy that reflects the understanding that has emerged from the analyses in this study.

I begin by considering the ways collaboration and related concepts are currently understood in music therapy. Subsequently I use the learnings from this study to propose an understanding of collaboration as a practice in and of itself in music therapy. I conclude by discussing how the learnings from this study inform my understanding of what it means to be a collaborator and the critical contribution that players make to collaboration as a practice in music therapy.

This discussion is a synthesis of the learnings from the two analyses in Chapters Four and Five of this thesis. In the analysis chapters I offered in-depth interpretations of the empirical material. In Chapter Four I focused on the young people's voices and sought insight into the meaning of collaboration in the music projects for them. In Chapter Five I examined the process of collaboration in the music projects, in order to conceptualise what collaboration in music projects with communities supporting marginalised young people looks like.

In this discussion I extract the key learnings from both of the analyses in this study to propose an overall picture of collaboration in participatory music projects with marginalised young people and their supporting communities. Throughout the chapter I draw on the learnings from these analyses and relate them to the current music therapy discourse. I use descriptive examples from the music projects in this study to highlight the way these learnings occurred in the communities involved in this study.

This chapter is divided into three sections that describe different 'levels' of learning about collaboration interpreted from this research project:

1. **Building on what is known about collaboration:** In this section I use the learnings from this study to articulate the meaning of collaboration in relation to existing theoretical understandings in music therapy (beginning on p212). This section aims to contribute to disciplinary understanding of the concept of collaboration.
2. **A new understanding of collaboration as a positive growth practice:** In this section I use the learnings from this study to propose a new understanding of collaboration with communities supporting marginalised young people in music therapy, and articulate considerations and priorities for this approach (beginning on p221). This section is intended to inform future collaborations between music therapists and communities.
3. **Being a player:** In this section I use the learnings from this study to articulate what collaboration involves for the individual participants who collaborate in music therapy (beginning on p237). This understanding is proposed from the perspective of players themselves, and aims to inform communication with potential collaborators.

Building on what is Known About Collaboration in Music Therapy

Language matters. The way concepts that underpin music therapy are described has a critical impact on the shape of music therapy practice. Not only does it inform how music therapists engage with participants and interpret meaning in their practice, it impacts on how collaboration in music therapy is communicated – to collaborators, to other professionals, and to the world at large. The word ‘collaboration’ is used regularly in descriptions of music therapy practice. However, the *concept* of collaboration as a core aspect of therapeutic process remains largely unexplored in the music therapy discourse, barring notable exceptions that will be examined further in the course of this discussion.

Throughout this research project I have had the opportunity to reflect deeply on the concept of collaboration in music therapy as an applied process, particularly as it is negotiated with complex people in complex communities. Engaging with community collaborators has offered me insights into the powerful potential of collaboration to promote positive growth for those who engage with it. However, just like musicking, collaboration is not necessarily a benign and non-threatening process. Like musicking, collaboration often requires people to step outside their comfort zone, to express themselves differently, and to be willing to respond and adjust to the contribution of others.

For this reason, I suggest that it is time for music therapists to more deeply consider way the word collaboration is used in the music therapy discourse. It is important to clearly articulate a practical definition of collaboration to inform the way music therapists work together with players. Language to describe what collaboration means and looks like can inform how music therapists safely and confidently ‘hold’ this process as it unfolds, in order to maximise the potential that collaboration offers for positive growth.

Building on what is Known About What Collaboration Looks Like

To date, the only in-depth theoretical exploration of collaboration in the music therapy literature is provided by Randi Rolvsjord (2010) in relation to her theory of Resource-Oriented Music Therapy for mental health care. In this important contribution, Rolvsjord proposes that collaboration in music therapy is based on equality, mutuality and active participation in decision-making. In the introduction to this study (p4) I drew on her principles of collaboration to propose a basic definition on which to base this research project.

Interpreting these principles for the ‘outwards and around’ community-based focus in this study, I defined collaboration as:

A process of dialogic interaction that

- a) actively seeks to engage all players in developing and enacting a shared music project, and
- b) is grounded in the principles of equality, mutuality, and active participation in decision-making (see p5 for further detail on each principle in community contexts).

I believe this remains a useful basic definition as it represents both the interpersonal nature and the overarching participatory orientation of collaboration. Comparative analysis of the music projects in this study has informed how this initial working definition can translate to an applied understanding of collaboration in CoMT practice. The following discussion is grounded in collaborations with marginalised young people and their supporting communities in community-based music therapy practice with a health promotion orientation. The applied understanding offered in this chapter is therefore proposed for music therapy collaborations with young people in community settings.

Participatory practice and collaboration. *Participatory practice* is an important term that is fundamental to my understanding of collaboration, CoMT, and this study. The term ‘participatory’ describes an approach to music therapy that is based on an ethos of democracy and equal partnership with participants. It is founded on the notion that all participant voices are valued and all people should have the opportunity to be heard (Stige et al., 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012).

Community music therapists support this approach by fostering the conditions in music therapy whereby this inclusive and dialogic dynamic can develop. In the many different contexts in which CoMT is practiced, participatory processes manifest differently as music therapists respond and relate to the culture and characteristics of the people involved.

Participatory processes in CoMT are the actions taken in music therapy that reflect and support a participatory approach to practice. In *Invitation to Community Music Therapy*, Brynjulf Stige and Leif Edvard Aarø (2012) propose a useful and comprehensive model of participatory processes (p208). Using a matrix design, the authors break down the different aspects of participatory practice into six distinct processes. Although I do not elaborate on each of these processes in this discussion, this model is an important contribution that visually represents the interconnected and multifaceted nature of participatory practice in CoMT.

This model is particularly relevant to this discussion because it helps to articulate the relationship between participatory practice and collaboration. It represents participatory practice as a dynamic web of processes that interrelate flexibly with one another. In it, Stige and Aarø explore and map the different processes that make up participatory practice in music therapy. By contrast, in this thesis I have explored the way in which music therapists engage and negotiate with communities to make those interconnected participatory processes happen.

I propose that collaboration is a concept that underpins participatory practice. In essence, where participatory practice refers to the processes undertaken to work together with communities in CoMT projects, collaboration refers to the interpersonal interaction between music therapists and community players through which these processes are negotiated. This notion of collaboration as an interpersonal interaction was a key finding that emerged from the comparative analysis of collaboration in this study, visually represented in Figure 10 (p175).

Collaboration as ‘working together’. The description offered above identifies collaboration as the way we negotiate the interpersonal process of

‘working together’ in participatory music projects. The broad notion of collaboration as ‘working together’ is indicative of the general way the term ‘collaboration’ has been used in the music therapy literature. Some significant examples of the way this is represented in the CoMT literature are outlined below.

In his timely theoretical exploration *‘On a notion of participation in music therapy’*, Stige (2006) argues convincingly that participation in music therapy is more complex than just attending and being involved in a music therapy session. He proposes that participation is in fact a relational act that occurs between participants, artefacts and the environment that comprise the cultural context in which music therapy occurs. Stige describes this relational understanding as “participation as collaborative activity” (p133). Here, he uses collaboration as a descriptor for a particular way of participating in music therapy that emphasises working together with participants.

Mercédès Pavlicevic and Gary Ansdell (2009) employ the term ‘collaborative’ similarly when presenting their theory of ‘collaborative musicing’. They propose ‘collaborative musicing’ as an adaptation of the well-recognised concept of ‘communicative musicality’, proposed by Steven Malloch and Colwyn Trevarthen (2000, 2009). Communicative musicality is proposed as an innate human predisposition to communicate through ‘musical’ interpersonal vocal interaction (2009). In ‘collaborative musicing’, Pavlicevic and Ansdell apply a CoMT lens to this idea and consider the way communicative musicality translates to the social arena of community. In the context of this theoretical discussion, they use the term ‘collaborative’ to describe moments of musicking characterised by unification, when all participants are communally engaging ‘as one’. This represents another very different way of understanding how participants may work or come together in the music.

In both of these examples, authors offer an understanding of collaboration as ‘working together’ where the meaning of collaboration is contextually framed by the theoretical concept it is attached to. Working together in relation to participation is interpreted quite differently to working together in relation to communicative musicality. However, the overriding understanding of collaboration as ‘working together’ provides an important and useful ‘common

denominator' between the ways the term 'collaboration' is currently employed in theoretical discourse in music therapy.

There is nothing wrong with having this broad understanding of collaboration, whereby functional meaning is derived from the context in which it is used. However, this way of understanding collaboration has limitations. It confines collaboration in music therapy to the role of 'descriptor', precluding a more nuanced exploration of what collaboration actually involves. I propose that while collaboration does encompass working together, this level of conceptualisation is not always sufficient. What matters in collaboration is how we negotiate that process of working together.

The tendency in music therapy to use collaboration as an adjective to describe practice, rather than as a practice in and of itself, has limited the depth of exploration into what collaboration in music therapy looks like. This in turn has limited the understanding of the potential of collaboration in music therapy, and therapists' capacity to harness that potential in their work. I believe there is a horizon of potential we have still not yet fully broached in music therapy where collaborative is more than a nuanced descriptor for other concepts.

The music projects in this study taught me that collaboration can be understood as a practice in and of itself. It is a practice that is open and supported, but does not necessarily have a fixed 'outcome' in mind; a practice that instead engages participants on a journey that they help create, to come to an end point that is relevant to their particular context. This notion of collaboration as a practice in its own right is a key learning from this study that I expand upon in depth later in this discussion (see p221).

Building on what is Known About What Collaborating Means for People

At a fundamental level, collaboration is founded on a deep commitment to actively seeking and valuing people's voices in the music therapy process. The participatory emphasis in CoMT highlights that the voice of participants is a fundamental quality of practice. However, even beyond CoMT there are strong and inspiring examples of this commitment to participants' voices across the

music therapy literature. These examples span in an array of music therapy settings and represent many different approaches to practice.

Diane Austin's (2002) descriptions of psychodynamic voice work are strongly grounded in a desire to support people to process challenging life experiences through the personal exploration of their authentic voice. Randi Rolvsjord's (2010) descriptions of her resource-oriented music therapy work in mental health care focus on the strengths and priorities that patients bring to the therapy process, in the often pathology-based context of mental health care. Grace Thompson's work in family-centred care with children with autism (Thompson, 2012) is ground-breaking in recognising the importance of parents, not just as active participants in music therapy with their children, but as experts by experience whose voices can and should help to shape music therapy goals and evaluation.

Moving beyond the importance of participants' voices *within* the music therapy process, some examples from the music therapy literature emphasise the need to represent people's voices in their wider communities. In *Culture-Centred Music Therapy* (2002), Brynjulf Stige describes how an intellectually disabled man's desire to play with the local band profoundly shaped his understanding of how music therapy could be used to represent people's voices in the communities where they live. Cathy Warner (2005) demonstrates inspiring commitment to the voices of adults with intellectual disabilities in her music therapy action research project collaborating with this population. In spite of significant barriers to communication, Warner's work challenged existing institutional assumptions about the capacity of people with intellectual disabilities to contribute to research.

These are just some important examples of how music therapists prioritise participants' voices in their practice, chosen for their diverse range of perspectives and their inspiring contribution. These examples demonstrate that the idea that people's voices need to be heard is pervasive in music therapy practice. This commitment to the value of people's voices in music therapy is grounded in the belief that it is empowering for participants to explore their voice and have it heard and respected.

This was certainly the experience described by the young people in this study, who identified being seen and heard as a particularly meaningful aspect of their experience in the music projects (see p153). I see collaboration as fundamental to supporting people to share their voice in music therapy, because it is through engaging collaboratively with participants that we can explore their voices *with* them, rather than representing their voices *for* them. It is therein that the potential for empowerment lies.

Empowerment and collaboration. The term ‘collaboration’ is prominent in discussions and case studies of empowerment in music therapy and there is general recognition that empowerment is fostered through collaborative process with music therapy participants. Interestingly however, with the exception of Rolvsjord’s detailed contribution (Rolvsjord, 2010) outlined earlier in this chapter, these discussions generally offer only a very limited explanation of what is meant by collaboration and how that collaboration is achieved. This gives the impression that collaboration is easy and straightforward to accomplish in music therapy work, which I believe misrepresents the complexity involved when collaborating with music therapy participants, who are often vulnerable and complicated people.

Discourse on empowerment in music therapy has tended to emphasise two different aspects. The influential work of Rolvsjord (2006, 2010) and Procter (2001, 2004) in the area of mental health has focused on the potential for music therapy to promote people’s power over their own health and wellbeing. In the CoMT and feminist discourses in music therapy, more emphasis has been placed on the potential for music therapy to promote citizen power for social action (Stige & Aarø, 2012; Hadley, 2006; Veltre & Hadley, 2012).

These two different foci are interrelated; representing different ways empowerment can be framed in response to varied music therapy contexts and perspectives. Though targeted at different levels, from the individual through to the broad societal level, music therapy programs with an empowerment focus are grounded in a common belief that fostering people’s power in the process of musicking can promote increased health and wellbeing for participants. The exciting potential of music projects with a health promotion focus to empower

participants and their communities at a number of different levels has prompted me to employ the term 'positive growth' to describe the purpose of music therapy collaborations such as those in this study.

The positive growth potential of collaboration. I feel the term positive growth encapsulates the potential for participants to experience positive growth at multiple levels through collaboration in music therapy projects. The notion of positive growth recognises the fact that this growth may take a variety of forms in different communities, depending on the priorities and needs that are negotiated with collaborators in different contexts. In some communities, positive growth may be a process of growing through the opportunity to build on existing strengths, in other communities it may take a social change orientation, growing out of old attitudes or practices into new ones.

This concept of positive growth potential is reflective of Carl Rogers' humanistic perspective that people hold within themselves the potential to grow and develop and that it is the therapist's role to engage with people to foster and support that growth (Rogers, 1980). While Rogers takes an individual, client-focused perspective on this potential for positive growth, Paolo Freire (1972), who has had a strong philosophical influence on this study, expounds a similar perspective in relation to the growth of communities. Freire posits that as people's awareness and understanding of their situation grows, so too does their ability to change and build their community for the better. He sees collaboration as the mechanism to fulfil this potential for positive growth, at both an individual and societal level.

The term 'positive growth' emphasises the value of growth at *both* of these levels as potential positive outcomes of collaboration, in a way that I believe the terms 'empowerment' and 'social change' do not. It is a term that emerged from the learnings of this study. It is reflective of the fact that whilst I recognised the potential for broad social action in the music projects with communities in this study, the young people engaged in this study brought a more individualised focus to our collaboration. This was similar to the experience described by Meagan Hunt (2006) in her action research project with adolescents from refugee backgrounds in the school environment. Hunt found that while the young people

in her study were not interested in engaging with a wider social change agenda in their music sessions, they experienced growth through increased belonging in their music therapy collaboration.

The young people in the current study described positive growth in their music projects through experiences of increased connection with peers, increased self-belief and confidence, and feelings of empowerment (see p157). However, as discovered in Chapter Four of this study, the degree to which players experienced these positive growth outcomes was dependent on the extent to which the design of the music project was compatible with: a) the young people's personal expectations for the project, and b) the cultural and logistical factors that comprised each players' community context. This suggests that it is possible to maximise the potential for positive growth in music projects by recognising and embracing the whole spectrum of potential for growth in music projects – from individual growth through to social action – and negotiating a focus that is relevant and compatible with individual communities.

This critical learning is why collaboration is crucial to fulfilling the positive growth potential of music projects with young people. It is through the process of collaboration that players can communicate their priorities and interests, and the group can establish and negotiate these priorities and interests into a music project structure that is congruent with player's expectations and the context that they are operating in.

Towards a new understanding of collaboration in music therapy. The learnings from the analysis in Chapter Five identified this as an ongoing process that develops and changes throughout the course of a music project. This ongoing process incorporates both the pre-collaboration hangout period and the collaboration period itself, and, as identified in this study, it is not possible to have one without the other. It is through building relationships in the hangout period that an understanding of the possibilities for the project and the passions of different players are shared and shaped into a plan to collaborate. In the subsequent collaboration period, these possibilities and passions are negotiated and developed. This is an ongoing and reflective process that grows and changes over time. In this analysis I identified two different aspects of this process: the

ongoing negotiation of purpose, which relates to the intention of the music project; and the development of expectations and structures, which relates to the practical implementation of the project.

In Chapter Five I developed a structure to represent this process of collaboration (see Fig. 12, p207). This structure offers a new understanding of collaboration in music therapy that is both comprehensive and practical. Based on the learnings from this study, I believe this understanding builds on what is known about collaboration in music therapy. I believe this deeper understanding is necessary if music therapists are to maximise the potential for positive growth that collaboration offers in music therapy practice.

Summarised briefly above, the learnings presented in Chapter Five outline in depth the practical representation of this collaborative process. In this discussion I reflect on the underlying attributes that define this approach to practice. I use the term *collaboration as a positive growth practice* as a useful way to frame this much-needed discussion. This term is based on two critical concepts proposed earlier in this chapter: The unexplored notion of collaboration as a practice in and of itself in music therapy; and positive growth as the purpose of collaboration.

A New Understanding of Collaboration as a Positive Growth Practice

In the previous section of this discussion I compared the learnings from this study with existing understandings of collaboration and related concepts in the music therapy literature, culminating in an overview of the process of collaboration that was developed out of the analysis in this study. This section presents the underlying attributes of this understanding of collaboration, constructed from the learnings that emerged in this research project. These learnings are presented from a music therapist's perspective. I offer this understanding of collaboration as a language and a practical frame of reference for music therapists as they try to take up these ideas in their practice.

Collaboration as a positive growth practice in music therapy is based on the concept that the benefit of collaboration lies in the experiential process of

collaboration itself. In other words, positive growth occurs through the experience of negotiating the direction and sharing responsibility for the music therapy process together as collaborators. This study has been an exploration of collaboration as a positive growth practice in music therapy. The voices of the young people in this study suggest that collaboration in music projects can offer a useful frame for people to deeply explore and experiment with the idea of “*learning how to collaborate, you know, and mediate with different ideas...*”, as described by one young person in this study.

For young people who have very few chances to influence the world around them, such as those marginalised by circumstances beyond their control, the experience of engaging as a collaborator can be simultaneously valuable and potentially intimidating. Music therapists striving for collaboration as a positive growth practice need to be able to support and hold this process. At the same time, music therapy collaborations must be allowed to unfold in an emergent way, as this is where the benefit to participants lies.

The Emergent Nature of Collaboration as a Positive Growth Practice

Collaboration as a positive growth practice in music therapy is an emergent process, meaning that the direction of a project emerges and evolves over time as it progresses. In the music therapy literature, emergent design is represented primarily in research, in a small, yet inspiring group of action research projects in music therapy, outlined in detail in the literature review (Chapter Two, p47). These studies offer profound examples of a commitment to emergent research processes with populations as diverse as children and adolescents in school settings (Hunt, 2006; Rickson, 2010) through to adults with disabilities in community and residential settings (Elefant, 2010a,b Warner, 2005).

Stige & Aarø (2012) propose that music therapists can apply the emergent principles from action research into participatory practices in music therapy. In this discussion I build on this valuable proposition. Drawing on the learnings from this study, I offer a perspective on how emergent design relates to collaboration as a positive growth practice.

At times this emergent process can be necessarily uncertain and chaotic. When striving for collaboration as a positive growth practice, music therapists must trust that the potential for growth lies in this emergent process. In the words of one player, this is a belief in the intrinsic value of ‘going with it’, that *“it’s not something we need to rush through”*. As a music therapist committed to this approach to practice I recognise that even whilst holding that belief, travelling with collaborators through this uncharted experience can be extremely challenging.

Taking an emergent approach to practice. The emergent nature of collaboration as a positive growth practice requires music therapists to be prepared to embark on a collaboration with participants without necessarily knowing in advance the direction that the collaboration will take. This can be daunting in music therapy, where session planning and goal-direction are basic principles of practice (Davis, Gfeller & Thaut, 2006). However, collaborative practice in music therapy does not prevent music therapists from preparing ideas or offering a direction for a music project. It is simply that these ideas serve as possible options or suggestions for the music project, rather than a guide or formula to be followed. As one of the young people in this study described it: *“...you’re like ‘hey what about this or what about that’, instead of ‘do this this this and this’, which is what I’m used to... It was good”*. Music therapists approaching collaboration as a positive growth practice must be prepared and willing to adapt or even completely abandon their ideas in response to the evolving collaborative process.

In this study I prepared for every session that I undertook with the young people, and my music therapy skills and resources emerged as an important aspect of my contribution to the music projects. This was represented both in the young people’s perspective on their experience (Chapter Four) and the analysis of collaborative process in this study (Chapter Five). However, alongside my music skills and resources, flexibility also emerged from the analysis as a key feature of my input to the collaborative process with communities (see p201). While my preparations were important to me so that I felt equipped to offer something to the music projects, they were invariably discarded or adapted in response to

young people's input on the day, and the music projects went in new and often unexpected directions. These new directions added value and depth to each collaborative process that I could not have anticipated in advance.

An example of this occurred with the therapeutic camp group. I arrived on camp ready to undertake a songwriting process with the young people. Having previously spent time 'hanging out' with the group, I had some active and energetic ideas for how to engage them to get the process started. When I arrived on camp I learnt that the main music session would take place on a camp-out with none of the equipment I needed on hand. I had no idea what the camp-out would involve, so I had to wait and see how a music session would work, and trust that we would figure it out as a group as we went – and we did.

We sat around the campfire, the firelight creating an intimate shared space. I pulled out some paper and we started to talk, slowly building our group experience together as our conversation evolved into a lyric-writing process. As one young person described, *"we were all sitting there, and then one by one we all started getting closer and closer and more people joined in and done the whole song and it got us all together."* This shared campfire session evolved in a direction that significantly deepened the overall group songwriting experience in a way I could not have anticipated.

Drawing on therapeutic skills. Collaboration as a positive growth practice draws on the fundamental skill-base of music therapists – the ability to safely support a group process, to allow it to develop organically, and to respond flexibly in the moment. These essential therapeutic skills make music therapists well-placed to support an emergent music collaboration with community participants to evolve safely. Or, as one young person described it, to *"expand something so that it, like, ignites a curiosity to do something or try something new."*

These core skills are common to many music therapy approaches, from psychodynamic models (Hadley, 2003) to improvisational models (Bruscia, 1987; Alvin, 1991; Nordoff & Robbins, 1965), through to Guided Imagery and Music (Bruscia & Grocke, 2002). These skills are also recognised as vital when music therapy moves outside the closed and contained therapy space into the community arena in CoMT. This adds a layer of complexity as music therapy

input is negotiated within and in relation to the unique and varied dynamics of individual community contexts. The complexity of musicking-in-context has been well explored in Stige's (2002) theory of Culture-Centred Music Therapy and the ongoing CoMT discourse (Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2004; Stige et al., 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012).

In spite of the many different ways music therapists interpret and apply these fundamental therapeutic skills in many different approaches to music therapy, they are embedded in practice across the discipline. Similarly, these skills are critical to collaboration as a positive growth practice in music therapy, where they are employed to flexibly hold and contribute to the emerging collaborative process, as described in previous example. It is these fundamental music therapy skills that music therapists can draw on to safely allow an emergent process to evolve.

This is important in collaborative practice in music therapy, where the potential for positive growth exists in the process of flexible ongoing negotiation. Imposing pre-determined structures or directions on this process takes away from the potential for positive growth. In collaboration as a positive growth practice in music therapy, these structures and directions are created together, in collaboration with players. This requires music therapists to relinquish the pre-conceived agendas and expectations that they inevitably bring to music projects.

Relinquishing pre-conceived agendas and expectations. When music therapists engage a community in a music therapy collaboration, they bring with them practice wisdom and an outsider perspective on the community that are extremely valuable. In this study, these were found to be significant aspects of music therapists' contribution to collaborative music projects (see p201). However, in order for these attributes to positively serve a collaboration, they need to be used in a reflexive rather than an anticipatory way.

The practice wisdom and outsider perspective that I brought to the collaborations in this study was based on my previous experiences in music therapy practice and the music therapy literature. In particular, I was informed by music therapy in adolescent health and in CoMT. Interestingly, key contributions to the literature in both of these areas offered quite divergent

opinions on the role of participatory practices such as collaboration in music therapy.

In adolescent health, Katrina McFerran and Meagan Hunt (2008) reflected on a series of three music therapy programs with young people experiencing bereavement and migration. The authors argued for the value of a participatory approach to music therapy in adolescent health to allow young people to have opportunities for control and freedom. However, in spite of active encouragement, the young people in these programs rejected opportunities to reflect on broader social implications of their musicking. McFerran and Hunt suggested that adolescence is an inherently self-focused developmental stage, and that it may be unrealistic to bring a social action agenda to collaborations with this population.

In contrast, some influential CoMT contributions to the literature have argued that it is the responsibility of music therapy programs to strive for social change. Brynjulf Stige has been a strong champion of this perspective in his theoretical contributions to CoMT (Stige, 2003, 2004, 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012), and the notion of music therapy for social change is increasingly prevalent in examples of CoMT practice, as outlined in the literature review of this thesis (Chapter Two). Simon Procter (2004) sums up this political perspective on music therapy beautifully in his call for client-centred CoMT practice in mental health care, when he states: 'Music therapy – like all other forms of musicking – is a political act. To deny this is simply to side with the powerful' (p214).

Both of these perspectives offer convincing standpoints on the potential of collaboration in music therapy. The CoMT literature has recognised the moral imperative of music therapy to act as a mechanism for action towards social change, while the adolescent health literature has recognised that young people may not be developmentally prepared to engage in social action through music therapy. In light of these varied perspectives, I adopted a 'wait and see' attitude to collaboration in this study. I endeavoured to be informed of the pre-existing music therapy literature, but not use it to limit or direct the focus of the music projects with participating communities.

In doing so, I made a commitment to collaboration as an emergent process, and attempted to consciously avoid anticipating in advance the direction of the

music projects with participating communities. One young person described her experience of this approach by saying: *"I had my own opinions towards it, and I could make my own decisions, it wasn't like you turned around and pressured us into doing anything. Like, if you said 'hey let's do this' and I said 'no', you wouldn't have cared, you would have said 'alright then we'll work on something else'"*. This quote demonstrates that the 'wait and see' approach to collaboration in this study did not prevent me from suggesting ideas in the music projects, but that players' opinions and decisions about those ideas was invited and accepted.

I draw on an example from the drop-in group to describe this. The collaboration with the drop-in group began with a community performance. The young people from in the band performed a cover of a popular song at a friendly community concert for the residents of the housing estate. Building on their early participation, the positive experience they had in this performance precipitated the young people to continue in their band as collaborative players.

We began this collaboration by writing an original song about their group identity, with the possibility of performing it at a much larger community festival attended by thousands of people from the surrounding community. Although the possibility of such a large audience was intimidating for the young people, the lyrics of their song suggested that they wanted to share the message from their work: 'We want to show the world how good we are, it starts here and never ends, we're going far'.

When the topic of performing at the festival was again raised with the band, band members were reluctant. However, they had acknowledged to me that my role in the project was to *"keep them moving in a direction"*. Given the clear message in their song lyrics I decided not abandon the idea of performing in the festival straight away, encouraging the band to continue rehearsing for it together. To me, the festival represented a way for the young people to live the words of their song.

However, as the festival approached it became increasingly difficult to energise the young people to leave their computers and come to practice. As one of the young people stated: *"We weren't comfortable enough to, like, get up at (the festival) to perform it coz there was like, too many people"*. So, we re-negotiated the direction of the project and decided to work towards a recording instead,

which was a goal more aligned with the way the band members were engaging with the project at this stage.

This experience in the collaboration demonstrates the way the young people from the drop-in group negotiated their limits. They ultimately did express a desire to engage in action in the wider community, and had a prior positive experience of performance to draw on. However, in collaboration with me they identified their boundaries and we renegotiated the direction of the project as a result. In this project, I prioritised this opportunity to collaboratively negotiate limits and boundaries over the potential value of public performance.

Collaboration as a positive growth practice is about not assuming too much or too little of collaborators in music therapy; in fact, it's about not assuming at all. It is about transcending pre-existing agendas and expectations of what a music project should be for, and engaging in the process of negotiating expectations and boundaries together with players. The learnings from this study indicate that the greatest potential for positive growth lies in music projects that are congruent with the expectations of players and their community context (see p158). Bringing pre-conceptions of what players will be interested in or capable of 'handling', or overlaying the process with broad ideological expectations, can be barriers to achieving this congruence. And in the process, they can take power away from collaborators.

Sharing power. Sharing power emerged as a key attribute of collaboration as a positive growth practice. Comparative analysis of the music projects in this study identified that in collaboration, the aim is to share power with players in order to foster mutual responsibility and ownership over the music therapy process. This was reflected in the detailed construct of collaborative process generated out of the comparative analysis of the music projects in this study (see Fig. 12, p 207). The interpersonal emphasis in this construct acknowledged and prioritised the notion that both music therapists and communities contribute to collaboration; that collaboration is based on the shared power of all players to input and impact on the interactions that comprise collaboration.

While sharing power is a driving attribute of collaboration as a positive growth practice, it is not unique to this approach. Shared power is emphasised in several contemporary theoretical perspectives in music therapy, most prominently in the participatory focus in CoMT theory (Stige et al., 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2012), and the underlying client-centred approach of Resource-Oriented Music Therapy (Rolvjord, 2010). Examples from music therapy practice and research demonstrate the different ways music therapists strive to share power in their practice.

Sue Baines (2003, 2010) demonstrates an enduring commitment to sharing power in her community-based mental health work, where participants engage not only in influencing the structure of sessions but in designing and implementing the evaluation of the program. In an example from research, Cochavit Elephant (2010a,b) describes how action research was employed as a way to share power with the members of two community choirs for people with physical disabilities. Elephant was engaged as a researcher by the choir leader with the express intention of supporting a process whereby choir members could contribute to deciding the program's future direction.

Sharing power specifically with well young people engaged in music therapy for socio-emotional support is also explored in the music therapy literature. Notable examples from Australian music therapy practice and research are Katrina McFerran and Kate Teggelove's (2011) work with traumatised young people in response to the Black Saturday Bushfires, and Meagan Hunt's (2006) action research project with young people from refugee backgrounds. Both of these programs emphasise sharing power through a sincere commitment to honouring young people's music-making preferences within music therapy sessions.

This exemplary selection from the literature describes music therapists' different interpretations of how to share decision-making power with participants in their practice. Alan Turry (2005) offers an interesting and realistic description of moving towards a collaborative dynamic in individual music therapy with a patient with cancer. The challenge and conflict Turry experienced in negotiating and understanding his own role when shifting to a shared power dynamic is evident in his descriptions of this process. Turry's (2005) frank

account of his experience offers also helpful insight into the fact that while sharing power in music therapy is recognised as valuable throughout the music therapy literature, it is by no means an easy process.

Indeed, while ostensibly a simple concept, the complexity entailed in sharing power in music therapy collaborations is represented in the intricacy of the structure of collaborative process generated in this study (Fig. 12, p207). And just as it can be challenging for music therapists to feel comfortable 'losing' overall control over the music therapy process, it can be equally intimidating for participants to take mutual responsibility and ownership of their music experience. For this reason, the term 'sharing' is critical to a collaborative understanding of power.

Sharing power, not handing it over. Sharing power is about developing a mutually empowering dynamic through which collaboration can evolve. I believe there is sometimes the misconception that in order for collaborators to feel empowered, music therapists must 'give the power over' to them. This not only disempowers the music therapist, it can be very daunting for collaborators, leaving them disempowered by a lack of input and support. In all three communities in this study, the young people at times required ideas, suggestions and direction from me to help them formulate their own ideas and share in decision-making about our work.

For example, in the drop-in group, the young people described needing me to keep them 'on track'. As one player put it: *"you keep us in line and make sure we were heading towards a direction"*. In contrast, for the young people from the share home I brought new ideas to work on and was someone they could try out those ideas with *"...you gave me different things that we could work on, like a list of different things that we could do, and I've actually been able to do it with someone else"*. In the analysis of young people's voices in Chapter Four, the young people in these groups identified this input as a meaningful element of their experience of collaboration in this study (see p136).

These examples represent the way sharing power in collaboration can incorporate different input from different players, towards fostering a mutually empowered dynamic between collaborators. They also demonstrate how a music

therapist's contribution to sharing power looks different in different contexts. In this study, this was negotiated in relation to the focus of the projects in different communities and in light of the existing power dynamics in each community.

Sharing power and the role of activism. Earlier this discussion I emphasised the need for music therapists to let go of pre-existing expectations and agendas when striving for collaboration. Yet here I state that to share power with players, music therapists must be willing to contribute their skills and perspectives when sharing power with players in collaboration. The subtle distinction between these concepts is critical. It is the difference between offering a perspective and bringing an agenda to the collaboration.

In this study, this was demonstrated in the way I adopted a social change orientation, rather than bringing a social change agenda to the music projects, as described in Chapter One (p14). Drawing on a related concept from the music therapy literature, this distinction represents the notion of approaching music therapy as an un-oppressive practice, rather than as an anti-oppressive practice, as advocated by Sue Baines (2013) and Jeff Smith (2012a). The distinction represents an example of the different underlying priorities that can inform CoMT practice, and are indicative of the different ways 'activism' is interpreted in CoMT practice.

Activism is a key quality of CoMT projects, and refers to 'the fact that people's problems are related to limitations in society' and 'involves willingness to act in relation to this' (Stige & Aaro, 2012, p23). Some important approaches to activism in CoMT, such as anti-oppressive practice, appear to prioritise representation and advocacy. In collaboration as a positive growth practice, the notion of activism is interpreted in a way that prioritises sharing power with players. I believe this represents a difference between a focus on activism *for* people and a focus on activism *with* people. Both of these approaches are highly relevant in music therapy at different times, however, when emphasising collaboration for positive growth in music therapy, I believe sharing the power to act *with* players is essential.

A mutual ability to impact. In order for sharing power to have meaning in a music therapy collaboration, all players must have the ability to impact on the

music project. This mutual ability to impact has emerged from this study as an important priority on which collaboration as a positive growth practice is based. To explore the concept of a mutual ability to impact on collaboration, I draw on an example of sharing power from the music project with the young people from the share home.

Two young people from the share home were working together with me on a songwriting project one Thursday evening. After working for around an hour and a half, the young people spontaneously proposed that they would like to perform the song at a share home community event in only four days time. While I was impressed by their enthusiasm and interest, at the same time, my instinct was that the idea was entirely unrealistic at such short notice. We had not yet finished the song and there would be no time to meet again to practice before the day of the event. Not only that, I did not know the people in charge of the event, so could not provide any support to the young people in terms of getting permission and organising the logistics of the performance.

However, this was a collaboration, and the young people had voiced an idea about the direction they would like their music project to take. So rather than categorically dismissing it as infeasible, we discussed it. I explained my hesitations, and we made a realistic plan to approach the idea. I explained that I would be glad to perform with them, but in the short time frame I could provide only limited practical support in preparation. If the young people wanted to perform they would need to arrange permission and organise the performance themselves. We considered what that would entail and made a plan. We also discussed the fact that it may be too late notice for the event organisers. That evening we worked late finalising the song and developing a recording for them to use for rehearsals in case our plans for the performance were successful.

I left the share home encouraged by the young people's enthusiasm. However, experience had taught me that young people's enthusiasm for an idea was not always matched by their interest in taking the action required to make it happen. So I suspended my expectations and waited to see if the young people followed through with our plan. The following day I was impressed (and admittedly somewhat surprised) to receive a phone call from the young people. They informed me that they had organised permission for the performance. They

outlined the arrangements and gave me instructions for my role on the day. Their organisation and their motivation to pursue the performance were inspiring.

The performance itself turned out to be an extremely significant aspect of the music project for the young people in this community. As one of the young people described it: *“it was like, even though I felt very overwhelmed, I feel like I’ve actually achieved something, you know... it was really great”*. Had I followed my own instincts and discouraged this idea due to short notice, or similarly if the young people had not followed through on our plans, this very important part of the share home music project would not have occurred.

When taking a collaborative approach to music therapy practice, players need the chance to experience genuine opportunities to make substantive contributions to their music project. This mutual capacity of all players to genuinely influence the music process constitutes the sharing of power that is crucial to developing a mutually empowered dynamic upon which to build collaboration. The emphasis in this statement is on the word ‘genuinely’.

Avoiding tokenism. It may seem that the opposite of being able to genuinely impact collaboration is a music project where participants have no chance to influence the program, however this is not the case. While such a project may not actively promote empowerment, it will also not actively disempower participants. Instead, the opposite of this concept is when a tokenistic attempt is made to enlist participant’s ideas and feedback, where there is no real intention or effort made to incorporate or consider their input. This experience can indicate to players that their contributions do not hold any real weight or power. Not only is this a potential barrier to collaboration in a music project, it is potentially disempowering for participants and serves to perpetuate existing power imbalances in the interpersonal dynamic.

Drawing on the example above, if, when the young people from the share home and I discussed the possibility of having a performance, I had used the discussion as a way to outline my hesitations and convince them to abandon their idea, this would have been manipulation rather than collaboration. Instead, I raised my concerns and we considered them, and based on the young people’s opinions and commitment we decided it was worth trying anyway. This does not mean that my opinion was disregarded, but that it held similar weight to the

young people's opinions. In our discussion we considered the merits of both perspectives and found a way forward that took into account the different considerations raised by all players.

As I stated in the introduction to this chapter, collaboration is not necessarily a benign and non-threatening process. Attempts to engage players in collaboration have the potential to perpetuate power imbalances as well as promote empowerment. Subsequently there is responsibility in asking people to collaborate in a music project, and music therapists striving for collaboration must ensure that when they invite community players' input they are in a position to take that input seriously.

This does not necessarily mean actioning every suggestion made by participants, but rather, sharing in a dialogue that values and genuinely takes into consideration the contributions of all players. Or, in the simple but effective words of one young person: *"listening to other people's ideas"*. The structure of collaborative process (Fig. 12, p207) developed in this study offers a detailed picture of this mutual dialogue, characterised into three ongoing interactions between music therapist and participants. This notion of a mutual dialogue in collaboration is congruent with Randi Rolvsjord's stance from Resource-Oriented Music Therapy (2010), where she too places strong emphasis the value and importance of the both participants' and the music therapist's contribution to collaboration.

While interpreted differently across the discipline, participants' ability to share power and impact on their music experience is generally recognised as important in music therapy practice with a health promotion and empowerment orientation. This is represented in the examples from the literature throughout this section of the discussion. Significantly less explored in music therapy theory, yet equally important to collaboration as a positive growth practice, is the notion of taking mutual responsibility for the music project.

Mutual Responsibility

It may be possible for young people to be active and interested participants in music therapy without necessarily being invested in the outcome of their input. However, it is not possible for young people to be collaborators if

they don't care – about what the music project is for, about how it is going, about why they got involved. Collaboration in a music project requires a dynamic wherein all participants share responsibility and ownership of the music project. Throughout this discussion I have built the argument that taking on and negotiating responsibility for a music project offers players the potential for positive growth. In collaborative music projects it is therefore counter-productive to protect or 'save' players from the responsibility of being a collaborator, because therein lies the potential power of collaboration.

This requires music therapists to relinquish some control over the music project in order to allow players to take mutual responsibility. Instead of creating preventative structures and safeties to protect against risks or challenges, music therapists must work alongside players to negotiate any risks and challenges together as the music project unfolds. Whilst this may be common practice in some music therapy practice, it has not been explicitly discussed in the literature to date.

I believe that taking mutual responsibility for a collaborative music project can offer players important, supported opportunities to explore and negotiate risk. In the secluded clinical setting of psychodynamic practice, music therapy has long been recognised as a forum to do this (Hadley, 2003; Priestley, 1994). Applying an ecological CoMT perspective to this idea, I propose that engaging in collaboration as a positive growth practice gives players a chance to explore and negotiate risk outside of the closed therapy environment, within the context that they live and in interaction with their real-life community.

Personal investment. In order to take mutual responsibility for their music project, collaborators must be not only able, but also *willing*, to do so. A milieu of shared power creates the conditions in a music project that enable collaboration to be possible. However, in order for it to actually occur, people must be personally invested in the process, rather than being happy to simply participate in whatever is offered to them.

This is reminiscent of the concept of the therapeutic alliance in psychodynamic therapy. The therapeutic alliance is an established principle from clinical psychology that recognises that client outcomes are improved when they

are engaged in and committed to developing and negotiating the therapy process (Duncan, Miller & Sparks, 2004). This concept of is well-established in psychodynamic music therapy practice, and has been used to frame discussions of the client's role in interpersonal interactions in clinical music therapy settings (Hadley, 2003).

Outside of the music therapy room in the CoMT arena, this notion that players must be invested in the process in order for collaboration to occur remains relatively unrecognised and unarticulated in the CoMT discourse. This is particularly noteworthy given the participatory orientation of CoMT and the prevalent reference to 'collaboration' in the CoMT literature. It suggests an assumed belief that people's choice to participate in CoMT projects makes them automatically open to engaging in collaboration. However, is it reasonable to assume this of all CoMT participants? The learnings from this study suggest that it is not.

The music project with the drop-in group offers a useful example. Many young people attended the drop-in group and all were welcomed into the music group. All of these young people showed an interest in participating in music at different times, trying out the different instruments, asking for help and bringing their friends to play. However, of approximately 15 young people who participated intermittently in the music group, only four expressed an interest in investing in the band as ongoing collaborators and making decisions about how it would evolve.

Investing in collaboration is a choice. It is not possible to collaborate with people unless they choose to become a collaborator. While this may seem obvious, there is a general lack of recognition of the power that participants hold in collaboration in the music therapy literature. I believe it is critical for music therapists striving for collaboration to recognise and engage with people's power to choose. This is particularly important given that potential collaborators in music therapy are often vulnerable and complex people who may need support and encouragement to foster the personal motivation to collaborate.

One of the young people from this study described her experience of investing in the music project by stating: *"I was more into doing (music) this time around because I wasn't being forced to do it, it was something that I was deciding*

to do myself". This simple concept of personal investment is one of the key learnings from this study. In order to benefit from the positive growth potential of collaboration in music therapy, people need to invest as collaborators in the process. In this study, I have termed this investment 'being a player'.

Being a Player

'Being a player' refers to the important, yet rarely acknowledged, contribution that music therapy participants make to collaboration as a positive growth practice in music therapy. The analyses in this study highlighted not only the fundamental importance of this contribution, but the ongoing and complex nature of investing in collaboration as a player. In this remainder of this chapter I discuss what this study revealed about what being a player involves for collaborators in music therapy.

To date, the players' perspective on collaboration has been neglected in the discourse on collaboration in music therapy. In this discussion I aim to start this conversation. My contribution to this conversation is based on learnings from the collaborations with young people and their supporting communities in this study. Future directions for this conversation are suggested throughout this section.

This is proposed as a practical perspective on 'collaboration as a positive growth practice' from the perspective of community players. I offer this understanding of player's role in collaboration in a way that may be articulated for potential music therapy collaborators. It is proposed as a process of:

1. *Buying in* to collaboration,
2. *Playing through* the collaboration, and
3. *Sounding out* the collaboration.

'Buying in' to Collaboration

Buying in is the point in a participatory music project where community participants make the choice to become collaborators in the process. As stated in the previous section, by choosing to buy in, participants are expressing an interest in influencing the overall purpose or direction of a music project, rather than simply having an interest in taking part. This is the point in a participatory music

project where people go from being participants in a music project, to being players in a collaboration.

The power to buy in lies with players themselves. However, an awareness that this is an essential component of collaboration as a positive growth practice can help music therapists ensure that they have provided adequate support, opportunity and information for players to buy in to the process. Given the marginalised and often disempowered people that who participate in music therapy, the option to become a collaborator may be an unfamiliar and perhaps even daunting notion. It is therefore the music therapist's responsibility to present the opportunity to buy in in a way that is accessible to participants.

Hanging out to support buy-in. The time taken during the hangout period cannot be underestimated in supporting buy-in. It is through building relationships in the hangout period that players develop the personal motivation to buy in to the music project. It is also through these relationships that music therapists learn how to best support buy-in in each unique community.

A critical learning about the hangout period that emerged from the analysis in this study is the notion that a music therapists' role sometimes involves engaging in activities that are not music-based (see p169). In the case of this study, it was sometimes my job to have a cup of tea or kick the football with players, or even on one special occasion on therapeutic camp, to go swimming with the dolphins. This learning does not suggest that extra-musical activities can replace musical interaction, but that they are also an embedded part of the music therapy process. I believe this is a significant learning because it is my opinion that often music therapists don't feel that they are 'doing their job' unless they are actively making music with people. Indeed extra-musical aspects of music therapy practice are rarely alluded to in the music therapy literature, however four notable examples are outlined below.

Sue Baines and Graeme Danko (2010) described the role of the music therapist in community-based psychosocial rehabilitation in mental health care as that of a "healthy role model" (p189). The authors stated that as a healthy role model in this context, music therapists routinely undertook extra-musical actions in addition to musicking to promote participants' good health. In the

international development arena, Katrina McFerran and I proposed that time spent drinking cups of tea with community members was a critical to the development of culturally-appropriate and sustainable music programs in rural Bangladesh (Bolger & McFerran, 2013).

In two examples of work in supported education settings highlights the value of this approach with marginalised young people. Phillippa Derrington (2012) described how time spent ‘hanging out’ with students was a fundamental aspect of her music therapy work supporting students with complex emotional and behavioral difficulties. In this example, spending extra-curricular time with students was not only understood to be part of her role as a music therapist, it was an embedded aspect of the school environment and culture.

Steve Cobbett (2009) also advocated for the music therapists’ role more broadly than musicking interactions in supported education settings, framing his rationale for this approach around the notion of safety. He posited that extra-musical activities, such as playing football or browsing the Internet, could build the rapport necessary for young people to feel safe to come to music therapy. He further argued that music therapy could sometimes provide a safe and supported environment for young people to undertake challenging extra-musical tasks, such as filling out a college application.

Though framed differently for different contexts, each of these examples articulated the relevance of extra-musical activities in adjunct to musicking in music therapy. Considering this idea in relation to collaboration as a positive growth practice, I propose that both musical and extra-musical moments are crucial to relationship building and shared understanding. They serve not only to inform music therapists’ understanding of how to support players’ buy-in to the collaborative process, but also to inform players’ understanding of who they are buying in to a collaboration with. Referring back to the structure of collaborative process developed in Chapter Five (Fig. 12, p207), it is the moment when players buy in to collaboration that the music project shifts from the hangout period to the collaboration period.

Different ways of supporting buy-in. Learnings from this study suggest that supporting players to buy in may take a variety of forms. It may relate to the

nature of what we ask people to buy in to. For example, with the therapeutic camp group, the young people were offered the choice to buy in to a very tangible songwriting process. In contrast, with the share home group, the form of the music project was left up to them, and I asked them to buy in to the opportunity to develop that together. These decisions were informed by the relationships we had developed in the hangout period, which indicated what scope of collaboration would best support different groups of young people to buy in.

Buy-in may also be supported using some kind of contract or written agreement. As a research project, all of the young people who bought in to the study were asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix 3). This was in addition to the consent form that was signed by parents and guardians (see Appendix 4). The young people's consent form was another tangible way for me to invite them to buy in to the project, and was an opportunity to discuss what it would mean to be a player in the music project.

All of the young people in this study could talk and were English speakers, and this informed the way I invited these players to buy in. However, it does not necessarily follow that buying in must be a verbal process. It was beyond the focus of this study to explore approaches to supporting buy-in with groups of potential players who are non-verbal. However, the inspirational work of Cathy Warner (2005) offers an in-depth exploration of the ethical and practical considerations of engaging in a mutual collaboration with adults with severe learning disabilities. She advocates strongly for her collaborator's capacity and right to be independent decision-makers in the music therapy process, and the findings from her participatory action research project support this position. Although decision-making in that context was idiosyncratic and non-verbal, Warner's approach and commitment to participant buy-in in this study was similar.

Music and 'buying in'. Reflecting on the collaborations in this study, music played an extremely important role in the young people's experience of 'buying in'. Deciding to become players in a collaboration was a relatively abstract notion for the young people in this study. Making the transition was a shift for the young people, from participating in music with me, to working with

me to decide what their music project would look like. It was through our musicking interactions that the young people had the opportunity to experience that shift. Through musicking, they had the chance to buy in to the music project in a tangible, experiential way. In the following example from the drop-in group, I describe how one of the young men in this group musically bought in to the collaboration, and the support I provided to promote this process.

When the young people from the drop-in group decided to work together with me to form a band, Billy wanted to be the drummer. Like all of the other young people in the band, Billy bought in to the process, offering his opinions and ideas about the band's future direction in our band meeting. However, it was when we sat down to play at the next rehearsal that Billy experienced what it meant to collaborate as the drummer in a band, and got a practical understanding of what he was buying into.

Billy sat behind the drum kit and began to play. Loudly. He played as hard as he could, drowning out his fellow band members without appearing to realise they could not be heard over his drumming. Watching him play, I wondered if Billy knew what he had actually bought into by becoming a band member. Had he bought into the idea of being in a band, or had he purely bought into the idea of playing the drums?

Recognising that the other band members could not hear themselves play, mid-way through the rehearsal I asked the band what they thought about the balance of the sound, and if everyone could hear each other. We discussed how being in a band was about listening to one another and how hard that was when you're trying to play at the same time. We tried playing together, and everyone took turns to be the 'loud' one. Gradually, Billy's playing softened somewhat as he began to try and hear what the others were playing.

'Playing Through' the Collaboration

Buying in to the collaborative process is the first stage of each player's investment in a music therapy collaboration. The second stage of this investment is the way players negotiate their ongoing commitment to the music project after their initial choice to buy in. I have labelled this ongoing negotiation 'playing

through' the collaboration. Where buying in to a collaboration is a choice made by players at a single time point, playing through a collaboration is the way players enact their investment in the collaboration over time.

Playing through a collaboration relates to the way each individual chooses to participate in the music project. Based on the collaborations in this study, I propose that this is reflected in the role players take in the collaborative process. Each player's role is an individual choice, but, as part of a group of collaborators, this individual choice is influenced in an ongoing way by the collaborative negotiation between players. In that sense, the way each player chooses to enact their role in the collaboration is developed over time in dialogue with the way all other players are choosing to playing out their roles.

Reflecting on the players in this study, the roles the young people chose to play were not static. Like the collaborative process itself, they evolved and changed over time as each young person played out their collaboration in dialogue with the rest of the group. To demonstrate this, I draw on an example of one player from the therapeutic camp group.

The music project on camp was a songwriting activity chosen to explore and celebrate the camp and what it meant to everyone involved. The target audience for the project were the players themselves, the young people and staff involved in the program. Alastair was one of the older and quieter boys on camp, often more likely to sit and observe than actively participate in activities that didn't involve physical activity. At our initial firelight lyric-writing session, Al sat by the campfire, watching and listening as others got involved, sitting with us while we worked. He offered his opinion when I directly asked him what he thought, but didn't volunteer any ideas.

At the end of the week when we sat down record, Al came along to the group but told me outright that he was just going to listen. I told him that of course this was fine, he was free to choose his role in our collaboration. On our third take of the recording, just before the song started, Al called out a birdcall. It was a funny and spontaneous addition, and in the final edit I made sure it was included at the start of the song. When we gathered together to hear the recording later that night, Al was pleased (and perhaps even a little proud) to

hear his call on the track. He asked me to play the song twice, pointing out his birdcall to others and joking with them about it.

Although the songwriting project was originally intended just for therapeutic camp participants, the members of the group decided they'd like to perform it for their family, friends, carers and out-of-home care workers at an end-of-year event. They wanted to use the song to show the wider community what the camp meant to them. They organised some rehearsals to practice their parts. At one such rehearsal, one of the solo rap artists wasn't there. Someone needed to fill in. So, as one of the older young leaders, Al impressed (and surprised) everyone by stepping up and rapping in his place, in front of everyone!

Like Al, all of the young people played out their part in the collaboration differently throughout their involvement in the music project. But on the night of the performance, dressed in their best clothes, they all stood up together and sang their song for the community. Al stood at the back of the group, out of the spotlight. And from that spot at the back of the group he joined in with his fellow players and sang every line.

In this example, the way Alastair played out his part in the collaboration changed and developed over time. His role in the music project evolved from observer to leader to performer at different points in the process. Storsve, Westby and Ruud (2010) offer a valuable perspective on the changing nature of young people's participation in music projects, based on their work with Palestinian refugee young people. The authors identify that different young people in their community music program choose different trajectories of participation. They propose that these trajectories of participation represent different degrees of participation and that young people on different trajectories contribute different things to the music project. This corresponds to the way the young people played out their roles in the collaborations in this study.

Storsve, Westby and Ruud (2010) draw on Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning to frame this observation. Wenger proposes that learning occurs in 'communities of practice' that are "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact

regularly" (<http://www.ewenger.com>). The concept of 'communities of practice' has been applied to CoMT by several authors. As well as Storsve, Westby and Ruud's valuable contribution, Ansdell (2010a,c) also explores how the idea of communities of musical practice relates to his ethnographic exploration of a community mental health singing group in East London. In this project, Ansdell describes how this community uses the practice of music as the basis for building a supportive community dynamic. In this group a shared love of music was what brought community members together. Around this shared music interest, community structures and rituals emerged, such as group rules, social tea breaks and regular performances, further fostering a shared group culture between participants.

In both of these examples from the music therapy literature, the authors use the notion of 'communities of musical practice' to conceptualise CoMT work. They propose that these communities of musical practice offer a social arena through which music therapy participants can negotiate their individual identities and foster a sense of belonging. Similarly, the music projects in this study could also be framed as examples of communities of musical practice, whereby players in the music projects are members of these communities of musical practice.

'Communities of musical practice' is a valuable frame for understanding the way players 'play through' the collaborations in this study. From this perspective, the social and changing nature of players negotiating their roles in the music projects in this study is seen as players negotiating their identity in dialogue with other members of their community of practice. This perspective highlights similarities between the music projects in this study and related examples from the CoMT literature, described above (Ansdell, 2010a,c; Storsve, Westby & Ruud, 2010).

The dialogue of 'playing through' the collaboration. Given the emphasis on collaborative process in this discussion, I am particularly interested in the dialogue between players and how this impacts on the changing way individuals negotiate their role in a music project. Reflections on the negotiation between players in this study indicate that sometimes dialogue is verbal, such as when Alastair told me he had chosen to just listen during the recording session.

But very often in this study, changes in young people's roles in the collaboration were played out in acts of musicking throughout the process.

More than just a forum to act out each player's role in the group, dialogue – verbal or musical – has a deeper and more fundamental significance in collaboration. Dialogue is the mechanism through which the meaning of these actions is created. Drawing on my earlier example, the meaning of Alastair's birdcall during our recording session was negotiated in dialogue with me and the other young people, as Alastair's fellow players in the project. Alastair may have had one of many reasons for calling out his birdcall. He may have wanted to make sure his voice was included on the recording; he may have wanted to disrupt the process; it may have been simply a spontaneous creative act. As another player in the collaborative process, I became part of the dialogue for negotiating the meaning of Al's birdcall when I celebrated it as meaningful contribution by including it in the final recording. Similarly, the young people entered into the dialogue by responding to the birdcall as a clever and funny contribution.

It is helpful for music therapists to be aware of this dialogic meaning-making. As fellow players in a collaboration, music therapists can support young people to 'play through' their role and to explore the possibilities of who they can be and the roles they can play within this collaborative dialogue. It is also important to be aware of this dialogue in order to ensure that all the voices in it are given weight and that no players, including music therapists themselves, inadvertently or otherwise try to unilaterally dictate the way young people play out their roles. Whilst recognising this, the learnings from the analysis of both the collaborative process and the young people's voices in this study identified that, as fellow players, the music therapist's voice also contributes a valuable perspective to the dialogue and should not be suppressed unnecessarily. The aforementioned notions of shared power and mutual responsibility apply here (see p228 and 234).

Underlying principles of 'playing through' a collaboration are: that the meaning of the roles individual young people enact in collaboration are negotiated in ongoing dialogue with other players; and, that these roles are likely to change and develop over time in relation to this ongoing dialogue. I believe that it is in this dialogue that that players are able to engage at an individual level

with the potential for positive growth that is fundamental to collaboration as a positive growth practice.

This positive growth is reflected in the way young people's roles developed and changed as they 'played through' the music projects in this study. While individual positive growth is developed in dialogue as players 'play through' their music projects, I propose that collaboration also offers the potential for positive growth at a collective group level, and in some cases even more widely into the community or societal levels. This relates to negotiating the purpose and scope of the music project, which will be explored further in relation to the concept of 'sounding out' the collaboration.

'Sounding Out' the Collaboration

Collaboration in a music project is about players having a voice. A voice they can find, explore, and share with others as they choose. 'Sounding out' in a collaborative music project is about the way players choose to use their voice to communicate what they have discovered in their music project. This concept emerged in this study through the notion of showing and telling the world, which the young people in this study identified as a meaningful aspect of collaboration in their music projects (p153).

In 'sounding out' their collaboration, players share the voice of the music project with the world. In his ongoing work examining performance in music therapy, Ansdell (2005; 2010d) describes this as "being publically witnessed" (Ansdell, 2010d, p170). This is linked to the overall purpose that has been negotiated for a music project, and the type of positive growth that players are striving towards. This scope of the project impacts on what players want to share, why they want to share it, and who they want to share it with.

For example, if the focus of a collaboration is on the personal learning of the players themselves, then it is quite likely that they may only choose to share their experience with a small number of people. However, at the other end of the spectrum, if the music project has a strong social change agenda, then players may choose to 'sound out' their music project very publicly in order for the voice of the project to be heard widely by the community. Lucy O'Grady (2011) describes a related concept in her research on music performance with women in prisons.

She identified performance as offering a “bridge from the inside to the outside” (O’Grady, 2011, p122). While the prison context offers a more distinct delineation between inside and outside, this notion of a bridge is relevant to the concept of ‘sounding out’ in this study. When players choose to sound out their music projects into the community or the wider world, this experience can create a bridge between players’ collaborative experiences and the broader social context.

Negotiating scope and ‘sounding out’. The scope of a music project is a very important factor in relation to ‘sounding out’ a collaboration. The examples from the three music projects in this study suggest that the overall scope of the music project has the potential to grow and develop over the course of a collaboration, just as individual player’s roles change and develop throughout the collaborative process. Therefore the scope of a music project is not a static decision, but continues to be collaboratively adapted and developed by players in negotiation with one another over the course of a music project.

This was certainly the case in all three music projects in this study, and interestingly, with each of the communities, this change in scope manifested differently. In the drop-in group, the collaboration began with a large community performance, and gradually the scope of the project became smaller and more focused on individual players’ skill development and self-expression as the project continued. The therapeutic camp project began as an internal reflective group exercise, and this expanded outwards to a communication with the wider supporting community. In contrast, in the share-home group the scope of the music project was different for different young people. The example from earlier in this discussion (p232) described two young people who had a wide scope for the music project, whereas other for players in the project had a more personalised focus.

The idea that the scope of a music project can evolve through collaboration is important. It speaks to the positive growth potential of music projects, and represents the fact that this growth has the potential to develop at a number of different levels – at the individual level, the wider community level, and even at a broad societal level. It suggests that even projects that begin with quite a narrow scope can potentially adopt a wider social focus over time, and vice versa.

As a music therapist who is committed to the potential for social action in music collaborations, it is encouraging to learn that there is potential for music projects with communities to develop social change agendas over time, even if that focus is not explicit from the outset of a project. However, I believe it is important to emphasise that there is no 'optimal' direction for changes in the scope of a music project to develop. Bigger scope is not necessarily better in a music project. The analysis of empirical material in this study indicated that the potential for positive growth was maximised in collaborations in this study when the scope and structure of a music project was compatible with player's perceived purpose for the music project (p160).

As the conversation about the potential of music therapy as a social change practice continues to evolve, I believe this learning is critical. It is essential that as this social change potential continues to be explored in music therapy, broad ideological agendas be not imposed onto music projects to the detriment of positive growth opportunities for players engaged in the process. I think this understanding that the scope of a music project can change over time is important for music therapists to have in mind as they support players to find and use their voice in a music project. With this knowledge, music therapists can 'hold' the wider ecological perspective on the potential scope of the project, while working with players to build the music project within the scope of what they envision for their project. In collaboration with players, music therapists can draw on their wider perspective to offer options to change and broaden the scope of a project over time. This needs to be negotiated with players to ensure music projects remains compatible with players' vision for the project in order to maximise the potential for positive growth.

'Sounding out' in the music. In this study, changes in scope throughout the course of collaboration in the music projects were represented in the way collaborators chose to musick at different times. The type of musicking that players chose represented the type of 'voice' they were exploring. For example, when the music projects had a very personalised focus, such as when young people were using the collaboration to explore their own musicality or their experience of the world, this personalised focus was reflected in inward facing

musicking techniques such as songwriting, learning instruments, personal song sharing. On the other hand, when the music projects took a wider-community focus, musicking was more outwards facing. For example, choosing to perform their song for a group or recording it or taking the skills and enrolling in a new music course, are a ways of musicking explored in this study that were more public and reflect a broader scope. Musicking in collaboration is a way of giving voice to the collaboration – of musically ‘sounding out’ the message or the experience that players want to share with the world.

The fact that players can explore different voices through different types of musicking experience demonstrates the versatility and value of music as a forum for collaboration. This versatility is further represented in the fact that within a single music project it is possible for different players to ‘sound out’ their voice in different ways, as evidenced in the share home group in this study. This possibility that a music project can simultaneously support positive growth of different players engaging at different levels with the wider community is an extremely valuable potential for collaborative music projects as a positive growth practice.

As music therapists, it is helpful to be aware of how different types of musicking can represent the scope of a collaboration. This can inform the way we negotiate with players about the structure of a music project to ensure player’s intentions for the project are compatible with the way they choose to ‘sound out’ their collaboration. It also suggests that if music therapists enter into a collaboration with a particular musicking end product in mind, we may limit the way players can ‘sound out’ their project by pre-determining what that will be. The learnings from this study suggest that this can limit the potential for positive growth in the music project, if our pre-determined plan is not compatible with what players want to get out of the project. This is an argument in favour of approaching collaboration in music projects as a positive growth practice that emerges over time.

Striving for Collaboration

Collaboration is a process, not an outcome. It is something that music therapists strive for in their approach to musicking with the people.

Collaboration is not about getting it right or wrong, and there is no clear point at which it is 'achieved'. When approaching collaboration as a positive growth practice in music therapy, music therapists strive for a music project that is founded in shared power and mutual responsibility, where players share a mutual ability to impact on the music project, and where each player has a vested interest how the project grows and develops. This process is founded in the belief that within the process of negotiating a music project together lies the potential for positive growth, at an individual level, at a community level, and at a broader societal level.

When engaging in collaboration as a positive growth practice in music therapy, these ideas can inform practice and guide the way music therapists engage with fellow players. And as the analysis in this study suggests, in the process of striving for collaboration, the way music projects unfold and the extent to which the potential for positive growth is realised is impacted by the way real-life factors such as time, resources, competing priorities and cultural barriers are able to be accommodated and balanced with the individual interests and expectations of players, within the chosen structure of the music project.

In the music projects in this study, I have had an opportunity to explore an aspect of collaboration that has previously received very little attention in the music therapy literature, namely, the critical contribution that community partners bring to music therapy collaborations. Collaboration with the young people in this study has highlighted to me that while it is possible to offer a variety of opportunities to collaborate in music therapy, the power and the inclination to collaborate lies with each individual player. It is the role of music therapists to support players even as we engage as players in the process ourselves.

In this discussion I propose that to be a player in a music therapy collaboration, people make the choice to buy in, play through and sound out their collaboration. Another way to put it is to say that collaboration is about choice,

dialogue and voice. First we need to choose it, then we need to negotiate it, and then we need to use it.

Boundaries of the Learnings from this Study

Traditionally described as limitations, the boundaries in this study relate to the particular characteristics and scope of this research project that impact on the boundaries of where the ideas generated have proven themselves to be relevant. Marginalised young people in community settings were targeted as the primary focus group in this study, and thus the learnings from this study have been generated to inform community-based music therapy practice with adolescents. Further research is required to explore the relevance of this interpretation for participants from other age groups in community settings, and for relevance with clinical and educational communities.

This study was set in the Melbourne, Australia, and therefore the music projects in this study were targeted to the particular challenges faced by marginalised youth in urban Australia. All players in this study were in contact with the youth support and community development sectors in Melbourne. Hence my interpretation of learnings in this study was informed by the priorities and assumptions of the Australian youth support field. Cultural differences in youth support services will need to be considered if these learnings are applied beyond the urban Australian context, and further investigation of the broader relevance of these ideas is warranted.

I am a white, middle-class Australian woman in her early thirties, and this impacted both on the way I engaged with communities in this study, and the way I interpreted the empirical material. In addition, I am a product of my University of Melbourne music therapy training, which emphasises “an eclectic, person-centred approach” (McFerran & Shanahan, 2011, p105) and draws on aspects of both psychodynamic and behavioural practice (McFerran & Shanahan, 2011). Subsequent to training I have worked for nine years with children and young people in community, education and international development contexts, and this experience has shaped by understanding of what is important, useful and relevant in music therapy practice with young people. These aspects of my cultural and

professional identity have influenced my choices and actions throughout this research project, and the overall learnings that emerged.

I have actively presented and discussed my work with a global network of music therapists throughout this project to explore the relevance of my interpretation beyond my personal cultural context. However, the learnings from this study are inevitably context-bound. It would be highly beneficial to explore the way these ideas translate and evolve between different international contexts. I believe that employing the comparative analysis process used in this study in a global action research project would offer fascinating insight into the broader relevance of these ideas.

In Conclusion

This research project has highlighted to me the significant power and potential of music as a positive growth practice with marginalised young people in community settings. I have learnt that in active, shared partnership with communities it is possible to create opportunities for growth at a personal, social and potentially at a societal level. Music therapists are well placed as trained professionals to support and develop such partnerships, and to optimise the conditions for players to buy in to opportunities for positive growth. Through this, players themselves can wield the power to impact on their personal and social world in positive ways, by buying in to these collaborative musicking opportunities.

In this study I have developed a practical understanding of the process and potential of collaboration in music therapy, and a language to communicate this with others. Armed with this new understanding, I hope to continue working together with marginalised communities in Australia to promote the positive growth of Australian communities at all levels through musicking. I believe the clarity I have developed in this study will support me to more effectively and confidently collaborate with communities. I hope to draw on this knowledge to foster the conditions through which maximise the potential for positive growth – for individuals, for communities, and for Australian society as a whole.

This is an ambitious goal, and potentially a lifelong endeavour. However, this study has taught me that the capacity to bring a broad social perspective while working responsively with each communities' unique needs is an invaluable contribution that music therapists can make to collaboration as a positive growth practice. I will therefore hold my belief in the capacity for collaboration in music for empowerment, connection and social action in the back of my mind as I work with communities to explore their own unique agendas for their music projects.

With this potential for wider action in mind, my final act of reporting back to communities in this study was, in fact, an act of reporting forward. Collaborating with the young people in this study, I recognised that being a player is a choice that each young person needs to make for him or herself. I sought take

this important learning and encourage young people to harness their own power and 'be a player'. I created a rap song and music video of what it means to be a player, based on the learnings generated with the young people in this study. I put this video on YouTube, as a youth-friendly invitation to young people to get involved, take control and collaborate.

Be a player

You've got something to show and tell – without a doubt
 You've got something to scream and yell – shout it out
 You've got something to say but you don't know what
 Try it out in the music, why not? Give it a shot!
 You can do it, no doubt,
 Even if you never knew it, play and sing it out
 Who knows what it will be, get together we'll see
 A bunch of people making music

CHORUS:

If you wanna be a player, player player
 If you wanna have a say, a say, a say
 If you wanna make the world hear
 Your message in the music
 You've gotta make a ch-ch-ch-choice
 Negotiate it and have a voice
 Celebrating, collaborating

Music is a way, you can say what you wanna say
 Music is a way, you can be who you want to be
 Music is a way to try something different,
 Be a different kind of person with a different kind of vision
 Music is the best, chuck out the rest
 Music is strong, like King Kong
 Music just rocks, like my fluffy socks

Music's a like friend that's there 'til the end
Music always yours you can make it what you like
Music's always there, it's like riding a bike
Music's just great, so come on and collaborate
Make music not war!

CHORUS

You've got ideas and they matter, gotta have your say
You wanna choose the direction things are gonna take
It's not enough to be told, you wanna steer the way
Don't wanna be a lab rat, wanna collaborate

CHORUS

See: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Azv-_75t1QI
for full music video

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Appendix 1 – Plain language statement for the project

“Understanding the process of collaboration between a music therapist and young people from a marginalised community in a participatory music group with a community-identified focus, and the impact of that experience for participants.”



My name is Lucy Bolger, and I am a student at the University of Melbourne. I am doing a project to find out how young people from a marginalised community can work together with a music therapist on a music project, and what that experience is like for them. The focus of the music project will be decided together by the young people involved.

My supervisor for this project is Dr. Katrina McFerran. She's my teacher and helps me with my work on the project. We both work at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. When this project is finished it will be part of my degree, called a PhD.

This project is for young people involved with the (insert community organisation name) **who want to be part of a music project with other young people.** The focus for the group will be based on what group members think is important to them. In the group we will decide together what we will do, and everyone will have a say in what they thought of each activity and what they would like to do next. Some music activities we might do include singing, song writing, listening to music, playing music or maybe putting on a performance or making a CD. It is up to us to decide what will be best for our group to do.

If you want to be a part of this project, I will ask you to join a music group with other young people. We'll meet to talk and play music together. When we play music together we might make audio or video recordings so we can hear and discuss them later if we want to.

If you decide to be involved, you will be a partner in the project, called a 'co-researcher'. This means you get to help decide what we will do in the group, and why. You will also participate in discussions about what happened in the group and what it was like for you. You will also help decide if we should tell or show anyone else what we have been doing, maybe in a performance or by writing a song. We might choose to make group notes of our decisions and discoveries so we can read and discuss them later if we want to.

We will also decide together how long the group should continue, but the maximum possible time will be one year. At the end of the group we'll meet to talk about what happened and what it's been like. We'll make an audio recording of the final meeting, and video recordings of any group performances we may do together.

During the project, if you decide that you don't want to be involved anymore, that's no problem. You can stop coming anytime you want to and any information that can be used to identify you personally will be removed from the study.

In the group, we may choose to talk about things that are important to members of the group. There's a small chance that people may want to talk about something

that makes you feel uncomfortable or unhappy. If this happens and you want to talk about it to someone outside the group, we can arrange for you to speak to a counsellor.

I will use the information we collect in the groups, like the audio and video recordings and the group notes, to write a report about the project, and probably also to write articles or presentations about the project. For the reports and presentations you will each get to choose if you want me to use your real name or if you'd like to choose a different name so no one will know who you are.

Because it is a small group, there is a small chance that someone who knows you well may recognise your face or voice, or a story you have shared, if they read an article or see a presentation about the project.

All your personal details about information you share with the group will be kept private between the people involved in the project. The only reason I would share personal information without your permission is if there is a legal issue and the court asks me to. This is very, very unlikely to happen.

After our project is finished, all the information we collect together will be kept locked up at the University of Melbourne for 5 years and then destroyed.

If you are less than 18 years old, I will also need to meet with your parents to get their permission for you to be in the music therapy group. When I meet them I'll explain the details of the project, so that they will understand what we'll be doing.

The ethics committee at the university has checked the details of this project to ensure it is safe and worthwhile for you to be involved. If you or your parents have any questions or worries about the project, you can contact me or my supervisor anytime, on:

Lucy Bolger: 0402 149 779

Dr. Katrina McFerran: ph: 8344 7382 or fax: 8344 5346

You can also speak to someone at the Ethics Office at Melbourne University if you are unhappy about anything that happens during the project. The contact details are:

Executive Officer,
Human Research Ethics,
The University of Melbourne
ph: 8344 2073 or fax: 9347 6739

If you want to be a part of the project, please sign the consent form attached. If you're less than 18 years old, we will also ask your parents to sign when we meet with them.

Appendix 2 – Consent form for professionals



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Melbourne Conservatorium of Music FACULTY OF VCA AND MUSIC

Consent form for professionals working with young people participating in a research project

Understanding the process of collaboration between a music therapist and young people from a marginalised community in a participatory music group with a community-identified focus, and the impact of that experience for participants.

Name of participant:

Name of investigator(s): Dr Katrina McFerran and Ms. Lucy Bolger

1. As a professional supporting marginalised young people in this community I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement to keep.
2. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form it will be retained by the researcher.
3. I understand that as a professional supporting marginalised young people in this community, my contribution to this music project is integral to the research, and it is important that this contribution is acknowledged.
4. I understand that I may be video or audio recorded participating in music-related activities throughout the project
5. I have been informed that:
 - (a) I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data I have provided;
 - (c) the project is for the purpose of research, and aims to understand the process of collaboration in a music project with communities supporting marginalised young people, and what that experience is like for participating young people;
 - (d) the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;
 - (e) with my consent video and audio footage from the project may be used in conference presentations
 - (f) my name will be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications arising from the research;
 - (g) a copy of the research findings will be forwarded to me, should I agree to this.

I wish to receive a copy of the summary project report on research findings

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

I consent to video or audio footage for myself being used in conference presentations

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3 – Consent form for young people



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Melbourne Conservatorium of Music FACULTY OF VCA AND MUSIC

Consent form for persons participating in a research project

Understanding the process of collaboration between a music therapist and young people from a marginalised community in a participatory music group with a community-identified focus, and the impact of that experience for participants.

Name of participant: _____

Name of investigator(s): Dr. Katrina McFerran and Ms. Lucy Bolger _____

1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement to keep.
2. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form it will be retained by the researcher.
3. I understand that my participation will involve **participating in a music therapy group** and I agree that the researcher may use the information generated as described in the plain language statement.
4. I acknowledge that:
 - (a) the possible effects of **participating in the music therapy group** been explained to my satisfaction;
 - (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any individually identifiable information I have provided;
 - (c) the project is for the purpose of research;
 - (d) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;
 - (e) I have been informed that with my consent the **music played by the group and final group discussion will be audio recorded, and audio recordings** will be stored at University of Melbourne and will be destroyed after five years;
 - (f) I have been informed that with my consent **any performances made by the group will be video recorded, and video recordings** will be stored at University of Melbourne and will be destroyed after five years;
 - (g) I have been informed that with my consent **notes will be taken by the group and researcher about what happens in the group, and the notes** will be stored at University of Melbourne and will be destroyed after five years;

(g) If I prefer, my name will be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications arising from the research;

(h) I have been informed that as this is a small group, it is possible that people who know me well may recognise my face, voice or stories in presentations or articles about the group;

(g) I have been informed that a copy of the research findings will be forwarded to me, should I agree to this.

I consent to ***music played by the group*** being audio-recorded

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

I consent to ***performances made by the group*** to be video-recorded

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

I consent to the ***group/researcher taking notes*** about what happens in the group

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

I consent to ***audio and video recordings*** of myself to be used in presentations about this research project

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

I wish to receive a copy of the summary project report on research findings

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 4 – Consent form for parents



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Melbourne Conservatorium of Music FACULTY OF VCA AND MUSIC

Consent form for parents of young people less than 18 years old participating in a research project

Understanding the process of collaboration between a music therapist and young people from a marginalised community in a participatory music group with a community-identified focus, and the impact of that experience for participants.

Name of participant: _____

Name of investigator(s): Dr. Katrina McFerran and Ms. Lucy Bolger _____

1. I consent for my child to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement to keep.
2. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form it will be retained by the researcher.
3. I understand that my child's participation will involve **participating in a music therapy group** and I agree that the researcher may use the information generated as described in the plain language statement.
4. I acknowledge that:
 - (a) the possible effects of **participating in the music therapy group** been explained to my satisfaction;
 - (b) I have been informed that my child is free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any individually identifiable information they have provided;
 - (c) the project is for the purpose of research;
 - (d) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information my child provides will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;
 - (e) I have been informed that with my consent the **music played by my child and my child's contribution to final group discussion will be audio recorded, and audio recordings** will be stored at University of Melbourne and will be destroyed after five years;
 - (f) I have been informed that with my consent **any performances made by the group, including my child, will be video recorded, and video recordings** will be stored at University of Melbourne and will be destroyed after five years;

(g) I have been informed that with my consent **notes will be taken by the group and researcher about what happens in the group, and the notes** will be stored at University of Melbourne and will be destroyed after five years;

(g) If I prefer, my child's name will be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications arising from the research;

(h) I have been informed that as this is a small group, it is possible that people who know my child well may recognise their face, voice or stories in presentations or articles about the group;

(g) I have been informed that a copy of the research findings will be forwarded to me, should I agree to this.

I consent to **music and discussion including my child** being audio-recorded

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

I consent to **performances made by my child** to be video-recorded

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

I consent to the **group/researcher taking notes** about what happens in the group

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

I consent to **audio and video recordings of my child** to be used in presentations about this research project

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

I wish to receive a copy of the summary project report on research findings

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**
(please tick)

Parent/guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 5 - Ethics approval emails

Move to Inbox

More

HREC 1034361 "The important stuff..." (McFerran & Bolger) PhD/ethics

Jacky Angus <jsa@unimelb.edu.au> 09/09/2010 ☆

to Kat, l.bolger2, Belinda, Denise, Vanda

Dear Researchers

Your research proposal was considered at the recent meeting of the Human **Ethics** Sub-Committee (HESC) for the Humanities & Applied Sciences. I am pleased to be able to tell you, on behalf of the HESC, that you now **have final ethics clearance**. A formal letter from me to this effect will be forwarded to the Principal Investigator, Dr Katrina McFerran-Skewes, within the next few days. (Doctoral students are advised to retain a copy of this letter for their records.) Meanwhile, you are free to start your work as soon as you receive this email.

Please note that your **ethics** clearance covers a total of five years. However, this does require you to regularly confirm the status of your project, via an Annual Report. This ensures that Themis doesn't delete your record from the system. The responsible researcher will receive an automatic reminder of this.

Any future amendments you may wish to make will need to be approved by both your HEAG and by the HAPS. The latter is a very quick process; but to speed things up, please always quote the **reference number and title** of your project. Once I receive an amendment endorsed by the Principal Investigator and your Faculty HEAG, I can usually clear this by return email. That is, amendments don't usually have to be approved by the central HAPS committee at their monthly meeting.

Best wishes

Jacky Angus
 Research **Ethics** Coordinator (Humanities & Applied Sciences)
 Melbourne Research Office (MRO)
 The University of Melbourne
 Alan Gilbert Bldg (level 5), University Sq,
 161 Barry St, Parkville V3010 AUSTRALIA
 Telephone: [+61 3 83442074](tel:+61383442074) Fax: [+61 3 93476739](tel:+61393476739)
jsa@unimelb.edu.au
<http://upclose.unimelb.edu.au/episode/189>
<http://www.research.unimelb.edu.au/humanethics/home>

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HREC 1034361.2 '...collaboration between a music therapist and young people...' (McFerran-Skewes & Bolger) Admin/University admin

Jacky Angus <jsa@unimelb.edu.au> 08/09/2011 ☆

to Katrina, l.bolger2, Denise, Vanda

Dear Researchers

Thank you for forwarding your application for your Amendment (HREC 1033857.3) to the above research project. I have approved this on behalf of the HAPS Committee.

A formal letter confirming approval will be sent to you on Monday.

Meanwhile, you are free to continue as planned.

Best wishes with the project

Kind regards

Jacky Angus

Jacky Angus
 Research Ethics Coordinator (Humanities & Applied Sciences)
 Melbourne Research Office (MRO)
 The University of Melbourne
 Alan Gilbert Bldg (level 5), University Sq,
 161 Barry St, Parkville V3010 AUSTRALIA
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<http://www.research.unimelb.edu.au/humanethics/home>

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HREC 1034361 '....collaboration between a music therapist and young people...' (McFerran-Skewes & Bolger) Admin/University admin x


Jacky Angus <jsa@unimelb.edu.au>
25/05/2011 ☆
🔄
▼

to Katrina, I.bolger2, Denise, Vanda ▾

Dear Researchers

Thank you for forwarding your application for an Amendment to the above research project. I have approved this on behalf of the HAPS Committee. A formal letter confirming this will be sent to you in the next week or so.

Meanwhile, you are free to continue as planned.

Jacky Angus
Research Ethics Coordinator (Humanities & Applied Sciences)
Melbourne Research Office (MRO)
The University of Melbourne
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<http://upclose.unimelb.edu.au/episode/189>
<http://www.research.unimelb.edu.au/humanethics/home>

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HREC 1034361 'Understanding the process of collaboration...' (McFerran & Bolger) Admin/University admin x


Jacky Angus <jsa@unimelb.edu.au>
01/11/2011 ☆
🔄
▼

to Katrina, I.bolger2, Denise, Vanda, Jessye ▾

Dear Researchers

Thank you for forwarding your application for an Amendment to the above research project.

I have now approved this on behalf of the HAPS Committee. A formal letter confirming this will be sent to you in the next week or so.

Meanwhile, you are free to continue as planned.

Best wishes,

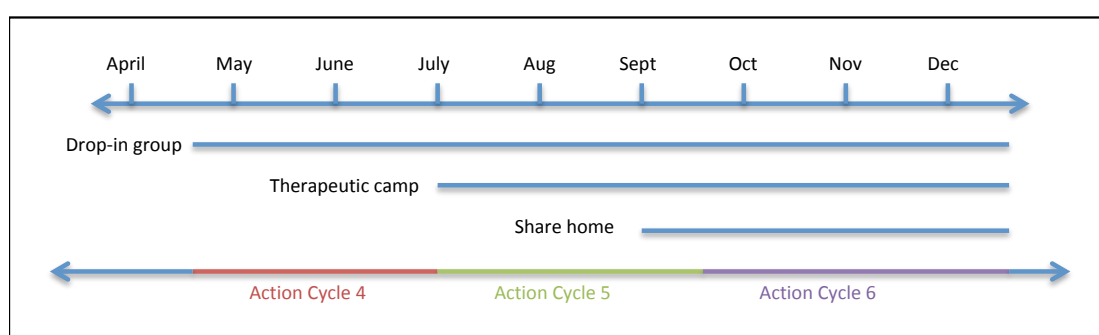
Jacky Angus

Jacky Angus
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Appendix 6 - Rich descriptions of participatory music projects

Rich Descriptions of Participatory Music Projects

Direct and regular engagement with participating communities in this research project occurred over a period of nine consecutive months, and comprised three of the six action cycles in this study. However, the duration and structure of the music projects with each community was varied. The introduction of each participating community to the research project was staggered. The drop-in group was engaged first in the study, followed by the therapeutic camp group, followed by the share home group. The timeline below is a visual representation of the timeline for different communities' engagement in the research project.



Timeline of community engagement. Time periods for individual community participation in the research project.

Collaborating with the Drop-in Group

The public housing community, otherwise known as 'the estate', is a rich and vibrant melting pot of many different people from many different ethnic backgrounds, living side-by-side. Many residents have had tragic and challenging life histories, both in Australia and in their countries of origin. In addition to residents, the community is made up of many 'stakeholders': community and government organisations, such as schools, youth programs, occupational training programs, sport and creative arts groups, and law enforcement agencies. These groups work to support the development, wellbeing and safety of residents, often with very different ideas about how this is best achieved. This diverse community of residents and stakeholders results in complex 'patchwork' of agendas, priorities and belief systems in close proximity, creating a unique, energetic community culture. However, in this high-density, low socio-economic environment, the 'dark side' of this community culture manifests in gang violence, a persistent and pervasive drug culture, inter-racial tension, and judgment and prejudice from outsiders looking into the community.

Coming into such a diverse community, there is an almost palpable tension between the many players who care and are invested in this community. How will I ever negotiate the layers, the players and the politics of this complex

community and establish an identity and role for myself here? Will I be able to get a complete enough picture of the community to see where I might input in a positive way? How will I develop the relationships to know how to respond when the unexpected happened? Can I find a way to give the young people from the estate a chance to get to know me, so they can understand and decide whether or not they want to work with me? The introductory group at the neighbourhood house (described in Chapter Three) had come to an unexpected halt. I don't know why and haven't as yet built the community connections to really find out. With so many questions in my head, the only thing I know for certain is that I need time to establish my own place in this community – and it might take some time.

My separate and isolated girl's group having stagnated, the neighbourhood house staff and I decide to learn from that and incorporate the music program into an existing youth program – the drop-in group. I begin to come to the group every week, to hang out, to meet the young people, to offer some music experiences for them to try out with me. I want to show them who I am, as a person, as a musician and as a 'worker', before offering them the chance to be part of the study and undertake a participatory music project.

Spending time at the drop-in group every week, the young people and I begin to get to know one another, but how can I establish myself in the wider community? In this systems approach to collaboration, particularly in such an interconnected community, it is important that not just the young people know me, but that the wider estate community knows who I am as well. There is no natural 'hangout' place on the estate, but the community comes together to celebrate and perform their collective and individual cultures at group festivals and celebrations throughout the year.

As the weeks pass, the drop-in staff and I decide to work with the young people towards a low-key community performance on the estate to celebrate the end of the school term. Performances are part of the culture of the drop-in group, as well as the wider estate community. A group of interested young people who have been 'jamming' with me for several weeks form a band, and we choose a popular song to play, rehearsing weekly in preparation. We engage with other community groups and invite the whole community to attend and participate if they choose. Primarily the drop-in staff and I drive this process. At this stage the young people's contribution to the collaboration is limited to making choices about songs, instruments, and whether or not they will participate. Right now we're still 'hanging out'.

On the day of the performance we draw quite a crowd as we carry the equipment across the estate. Music blares from speakers in the community room we are using. The young people dance around as we prepare, while a gang of older boys sit outside and look on. A worker from another program has cooked a feast for everyone to share, and everyone pitches in to set up the equipment and speakers. The young people who are going to perform sit in a nervous but excited huddle, together as a group. They are one of many acts that have been invited or have volunteered to perform. The space fills slowly, with family members, young people from the estate and many community workers coming to show their support and interest. The room buzzes with noise and colour and the sound of many voices speaking many languages all at once.

The announcer introduces the young people and explains what we have been doing over the term. The boys play their song to the cheers and claps of an

enthusiastic and supportive audience. The performance continues for two hours, with many different community groups playing and dancing and singing into the night. I move around the space, debriefing and celebrating with the young people, talking with parents and community workers about music and food and children and all manner of important topics, getting to know everyone and inviting them to know me. After three and a half months of working within the community, it felt as though the hangout period was over, paving the way for a deeper and more mutual collaboration in the coming months.

In the week after the performance, fuelled by chips and chocolate, the young people and I reflect on the performance and make plans for the music project. Energised by their successful performance, they have many suggestions for the term ahead. They want to keep playing as a band, to try some new instruments and maybe work towards another performance too.

However, as the weeks continue, the draw of the computer room – particularly Facebook and a computer game called HALO – increases for many of the young people, shifting their focus away from the other programs offered at the drop-in group, including music. The young people arrive at the neighbourhood house and head straight in to check Facebook. I pop in and chat to them there, and invite them out to play, if they are in the mood. The music group takes on a very flexible jam session structure. Every week, different groups of young people engage in the jam sessions, trying out different instruments, playing in groups or individually.

Every Wednesday afternoon I walk into the neighbourhood house, make myself a instant coffee and have a quick chat with drop-in staff and any young people who've arrived early to secure a prime seat in the computer room. I head to the storage cupboard and marvel again at the amazing array of music equipment available. I bring out a few key instruments to set up in the music space – a keyboard, an electric guitar and bass, some amps and microphones and a drum kit. I also add a few hand drums of my own and pull out some music different young people asked me about last week. I wonder they'll be interested in following up the songs with me today or if it had been just a fleeting interest the previous week. I wonder what the guys will be interested in today, and who, if any, of the young people will want to play.

I work with the mood of the boys on any given day. One young man is fostering a strong interest in the bass guitar. We work together to find new riffs for him to learn, and he picks them up faster and faster with every passing week. Another young man wants to be a singer, so we print off lyrics to his favourite songs and I back him up on guitar as he rocks out on the microphone. Another boy is interested in the keyboard, and I play a slow twelve-bar blues on guitar for him to improvise over the top of, the bass guitarist joining the jam. Other young men come in to play the drum kit – a hugely popular instrument with the young men. They play loud and fast and drown out everyone else. I have no skill at the drums and so ask some of the talented young men to show me some tricks, and later some others who were loitering nearby, nervous but interested. It is clear that some of the boys are very motivated to play and learn, and pull out their instruments every week. Others seem to have more of a short-term or fluctuating interest.

In spite of these varied levels of engagement, in our planning session the young people had expressed an interest in continuing the group and potentially

working towards a performance. It is clear in the jam sessions that some dedicated young people are still interested in pursuing the group's plans, while others appear more ambivalent. For those interested young people I want to honor the group's plans, but band rehearsals have come to a halt this term. Having observed the boys respond well to the structure of band rehearsals when preparing for performance last term, I decide to run a songwriting session for the players in the drop-in group. Would the structure and direction of a songwriting process provide a focus for their engagement in the project?

The boys pull themselves away from the computers to have a go at writing a song together with me. We sit around in a loose circle and discuss the possibilities, and eventually they decide to write a rap song about themselves. Where they are now in their lives, and where they are headed. Everyone contributes ideas, with some young people very deeply involved, others coming in and out of the space, and others mostly watching. I work with them to pull their ideas into a lyric structure, and one of the guys who is a confident rapper sings the final product for the group. "We're the future boys, yeah we're black and white, all the girls go mad coz we're out of sight..."

There is a big community event coming up in a month, so I suggest it as a good time to perform their song. The young people express some interest, but in the coming weeks it is tough getting many of them to come to practice – they are deeply engaged in their computer game instead. The more committed boys get sick of trying to convince their fellow band members to come to rehearsals, and, frustrated, this causes them to lose motivation as well. As the community event approaches the band is not feeling prepared, so we decide not to perform. Reflecting with some players from the group, we decide to make a recording of their original song instead.

Working towards the recording, I target the guys who are the most motivated and we work on their individual contributions, coming together periodically to play the song together. On the recording day, the three young men who are still interested and ready to record stay late after the drop-in group. We set up a portable recording studio in the neighbourhood house and a professional sound technician works with the young men to lay down their tracks. After the recording session he'll go away and mix the song, and we'll give each band member a copy.

Around this same time, one young man from the group, the rapper in our band who wants to be a singer, decides to apply for a specialised music subject at school. He needs a reference for his application and asks me to write one for him. We sit at the computer together and reflect on what he has achieved over the music project, and write the letter for his application together.

The end of the year is fast approaching, and I catch up with many of the young people to see if they would like to continue the music group or if it is time to wind up at the end of the year. Although several young people still enjoy the occasional jam session, I've noticed their interest has slowed down and I suspect it may be time to close the project. The young people confirm this suspicion, several stating that they won't be able to return to the group in the coming year, or have other plans for their musical future. And much to our delight, our aspiring singer has been accepted into his school music program! We close down the project on the final day of the program for the year in true housing estate community style – with a casual community event outside on the basketball

courts in the sun. It's a relaxed and cheerful vibe on a sunny afternoon, and as the young people joke, laugh and play together as we set up the sound system as a makeshift stage on the basketball courts. The young people are invited to dance, sing or rap, and we're joined by residents and staff from across the estate for pizza and a performance.

Collaborating with the Therapeutic Camp Group

It is the start of a week-long camp, my first time away with this community as a volunteer. The camp staff introduce me to several of the young people from the program, who are gathered in excited groups around the cars, smoking and talking and kicking a football around. They are catching up on what had happened since the last camp, so excited to be together and anticipating a week away that they're not really interested in meeting a new adult volunteer, not just then. We pile into the cars to drive up to the cabin by the beach. The three young people in the car with me plug their phones into the car speakers and play their music – LOUD – all the way to the cabin, a three hour drive. We sing and dance along the whole way up.

This is the first time I've met the young people from the therapeutic camp group, and I've come on board as a general volunteer, one of four or five who work alongside the two staff members to run the week-long camp. It is a chance to get to know the young people and give them a chance to know me so we can see if we can take on a participatory music project together. I drive cars, help with cooking, play games, and chat with the young people. I ride horses and paint nails, and am part of the therapeutic campfire sessions where we talk about the many challenges faced by these young people, living in residential care and unstable homes.

It is a busy and challenging week, with lots of fun and activity and very little time to sleep. The young people are used to new volunteers, and are comfortable spending time with me. They are interested to get to know me, but at the same time I am a newcomer, and life has taught these young people not to rely on people, even adults – especially adults. I sense the process will take time.

Many of the volunteers work for the organisation that runs the camps, as case managers or residential care workers, or are social work or outdoor education students. I am someone new, not connected to the organisation, and the young people are curious to understand how I fit, what on earth had brought me there. I explain that I am a music therapist and am interested in maybe doing a music project with them sometime in the future, as part of my research.

Music is omnipresent on camp, there is always someone singing to themselves, or playing music on their phone, or tunes blaring loudly from the car speakers when we go driving along the coast, or from the CD player while we cook and do the dishes. I have not brought my guitar with me on the first camp, and regret leaving it at home. It would have given the young people a really tangible and clear picture of who I am and how I 'fit', a way to show them rather than just tell them who I am.

Next time I come on a camp I bring my guitar along. This is a weekend camp, and over the course of the weekend we play several times, spontaneously, when it seem like a good moment for live music. We sit on the balcony in the sun, those young people and I who are too relaxed to get up and kick the football on the lawn. We look through songbooks I've brought and play and sing, just getting

to know each other. Just as they have shared their music with me using their phones and CDs, I show them a little of the way I make music, and the possibilities for what we could do together in the future. In doing this I pave the way to invite the young people to engage with me in a songwriting music project on the following camp...

It's getting dark and starting to get cold. Everyone begins to draw closer to the campfire, huddled in small groups, talking. As part of the camp activities, we've taken the young people on an overnight campout. We've built our own tents and are spending some time together by the campfire before heading off to our respective boys' camp and girls' camp to toast some final marshmallows before bed. It's time for our campfire session.

Campfire sessions on camp are where we come together to discuss the challenges and problems the young people face, growing up in the residential care system and in complex home environments. Mobile phones are turned off and everyone gathers to talk and listen. Tonight at campfire we're going to reflect on the camp 'family' - what it means to everyone, and what we think it's for. We're going to do that by developing some song lyrics together, part one of three group songwriting sessions over the course of the week-long camp.

It was the camp staff that suggested we write a song about the therapeutic camp program as the basis for the participatory music project. The camp program plays a significant role in the lives of many young people in the program, as a support system, a peer group and a chance to get away from their complex daily lives. It is an opportunity for them to have new experiences, to explore different ways of being and to feel a sense of belonging. The camp staff want to use the music project as a way for the young people to explore and communicate their relationship with the program, and have chosen to use a songwriting process as the basis for this. This young people are used to a program that is structured and organised for them, so staff decided that providing some structure through the songwriting process would be more familiar and easier for the young people to engage with, and this structure creates the frame for the collaboration with the young people on therapeutic camp.

I bring some large pieces of paper and some coloured pens, and sit down by the fire with a small group of the young people to get started. We begin by brainstorming all the things that they think are important about the therapeutic camp program. The young people begin slowly, one idea at a time, and then, as more young people come and join us, curious about the process, the ideas come in faster and faster. I keep my ears open and write everything down, throwing follow-up questions out to the group and asking for other people's perspectives on different ideas. They chat together about the ideas as we go. My job is mostly to listen, to catch all these ideas and follow where they go. I check in with the young people to make sure I've 'got it right' and follow up to get more information. As the night gets dark, the glow of the fire throws our faces into shadows, so I listen harder for the different voices of the young people, seeking out the opinions of those I haven't heard from yet, or whom I suspect may need a little more encouragement to give their ideas.

After the ideas die down, I read through our brainstorm and we group the ideas into themes. We slowly build them into sentences, the young people taking control of this process together and deciding how to make the song sound like they would like it to. We make verses and a chorus that I read out to the group as

we go, checking in for ideas or opinions so that everyone has a chance to input if they want to. We talk as we go about why these ideas are important, and this leads to more suggestions from the young people about what is missing from the song. We add verses and change lines along the way. There is a concentrated energy created as we work on the lyrics. After around two hours sitting around the fire, the lyrics of the camp song is complete. It is a rap-style song at this stage, with five long verses, a powerful chorus and a rousing call-and-response ending. I read it out – loudly – to the group, to beat-box back-up from two of the young people. The energy builds up to the final call and response where the young people join in. “I SAY PATHWAYS, YOU SAY LOVE. PATHWAYS! LOVE! PATHWAYS! LOVE!” The first stage of the songwriting process ends and we ‘break camp’ and head towards bed.

The next session is the following afternoon. I bring the lyric sheets and a bunch of instruments onto the veranda in the sun and start to write them out. Some of the young people are relaxing on the grass, playing football or hanging out inside. There is a quiet, slightly subdued vibe – it’s halfway through camp and everyone is getting tired. A small group of interested young people, around six or seven, come and join me, as do some of the staff, and we start to talk about what we might add to the song musically. One of the young people suggests a melody for the chorus and we show the others. There is some discussion among the young people, and some disagreement as we come up with the right melody and pick a beat on the keyboard to match the rap sections. It’s interesting to watch the young people negotiate these ideas and differences of opinion with each other, and the staff and I take a background support role, allowing the young people to drive the discussion. Young people come in and out of the group as they choose to. Some just watch and give their opinions when I ask, others are more active in the process. The session evolves into a music jam session and group discussion.

On the final evening of camp, the young people are very tired and getting a little down as camp is going to end the next morning. I set up the activity space for the recording and go and gather all the young people together to record. There is much mumbling and moaning as they butt out their cigarettes and come to the activity room. Can’t we see they’re tired and grumpy and don’t have the energy for anything? But we cajole and encourage them, and remind them how great it is to finish what we’ve started, and how impressed we are with what they’ve been able to create. Once we start everyone gets their energy back and gets involved, either by watching and listening, or by playing an instrument, singing or beat-boxing on the recording.

We play the recording together before sitting down to watch a movie and relax for the night. Some of the young people are shy to hear themselves sing, others laugh and joke to stop themselves feeling self conscious, others discuss the parts of the recording quite seriously amongst themselves. The young people decide to listen to the song twice. There is a general sense of pride in what they have achieved, and a strong sense of ownership – this is theirs, they created it; it’s by them and it’s about them. The next day each young person goes home with a copy of the song, presented at our final breakfast together. Some young people and staff put their CDs on in the cars on the way home and sing along.

After that the song takes on a life of it’s own for the therapeutic camp community. They decide they want to sing it at their end-of-year ‘graduation’ ceremony, and set about arranging rehearsals all by themselves, only calling on

me for tech support and back-up beats. The graduation ceremony is a big deal to the young people, and culminates the year for the therapeutic camp program. It is a chance for these young people to dress up and be celebrated – something that doesn't happen very often – in front of their families, the organisation staff, the volunteers and one another.

On the big day I meet them in the afternoon and help out with hair, makeup and last minute rehearsals. Looking glamorous and very excited, we all drive together in a rented stretch Hummer to the graduation hall. After speeches and thank-yous and food and dancing, the young people get up to sing their song, with the camp staff and me as backup support. Soloists rap out their verses and we sing the chorus together "Pathways love, we do things our way, Pathways love, we get hugs every day..." At the end of the song it's time for the call and response, and a camp staff member takes the lead. "I SAY PATHWAYS, YOU SAY LOVE...". And in that moment as the young people shout out together in response I'm reminded of that first songwriting evening, by the campfire in the bush.

Collaborating with the Share Home Group

I sit perched on a stool at the kitchen bench of the share home in outer urban Melbourne, one of approximately 12 safe homes around Melbourne and rural Victoria. This house is home to four young people, two of whom are on 'dinner duty' this evening, and are at this moment on the other side of the kitchen bench, cooking tandoori chicken wraps for dinner while we talk. We talk about the different music we enjoy, and the singers and songwriters we admire, and how much the girls love to sing around the house.

It has been four months since I first got in touch with the share home community, and finally, after six cancellations due to conflicting timetables and unexpected emergencies, I am visiting this share home for the first time. The share home is one of a network of homes run by an organisation committed to providing safe homes for homeless young people. After a mandatory screening, the organisation had quickly agreed to let me meet the young people, recommending that the young people from this house particularly would benefit. However, due to the varied schedules of the young people and the house carers, it has taken a long time to arrange a meeting and I had begun to despair that an initial meeting would never come about.

Now that I am finally in the door, I'm able to introduce myself and the project. The young people are all aware that I am interested in doing a music project with them as part of my university research, and they have lots of direct questions to ask about how they would be involved, what we would be researching, what they would be expected to do, and most importantly, what they would get out of it. I answer their questions and explain that we can decide together what our focus for the project would be. I make some suggestions of some possibilities and ideas, and ask some questions of my own about what they may be interested in doing musically, and what they think they'd like to get out of the project.

After a delicious dinner, one of the young men brings out his guitar and plays for us, a beautiful and highly technical groove that he improvises as he plays. After that he hands me the guitar and the young people ask me to play something for them. I play and sing a song we had been discussing before, and afterwards ask the others if they'd like to sing. Both the girls choose a song to sing together, a

song by an Australian singer/songwriter. They seem to feel too shy to sing unaccompanied or with the guitar at this early stage, instead opting for the security and familiarity of singing along to the original recording on their mobile phone.

After this brief musical interlude, it is getting late in the evening and time for me to leave so the young people can get to bed. I ask if they need some time to think about the project, or suggest that we can hang out a few times and see if they feel like being involved. They state that that won't be necessary, they are interested and ready to start, and each have ideas already for projects they would like to work on. So we lock in a time for me to come in two weeks' time, and so begins the project. After four months of struggling to get in the door, it takes only one conversation over dinner and the chance to play some music together, and they are ready to go. And our fortnightly project begins...

I walk into the living room at the share home and put my guitar down. I shout out a loud "hello" and put the kettle on before walking out the back of the house to see who's around tonight. Two young people and a carer sit around the table in the back yard, smoking cigarettes and chatting amongst themselves. They give me a wave and tell me to join them. I sit down and ask how they've been, what's been happening that week and who's around tonight.

I get up and make myself a cup of tea and go back outside to the group, popping my head into a bedroom to say hi to one young woman who's in there. I let her know I've found a copy of the lyrics to the song we discussed last week and ask if she wants to sing it sometime later – she agrees that she'd like to have a sing, "but not just yet" and returns to an important conversation she is having with her boyfriend via Facebook wall posts.

I sit down outside and chat to the group, telling them about my week too, and asking who was up for some music tonight and what they'd like to do. I pull a couple of songbooks out of my bag and leave them on the table for one young woman and her boyfriend to have a look at. I've put together some songs we had discussed earlier. I head out to grab my keyboard from the car, leaving the guitar with the group outside in case one of the young people with some guitar skills feels like playing. I tell them I'll be back later for a jam.

I set up the keyboard and go back to the young woman in her room. She comes out and turns on the computer. She wants to show me a YouTube clip of the song she wants to sing so that I get the accompaniment right. We listen to it a few times together, and I play along, getting the hang of the chord progression. We decide to do our own version, and I start, the young woman singing along. Her confidence grows as we play through the song a number of times. She then decides she'd like to try a different song, returning to YouTube to show me how it sounds. Tell her I'll find the song for next time, and remind her to think about whether or not she'd like to make a recording of herself singing, something she's been thinking about building up the confidence to do.

I then go back to the group outside and ask if they feel like singing today. We turn through the songbook, singing different songs together. The young woman I have just been working with comes and joins us. There is a lot of joking and talking about our different associations with different songs. When the group thinks of a song that I don't know, or that isn't in the books, they play it for me on their mobiles phones, singing along.

Another day I walk in and a young man meets me at the door. He's been thinking about the song we started writing last fortnight using his original lyrics. He's got a lot of ideas about what we should do with it, and gives me a hand to unload my keyboard and get it set up so we can get started. I say hi to the other young people in the house, who are sitting around the kitchen bench. While I'm doing that, the young man mentions that he'd like the young women in the house to sing the song that we're writing. He has an idea that it should be a duet and the young women could sing it. One girl is not sure, saying she doesn't think that it's her kind of thing. I suspect that the other girl is interested but may need some encouragement. I suggest we play the song and keep working on it, and that the girls can jump in if they'd like to once they see what the young man has in mind.

We set up in the back room and one of the girls comes and joins us, sitting a little away and listening. We re-cap on what we did last fortnight, and the young man launches into his ideas. We include the young woman in the conversation, and as we suggest different harmonies and duet-style call-and-response elements that she could engage in. The young woman gets increasingly involved, giving suggestions and opinions, and I step back, taking direction from them. They sometimes ask my opinion, or I give some suggestions when I feel they are getting stuck, but for the most part the young people have a clear idea of how the song should progress. We call out to the other young woman and ask her to come and play. She comes to listen and chat, but determinedly declines to sing, saying she has had a bad week and telling us about it.

After an hour and a half of working on the song the young people have a brainwave. They decide they would like to perform it at an awards ceremony the organisation is holding that weekend – three days from now. I tell them that's pretty soon, but if they'd like to do it I can come and play with them. I remind them that I don't know any of the people organising the awards ceremony, so they will have to get permission and arrange the details themselves and then call me to tell me whether it was possible. With such a short time-frame I'm not sure if we'll be able to do it, but we decide to try.

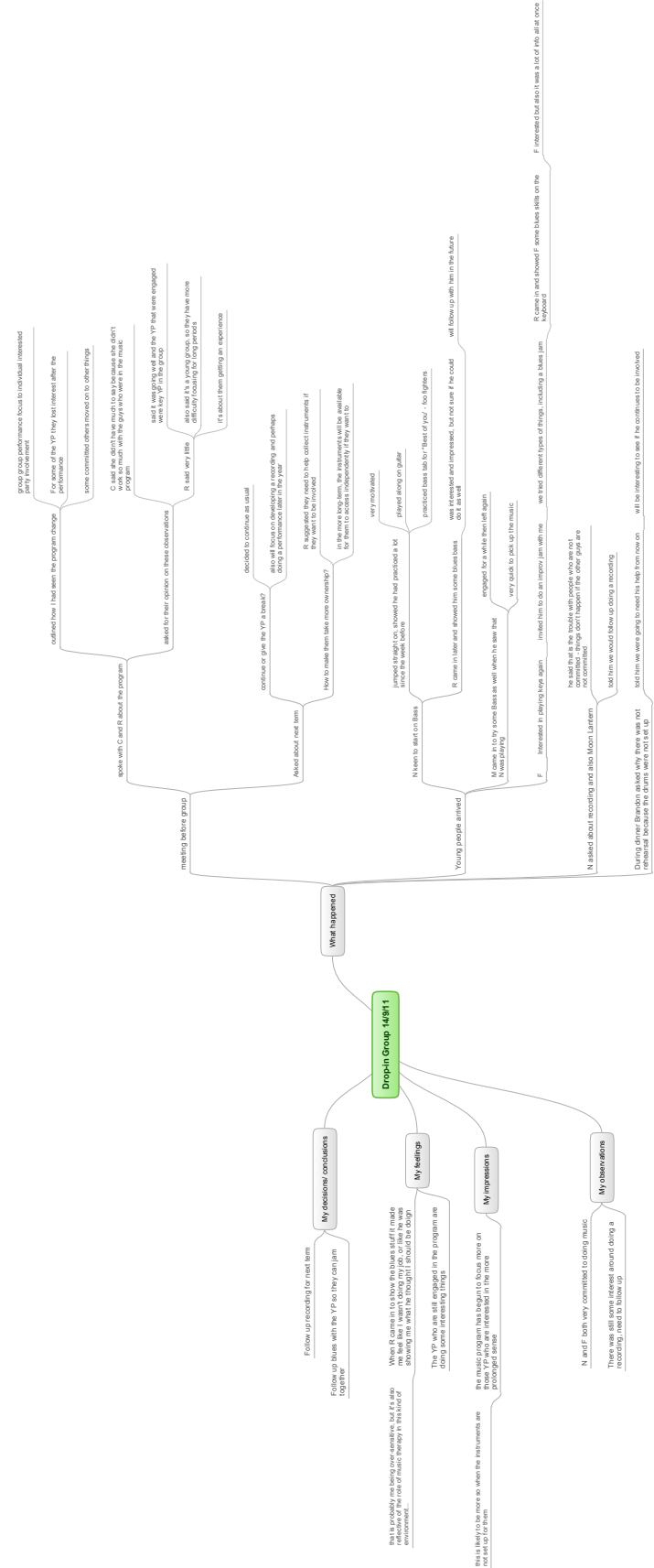
That night we prepare everything we can. We finish writing the song and I make a recording of it for them to use for practice over the next couple of days. We work late, planning and practicing. The next day I get a phone call – they young people have arranged to perform at the start of the awards ceremony! I'm very impressed by their initiative and their motivation. They ask me to come a few hours before the ceremony so we have time to set up and practice. When I arrive, the young people are nervous and had been practicing very hard. They've also decided to include another young person in the performance and have had some ideas about last-minute changes to the piano part. After practicing the changes we take a break for a few hours, chatting to everyone and having lunch, as the other young people and staff from the organisation come and the event begins.

When it's time for the performance, the young people are nervous, coping in different ways. One young person is compulsively updating her Facebook status, one is making jokes and the other is hiding quietly and seriously behind a video camera. We are introduced to the cheers of a supportive crowd of friends and carers. The song is performed without a hitch, and the young people are cheered and congratulated afterwards. Two disappear, smiling, into energetic conversations with friends, proud to be acknowledged for their talent and work.

The other takes a quiet walk outside, also proud, but overwhelmed by the support and positive interest his song has received.

In summary. These three rich descriptions share my experience as an active collaborator in the music projects with each of the participating communities in this study, and are based on my ongoing critical reflection throughout the research process. These projects occurred simultaneously, and thus my experience with each community was experienced both as individual music projects and as part of the larger research project as a whole. The descriptions above represent the experience that informs my interpretation of the learnings in this study.

Appendix 7 – Example: mindmapped session notes



Appendix 8 – Excerpt from decision log

Date:	Decision:	influenced by:	Potential impacts:	Discussed with:	key discussion points:	Conclusions:	Actions:	Additional notes:
23/08/11	Have decided to bring my guitar to the next Therapeutic camp	Reflection on last camp where I felt my musical identity was missing	1. Will give the YP a context for my role at camp, 2. Will give me a chance to introduce the idea of music on camp and relate it to me 3. Will give me a chance to engage the YP in music	acamp staff at the last camp, Supervisor	1. It would be good to introduce myself as a musician to the group 2. The YP would enjoy it	Good idea	Will bring guitar on camp	
25/08/11	I will persist in attempting to engage Share home in the project until after I have had an initial meeting with the young people	The fact that I have started a process with the community and want to follow it through	Hopefully the persistence will pay off and I'll get a chance to meet the young people	Supervisor - supervision	1. I need to decide when to stop if meetings keep getting cancelled 2. It is a key challenge for working with this community - getting in the door	Given I have time due to the PhD scholarship I will persist at this stage	Continue to reschedule meetings until I get to meet the community	Persisting with Share home - 25/8/10

Appendix 9 – Excerpt: Reflective journal to supplement decision log

Targeted questioning – 19/8/11

Because this project has a strong music-program focus, I need to remember in reflection/observation periods with the community to keep in mind the research questions and ensure that we reflect on the process as a collaborative group. This is particularly important in the final stage – the analysis and reporting stage. Not as important in the ongoing reflection and planning stages.

Eg. For drop-in group – What was it like being in the group? What did we find out about ourselves being in the group/doing the performance/writing the song? What do you think of the song we wrote? Do you think anyone would like to know that? Who do you think would be interested? Who would you like to tell? What do you think of the recording/video we did? Do you want to show that to anyone? Eg – newsletter, display, poster, recording, etc... Need to prepare that in advance, and also found that the video was really motivating, so for the reflections sessions it would be wise to use it. This was based on a suggestion by R (staff).

Persisting with Share Home – 25/8/11

It has been extremely difficult to 'get in the door' with the share home community. It's interesting, because I get the sense from my interactions that they are interested in participating, but it's really hard to lock in a time to catch up, and to date they have requested that the initial meeting with the YP be postponed 3 times for various reasons, often only several hours before I was due to leave for the visit. It's quite frustrating, and I can imagine that this probably deters professionals from engaging with this group. I am in the fortunate position that because I am on a research scholarship I can persist without it impacting too adversely, other than being frustrating and inconvenient, but I can imagine for professionals who were relying on an income it would be difficult to engage with a community that cancelled so regularly – however, if they were paying for it perhaps that wouldn't happen either.

I think that the two key reasons for the unreliability are that the staff are shift-workers, and difficult to get in contact with as they have work mobiles but they are only on when they are on shift. They tend to deal with each situation on the day that it occurs, rather than having a coordinator type role where they plan things in advance. I also think it's the nature of the way these young people are, and the fact that this is their home – it's not a place they come to do 'work' or participate in a project, it's their home, and sometimes they're in, and sometimes they are out living their lives. That is the nature of a home environment, rather than a 'program' that people come to.

I have decided to persist with this community in spite of the frequent cancellations at least until I have met with the young people to assess their interest and need of a program like this. I believe this is part of the learnings involved in working with this kind of community, and to that end I'm going to follow it through, because the PhD gives me the time to do that in a way that would be difficult if I was working as a consultant professional.

Appendix 10 – Example: Final interview transcript

N – Drop-in group player

R: So this is just a final chat with N, and today is the 4th of December or something. Just about the project. So basically what I just want to know is, coz I know that you did heaps of stuff along the way, all through the year

YP: mmmhmm

R: You did like, starting with preparing for that performance that we did last café night, and then there was kind of some jamming and stuff, and we wrote that song, and then there was the recording. And I also noticed that your interest and your experience changed along the way, which is cool. So I want to know what it's been like for you I guess. So I might just ask you a few questions to make it a bit easier, would that help?

YP: yeah

R: alright, so how would you describe what music means to you now?

YP: Um, I don't know, it means a lot coz um I don't have the opportunity to learn coz um, like I have to pay for lessons and I didn't want to do that, so it's free here so

R: So how has being a part of this program, do you think that that's changed the way you feel about music at all? Or...

YP: it did

R: in what way?

YP: the way I communicate with people and music.

R: Ok, can you explain what you mean?

YP: yeah, um, I don't know, like I play better and so yeah

R: you play better?

YP: yeah

R: and how does that, how do you mean by communicating?

YP: I didn't know how to play at first, so then like after you taught me what the notes mean I started picking it up very fast and I knew

R: very fast

YP: not very fast but still

R: I think very fast

YP: yeah, and I knew were most stuff was, and I just needed to work on my hand

R: yeah, and I remember, like, there was, what was the most important time for you in the process? What bit?

YP: the most important time?

R: What did you think was the most useful thing or the most interesting part or..

YP: practice, I guess

R: practice?

YP: practice practice practice makes you better

R: yeah right. And you were, um, what do you think about your role in our group, in this program?

YP: my role?

R: yeah

YP: I don't know, my role was pretty much to get people prepared because not most of the people in the group want to do it, they probably come here to use computers. Even though they do want to learn to play, they just, it's like Facebook it's like an addiction and they just get addicted to it.

R: Yeah, it is. And so I would say that you were a bit of a leader. How was that, to be working with the others and to have that role?

YP: I don't think I'm a leader, it's just, I just want, it's not like I wanted everything to go my way, its, just, you know? I don't know really, ah, it's just you know, get everyone prepared, like, if you want to play, you're going to have the play. You chose to play, and you just can't quit half way. So that's when I want those people that chose to play have to play

R: yeah, cos if they don't, then it impacts on what you can do yeah?

YP: there you go, yeah.

R: so, that happened a bit a some points,

YP: yeah, it broke apart

R: and what was that like for you

YP: I don't know really. It's just, I don't really care coz as long as I learnt you know

R: Sure, yeah. Ok, so I have another question for you. I feel like I know you better because we played music together. What do you think about that?

YP: what?

R: what does that mean to you?

YP: A lot, I guess.

R: yeah?

YP: because I learnt a lot about you too. What your passion is, what you like. And, so, now we became friends now. So yeah, it's good

R: And what about with the other guys in the group? Playing music with them

YP: oh, man, I don't know really, you just get used, you get to know the people, what instrument they like to play....

R: so if you were going to say to someone, anyone, like your mum or your sister or anyone, if you were going to say what it is that I do when I come in here, what would you say I do?

YP: I did?

R: What would you say I did?

YP: you did?

R: yep

YP: a great job

R: thanks

YP: the best (laughs). nah, um, I don't know, you've made me become a better person because you know, it's like I didn't have a future about music when I came in here, I never really did like to play instruments because I thought all those rock stars and all that stuff people play, then when I first played bass guitar I just fell in love with it so I started playing then got used to it

R: sure

YP: So, that's all coz of you.

R: and a bit because of you, hey? You were pretty committed, which was really amazing. It's hard to be committed when everyone else is playing computer games sometimes.

YP: yeah.

R: So what about I guess now that this project is finishing up, what does that mean for you? What do you think about that?

YP: I don't know. Because I'm not coming back here next year.

R: you can't come back next year anyway

YP: because I've got Vet in the afternoon, so yeah

R: so what's that like? How many years have you been coming here?

YP: like a year, something near a year. I knew about it last year but like I just didn't want to play

R: sure, so now that you have got an interest in playing, and it's finishing, is that alright? Because you wouldn't be able to come anyway?

YP: yeah

R: If you had the opportunity do you reckon you'd keep playing bass?

YP: mmhmm

R: yeah?

YP: I don't know, yeah

R: So, on that note, you know that they're still here, and some of the guys like E and whatever, they'll probably going to be playing on a Tuesday night. I won't be here, but R will be here. So if that's something you wanted to do, then that option is there available, you can just chat to R and find out what's available to that. I just wanted to make sure you know that. It's totally up to you, and you're doing big high school stuff next year, so you might not have time, but if you miss it and you want to play there is that.

YP: mmm

R: So is there anything else you want to say about his process? You've been involved the whole way through, we've done the performance, and we've done the recording, we've done the preparing for that and all the jam session, and there was a point where you kind of lost interest a bit or it changed for you a bit? What was that like?

YP: pause...

R: Do you know what I mean? Do you remember when you jut kind of just stopped. Said for a while I'm just a bit bored with it

YP: oh yeah, yeah um

R: Which is fine, totally fine, I just wonder. That's a part of your process, do you want to say anything about that, what that was like?

YP: yeah, um, I don't know I was just tired of complaining, like asking people to come and practice, and also I had lots to do at school so I came and I was really tired

R: you just wanted some down time

YP: yeah

R: So it was a little bit about the others not being too committed to it that made it...

YP: yeah, it made it hard

R: Yeah right, sure. So it made it you not really feel like it. What about recording, you didn't really feel like doing that so much

YP: um, I wasn't here. Because I was busy.

R: Busy, so it was a hectic time. OK, cool, so is there anything else you want to say? So this part of the project is about me telling your story, not just yours but the group, so you, L, B, those guys that were involved. Anything that you think is important to include from your perspective.

YP: yeah, um, like, I know most people I know most of them think that they cant play or can't sing, but once they came here, you showed them how they have a future you know? They have, they're going to start planning something, um, so if they get interested in an instrument they want to keep on playing, so, yeah

R: Is that want it's like for you?

YP: yeah

R: so do you reckon you'll use music differently now in your like?

YP: mmhmm

R: how?

YP: I don't know. Buy a bass guitar and just sit in my room and play.

R: yeah right. Well, you definitely have that option now I guess

YP: mmhmm

R: great. So nothing else to add? That's it for you?

YP: that's it

R: thanks so much for being a part of this whole process, with the interviews along the way, they're another thing to ask you to do, but I appreciate it.

YP: No problem

R: alright

Appendix 11 – Excerpt: Brief summaries of camp player telephone interviews

E - Therapeutic camp player

What was the most important part of the process for you? I think the writing part was the most important when we did the camp out. You need words to have a song but I also think I had lots of input in that part. It seemed like everyone was pretty even, no one was leading it and everyone seemed to be able to have a turn of putting in words. I think I was pretty well represented in it.

What about the Jam session? That was fun as. I was on the key board, I've been on a key board before and it was fun just mucking around.

What about when you did some solo keyboard stuff away from the group? It was good. I was just trying stuff out. I wrote a little tune, it was good to try different things out on it.

How did you feel about recording the song on camp? It was a pretty important part too. I did beep boxing for the recording which was fun. I was feeling pretty confident about it all. I missed the Christmas camp so don't know about that one.

What about the graduation? It was pretty good. I didn't get to do the beep boxing though because I wasn't there in time. I was outside having a cigarette. I just sang instead, but it sounded really good and I was happy with it. I would have liked to do the beep boxing though.

What did you think of Lucy? She did a pretty good job handling it all. She got everyone's input and seemed really fair.

Would you change anything if you could? No I wouldn't change a thing. It was really good.

A – Therapeutic camp player

Did you have a favourite part of the process? No.

Was there anything you didn't like about the process? No.

What did you think of the writing session during the camp out? I didn't really participate in it, I just watched everyone else. It was ok.

What about the recording on camp? I just watched everyone else, but I sat with the group.

What about the rehearsal on Christmas camp? I rapped for someone who wasn't there. It was ok. I didn't rap for the last performance though.

What did you do at the graduation? I got up because everyone else did but I can't remember if I sang or not. It was good though.

What did you think of Lucy and how she ran the sessions? She is pretty cool, I like her

Appendix 12 - Semi-structured interview questions

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS – GUIDING QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTORY

- How would you describe the role of music in your life now?
- Has that changed over the course of this year, since we've been working together?
- Now that the music program is finishing up, do you think you'll keep making music?

RELATIONSHIP

- If you were going to describe what I've been doing here, what would you say?
- For me, I feel like I've got to know you better through making music together, what's that like for you?

SKILLS

- At the end of the day, what have you got out of being in the program?

EXPERIENCE

- What has it been like for you to be a part of the music programs
 - o Examples of key things that we've done

PROCESS

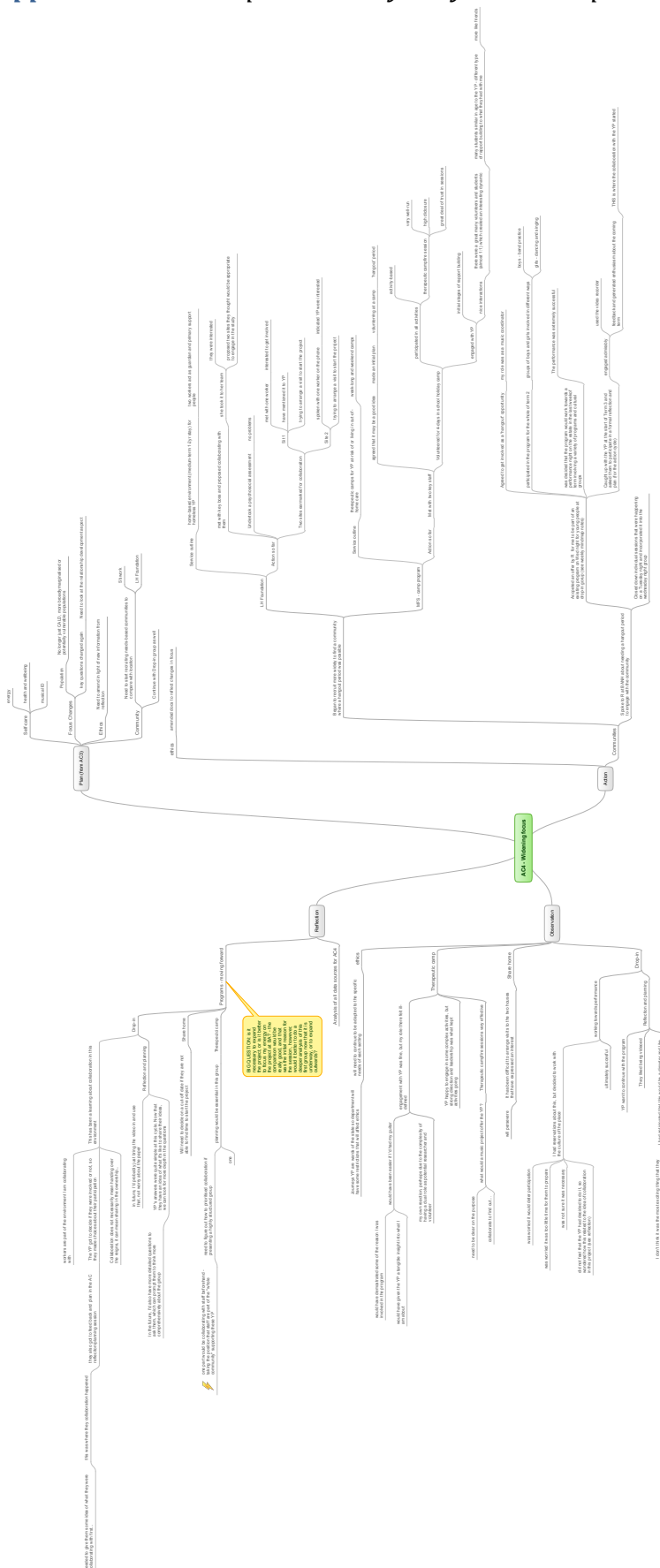
- What was it like working together – with me, with other young people?
- What did you bring?
 - o Examples "I noticed you did this"
- Do you think your ideas influenced/impacted this process at all?
 - o Examples like attendance, choice of instrument

WHAT IS IT THAT THEY HAVE TAKEN FROM BEING A PART OF THIS PROGRAM?

- What have you got out of being in the program?

PROMPTS AND INTERACTIVE REFLECTION OPTIONS

- Examples of what's happened and options for answers
- You said this before, what do you think of that now, is it different?
- I remember _____, do you remember that? What do you think about that?

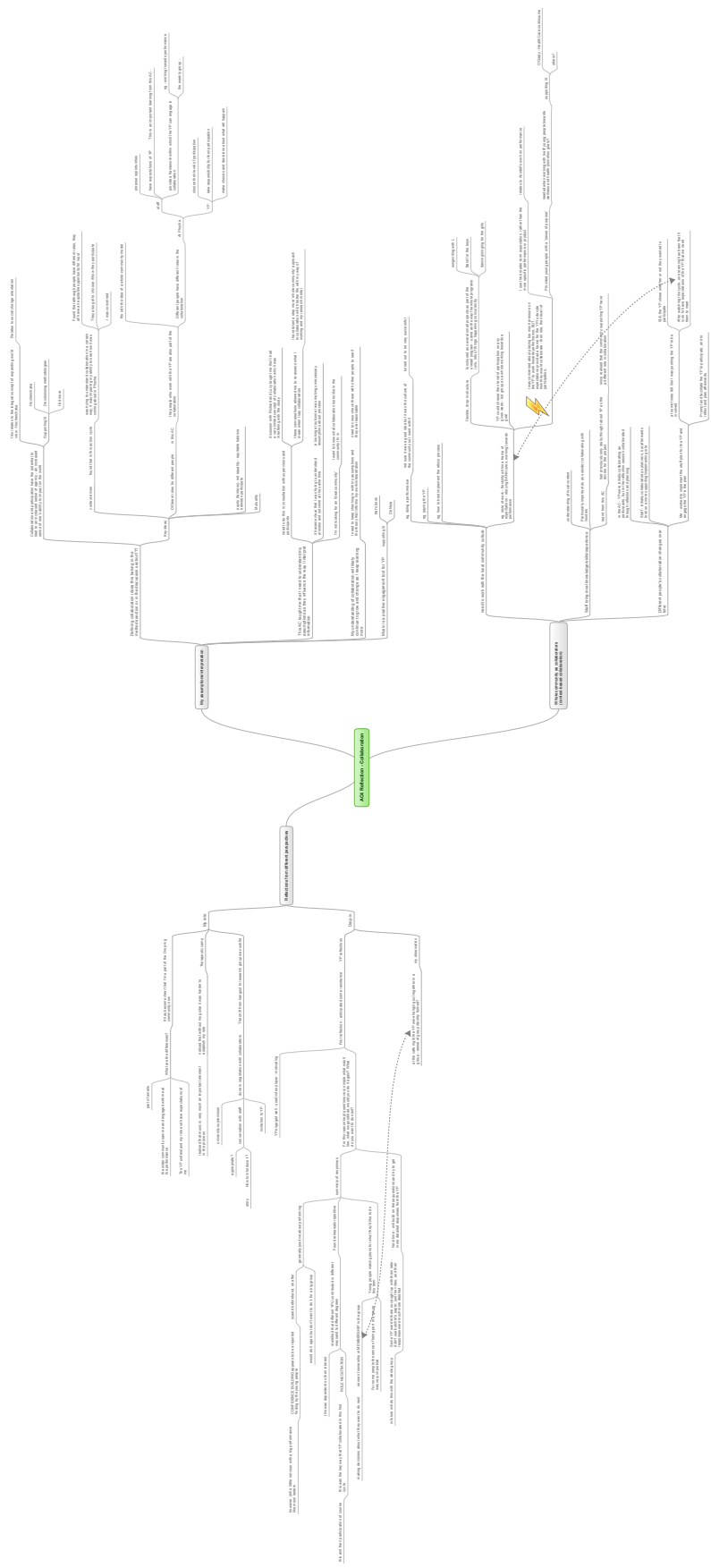


TEXT OUTLINE OF MIND MAP – Excerpt of Action Cycle 4 Map 1

- Plan (from AC3)
 - Self-care
 - energy
 - health and wellbeing
 - musical ID
 - Focus Changes
 - Population
 - No longer just CALD, more broadly marginalised or potentially vulnerable populations
 - key questions changed again
 - Need to look at the relationship development aspect
 - Ethics
 - Need to amend in light of new information from reflection
 - Community
 - Need to start recruiting needs-based communities to compare with location
 - S'swork
 - LH Foundation
 - Continue with Drop-in group as well
- Action
 - ethics
 - amended docs to reflect changes in focus
 - Communities
 - Began to recruit more widely to find a community where a hangout period was possible
 - LH Foundation
 - Service outline
 - home-based environment (medium-term 1-2yr stay) for homeless YP
 - two workers act as guardian and primary support people
 - Action so far
 - met with key boss and proposed collaborating with them
 - she took it to her team
 - they were interested
 - proposed two sites they thought would be appropriate to engage in the study
 - Undertook a psychosocial assessment
 - no problems
 - Two sites earmarked for collaboration
 - Sit 1
 - met with one worker
 - interested to get involved
 - have mentioned it to YP
 - trying to arrange a visit to start the project
 - Site 2
 - spoken with one worker on the phone
 - indicated YP were interested

- trying to arrange a visit to start the project
- MFS - camp program
 - Service outline
 - therapeutic camps for YP at-risk of or living in out-of-home care
 - week-long and weekend camps
 - Action so far
 - Met with two key staff
 - agreed that it may be a good idea
 - made an initial plan
 - volunteering at a camp
 - 'hangout' period
 - Volunteered for 4-days in school holiday camp
 - participated in all activities
 - activity-based
 - therapeutic campfire session
 - very well-run
 - high disclosure
 - great deal of trust in session
 - engaged with YP
 - initial stages of rapport building
 - nice interactions
 - there were a great many volunteers and students (almost 1:1) which created an interesting dynamic
 - many students similar in age to the YP - different type of rapport building to what they had with me
 - more like friends
- Spoke to R at BANH about needing a hangout period to engage with the community
 - Accepted an offer by R for me to be part of an existing program on Wed night for young people at drop-in group (see weekly mindmap notes)
 - Agreed to get involved as a 'hangout' opportunity
 - my role was as a music coordinator
 - participated in the program for the whole of term 2
 - groups of boys and girls involved in different ways
 - boys - band practice
 - girls - dancing and singing
 - was decided that the program would work towards a performance night on the estate in the last week of term involving a variety of programs and cultural groups
 - The performance was extremely successful

Appendix 14 – Example: Action cycle synthesis map 2



TEXT OUTLINE OF MIND MAP - Excerpt of Action Cycle 4 Map 2

- AC4 Reflection - Collaboration
 - My assumptions/interpretation
 - Defining collaboration (does this belong in the methods section or in the discussion section???)
 - Collaboration and participation have the potential to lead to an increased sense of agency - an increased sense of one's ability to impact on the world
 - this relates to the integral concept of expanding world view - Hochenchaka
 - Relates to social change orientation
 - Supporting lit
 - Hochenchaka
 - Decolonising methodologies
 - find more
 - Key ideas
 - context-driven
 - found that in this action cycle
 - was trying to understand collaboration in a certain way, it was impairing my ability to see how it was coming about in Drop-in group
 - Found that although people have different roles, they all have an equitable opportunity for input
 - They also get to choose if/how they participate
 - I was concerned
 - Different roles for different people
 - in this AC
 - the people who work with the YP are also part of the collaboration
 - fits with the idea of a whole-community model
 - Different people have different roles in the collaboration
 - At Drop-in
 - staff
 - propose opportunities
 - have expectations YP
 - This is an important learning from this AC -
 - provide a framework within which the YP can engage in collaboration
 - eg - working towards performance
 - the weekly group -
 - YP
 - choose their level of participation
 - take responsibility for their participation

- make choices and decisions about what will happen
 - equity (fairness), not equality - equitable balance between participate
 - Mutuality
- This AC taught me that I need to understand my assumptions as they influence the way I interpret information
 - need to do this in consultation with supervisors and participants
 - discussion with Richard and Lucy taught me that I had a very limited concept of collaboration which was interfering with the study
 - these conversations allowed me to re-assess what I mean when I say collaboration.
 - I have taken a step more 'whole community' approach to collaboration which better fits with my way of working and my research model
 - it became clear that I was trying to understand process and outcome at the same time
 - in looking at outcome I was making unnecessary assumptions about process
 - I'm not looking for an 'ideal community'
 - I want to know what collaboration looks like in the community I'm in
- My understanding of collaboration will likely continue to grow and change as I keep learning more
 - I need to keep checking in with my assumptions and the theory that informs my work/interpretation
 - need to cross-check these with other people to see if they are reasonable
- Music is a positive engagement tool for YP
 - supporting lit
 - Kat's book
 - De Nora
- Whole community as collaborators (context-based collaboration)
 - need to work with the local community culture
 - eg. doing a performance
 - not sure it was a good idea but it was the culture of the community so I went with it
 - turned out to be very successful
 - eg. paying the YP
 - eg. how to best implement the ethics process
 - eg. style of work - flexibility within a frame of expectations - obeying BANH rules, working towards performance
 - flexible, drop-in structure
 - functioned as several small projects as part of the overall program - same as the way the whole programs runs, lots of things happening concurrently
 - songwriting with L
 - Band for the boys
 - dancing/singing for the girls
 - YP could choose their level of participation on any given week - but group as a whole working towards a goal

Appendix 15 – Excerpt: ‘YouTube’ style reporting documents for young people

Your **Views**

What happened after we did those interviews anyway...?



Browse



lebolger@student.unimelb.edu

You guys rocked – and this is what you said about it...



7,958,728,680

Published on 23 Aug 2012 by [LucyBolger](#)

Three awesome groups of young people from different places around Melbourne worked with me to create their own music projects. Each project was different, and each group decided what their project would be about and worked together with me to make it happen.

We found out by experience what that process was like, and what it could be used for.

Young people from all three groups gave their opinions about what their experience in the music project was like.

You all had different opinions and ideas, and I've grouped them into topics. I've included quotes here from different people that represent different perspectives on these topics.

Although you come from different places and have had different experiences, you were all an important part of this project. These are examples of what you all said about it, and what I found out from your opinions and reflections.

What do you think? Maybe it sounds about right to you, or maybe I got it completely wrong – maybe your thoughts are totally different! This was your experience, so if there is anything you want to like, dislike or comment on – please do! You can contact me about it on:

lebolger@student.unimelb.edu.au

Category:

Research

Your Comments

Topic: Making choices about getting involved

“...the most important part was that everyone in the (group) got to participate...”

about [making choices](#)

“...I had my own opinions towards (the music program), and I could make my own decisions, it wasn't like you turned around and pressured us into doing anything. And like, if you said 'hey, let's do this' and I said 'no', you wouldn't have cared, you would have said 'alright then, we'll work on something else'... It was good. I guess I was more into doing (music) this time around because I wasn't being forced to do it, it was something that I was deciding to do myself.”

about [making choices](#)

What matters about making choices...

Everyone involved

Everyone has choices about their participation

Everyone committed to the project

For me, it was important that everyone came together for a good reason, to play music, and it was like, even if I wasn't in the core group at the time, I was still part of it. It was nice to know that it was there and available if I wanted to be involved.

about [making choices](#)

"...like, if you want to play, you're going to have to play. You chose to play, and you just can't quit half way. So that's when I want those people that chose to play to have to play..."

about [making choices](#)

It sounds like for some of you, getting to choose and control the way you got involved in the project was important in the music project, even if that meant you just chose to watch and listen. When you're working in a group, it sounds like once people have made the choice to participate, it helps if everyone stays committed to the project because you're relying on the whole group to make the music project happen, and everyone's part counts.

[LucyBolger](#) reflecting on your comments about [making choices](#)

Appendix 16 – Excerpt: Summary document of YP's quotes

J3	Lyric writing	It was fun, because you got different ideas, it wasn't all on your own,	- Liked that everyone contributed together – shared process good
J3	Lyric writing	no pressure at all, it was just chilled out, people dropping in words, people helping, people weren't,	- Liked that people could choosing how they wanted to participate
J3	Comment on group process, putting the song together	Oh, we had a couple of difficulties, a couple of people in and out, people didn't make up their minds, a couple of people didn't feel comfortable. But I felt like I can do it, I just didn't mind getting up there.	- challenges of group process, uncertainty, difference of opinion - self in relation to group
J3	Rehearsals – informal bit of process	Doing a couple of rehearsals here. It was hilarious. It was fun as.	- rehearsals fun
J3	What the whole idea of a song was like	It's made us all connect a bit more... because, how it all started. We were all sitting there, and then one by one we all started getting closer and closer and more people joined in and done the whole song and it got us all together	- process of songwriting connected the group - progressive engagement in the process

Appendix 17 – Summary of young people's overall position towards each category

Young Person	CHOICE IN PARTICIPATION Making choices about getting involved	TANGIBLE PURPOSE - working towards something	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT- showing or telling the world	COLLABORATIVE SUPPORT STYLE - the role of the music therapist	PATHWAYS - moving towards independence
Share home YP1	not being forced to do it made her more interested in being involve - it was something she was deciding to do herself	Gave the young people something to look forward to - the music project itself was something to work towards; performance was scary	Everyone got to see that she could sing - being seen/acknowledged	helper'; friend; brought new ideas; brought everyone together; working together with the music helped her build trust in me	Wanted the project to continue; no concrete plans to continue herself - will see what comes up
Share home YP2	Liked knowing it was there even if she didn't directly engage - knew that she could if she wanted to	didn't engage in any performance/recording stuff - indicated that with more time she would have liked to do some recording, but 'in a year or so'	Said she was too shy and nervous to do that - but expressed an interest in the abstract, but said she would be too nervous	Mentioned that the program was individualised to suit different people; brought resources, brought everyone together - saw my role as for those who didn't already have a strong idea of the power of music - feels she already has that	Would have liked the program to continue - indicated that in the future there was the chance she would engage in different ways with the music, but didn't feel she could/wanted to at this time
Share home YP3	Not hugely emphasised by this YP - perhaps because he was very engaged from the start and directed his involvement throughout. He did, however, say that he learnt how to collaborate - so like an interpersonal approach to collaboration	YP was very 'production' focussed - working towards something was very important to him and he had a clear sense of what it was he wanted to work towards	Having his song heard was a big deal for YP - he emphasised lyrics and emotinal expression, so being heard was important to him. Being acknowledged and heard was important to him	Saw me as a collaborator and 'teacher' - learnt things from me about working together with people, saw that as my role	Would have liked the program to continue - saw a great deal of future potential but didn't see himself as in a position to explore that himself. He wanted to keep doing it with me (may be due to limited program time)
Drop-in YP1	Felt it was good to have me to keep the group 'on track'. Felt that he was more motivated than others at times	Having a direction was important - keeping things on track; also 'locking in' a process by recording it was good	wanted to share what he was doing and was proud of it- keen to put his music on facebook - less of an emphasis on other people's reactions	band manager' role - keeping everyone on track and in a direction; following up on the group's ideas	Very important to YP - saw this as an opportunity; worked through the program towards getting into VET music - ultimate goal of pursuing a career in music; took his experiences in the group and used them to extend into other areas of his life/future
Drop-in YP2	This was conflicting for YP He saw that after some time, commitment was required of all the people involved so that they could achieve what they set out to. He was frustrated by other's lack of commitment	Practice was important to YP - the gaining of skills seemed to be enough to work towards for him	This didn't come up with YP in discussion	My role was important - he saw me as the person who made this possible	Gto the sense that he could keep playing independently - in his room. Feels like the program gave people an idea of having a future in music - not a concrete plan forward
Drop-in YP3	Got annoyed and bored when people asked him to get involved and rehearse when he wanted to play on computers	For YP the point of working towards something was that he got paid if he rehearsed and did the performance; also found the recording motivating as he didn't want to 'stuff it up'	Didn't really seem to come into it for Brandon - the motivator for performing was that he got paid - which is a kind of acknowledgement I guess	I was a teacher/helper person in the group, keeping things going, showing how to play	Can see how he would like to play with his friends in the future, but not very self-motivated to arrange it himself
Camp YP1	Didn't really touch on this	Developing the 'product' of the song was important as it was something that she could listen to to remind her of camp and good times	For YP having her experiences heard by others was important;	YP saw my role as a 'musician' so my feedback was highly valued when I told her she was good at playing the drums	Didn't really touch on this - uses her song independently now to remind her of the program
Camp YP2	Getting everyone involved together was an important thing for YP	Didn't really touch on this	For YP her favourite part was performing the song on graduation day - she talks a lot about the process of singing, rather than the words, so I would interpret that being seen was important to her, but she also mentioned that there were personal things in the song	Saw me as the person who brought it all together and made it happen	Didn't really touch on this
Camp YP3	The fact that it was chilled out and people could input what they liked was important to YP	Didn't really touch on this	Being seen - up in front on the mic - was important to YP	I bought access to equipment	Thinks he'll start rapping again and writing his own raps

Young Person	CHANGED SELF CONCEPT - a new way of looking at myself	SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND MASTERY - Growing as musicians	PEER CONNECTION - strengthening connections in the group	Most important for this young person	Least important for this young person
Share home YP1	Built up more confidence; belief in self and own abilities increased	re-connected with her own skills and took them more seriously	Felt more connected to the people in the group; gave them something to look forward to	Building confidence in self; connected to group; being acknowledged	Pathways - happy to just go with the flow; working towards something - no real emphasis on process of working towards performance - however, being acknowledged was significant
Share home YP2	Felt she already had a strong sense of her relationship with music and the importance of it - so she didn't need the music project for that . BUT also expressed an interest in doing things in the future if she was less shy - perhaps shyness an inhibiting factor for her...?	Felt too shy at the moment to build on her existing skills, but saw the potential for that if she'd had more time (also - boyfriend around which changed the dynamic for her)	Liked seeing everyone come together for a good reason - giving them something to share as a group	Connectedness with the group, bringing everyone together. Making choices about being involved. Also indicated some potential for more engagement on her part but that there wasn't time	Sense of self - she already had a good relationship with music and was happy with how she used it so didn't need the music project for that.
Share home YP3	Gained a sense of achievement out of what he was able to do by creating and having his some performed.	This was very important to YP - gaining skills in songwriting and learning new ways of working on his ideas - feels this was the most important part of the program	Collaborating with others was important - very much focused on within the process, rather than more general connectedness	Working towards something - production; Learning new skills in songwriting; having his ideas heard - exposure; Pathways important but not independent yet for YP	making choices about getting involved; connectedness;
Drop-in YP1	More confident now through having chances to perform and be in the program - has lead into other areas of his life; identified himself as a leader in the group - people came to him to make decisions etc	Feels like he has had good new experiences that will support him in the future; feels like his understanding of songwriting has increased; feels like he has more of a sense of his style as a rapper	Found working with the group frustrating at times when other people didn't take it seriously and he wanted to; found it helpful having lots of people's input in songwriting	Pathways - using the music project to steer him towards his goals; skills and mastery - to support his future direction ; sense of self - got more confidence; working towards something	Connectedness - more individualised goals; making choices about getting involved - didn't acknowledge this as important, however, this is inherent in this drop-in program anyway
Drop-in YP2	Saw himself as a musician where he hadn't in the past -	A sense of learning and skill development was important - feels like he got better and better	Felt conflicted about his role - didn't want to be nagging everyone to participate - describes feeling like things got 'broken apart' because they had different ideals - I think he communicates that this alienated him from his peers (didn't say so explicitly)	Skill development/new experiences and sense of self; my role in facilitating opportunities for him; in a reverse way - making choices - needed people to commit, and in a reverse way - connectedness - felt disconnected from peers	Begin heard and acknowledged didn't seem to matter to him, nor did working towards something
Drop-in YP3	Not really something YP touched on	Said access to the instruments meant he got the chance to practice and develop his skills more	Felt annoyed by the group when they made him practice or said he wasn't good enough; motivated to play with his friends, brought a friend to the group and enjoyed playing with him	working towards something - money; skills/mastery - access to drums; in a reverse way - connectedness - found the other YP annoying but motivated to play with his friend	new way of looking at self; being heard and acknowledged;
Camp YP1	She was proud of the song and what they were able to achieve; also saw herself as a good drummer, which is not something she'd ever seen herself as in the past	Developed skills as a drummer	Found that writing the song together connected her to her peers as they all shared the same experience; found it was good working together on the project	Being heard was important to YP - communicating with others through the song; Sense of self - view of herself as a musician was new for her; Connection to peers through experience, reflected in song	making choices about getting involved; Pathways
Camp YP2	Didn't seem to be a strong outcome for yp	Didn't touch on this - already had a high level of vocal skill	That everyone connected and worked together and was represented was important to yp	Connectedness and having everyone's input was important to Jane;	Pathways
Camp YP3	didn't really touch on this- already confident in skills	brought the rap back' - and extended it, now he would think about writing his own raps	Connection developed between people through working and playing together	Being acknowledged; Connecting with others; skill development	Working towards something; changed sense of self