

Investigating Musical Activities In BC Correctional Institutions

Jules Dawkins
Dr. Steven Capaldo
School of Music
July 2025

Purpose

An understanding of the operational musical activities in BC institutions could inform future research into the effectiveness, consistency, and cultural responsiveness of these programs. Most of the literature on musical practices in carceral settings is from the United States and the United Kingdom. Examining activities in BC provides information on Canadian contexts, for example, musical practices in place to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in Canadian institutions.

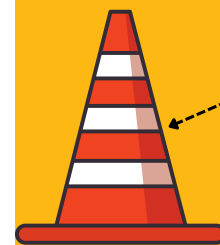
Objectives

To create a report answering the following:

- What musical activities are or have been offered to institutionalized individuals in provincial and federal correctional facilities in BC?
- What proportion of incarcerated individuals partake in organized musical activities?
- Which demographics are participating in organized musical activities?

Method

A mixed-method survey is sent to programs directors of provincial and federal correctional facilities in BC. Data is collected and analyzed in conjunction with surrounding literature to create a report.



Literature: Review of 54 Articles on Music in Carceral Settings

17
Focus on Music for Education/Recreation

11
Other/Multiple Categories

13
Focus on Music Therapy

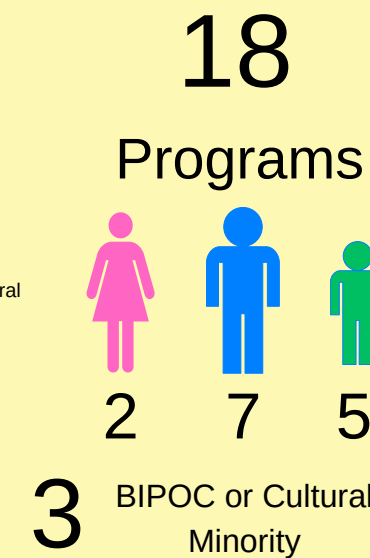
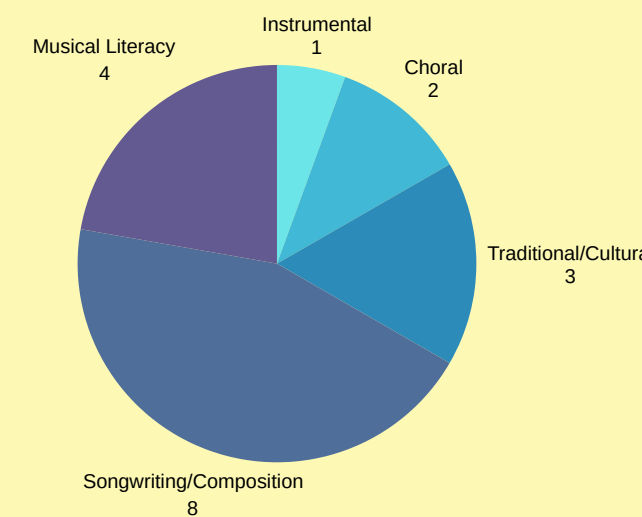
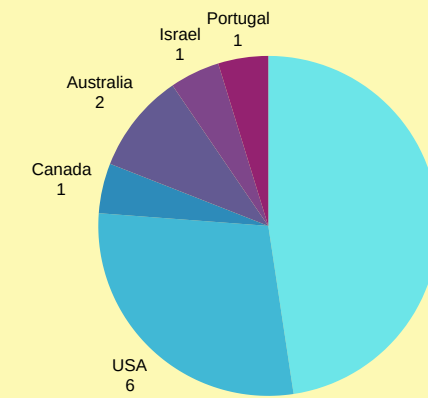
13
Focus on Music for Social Coherence/Identity Formation

16
Articles

1
Systematic Review

1
Report

2
Theses



Notable Programs

Good Vibrations

Participants are taught about Gamelan and Indonesian culture and learn how to play Gamelan instruments.

Finding Rhythms

Music charity that pairs UK artists with incarcerated individuals to create a collaborative music tape.

The Lullaby Project

Pairs professional musicians with new or expectant refugee mothers and incarcerated fathers to create a lullaby.

This research was supported by the Valerie Kuehne Undergraduate Research Awards, University of Victoria and supervised by Dr. Steven Capaldo

