Teaching Music to Students with Autism and Sensory Processing Challenges
January 19 and 20, 2019

Prevalence of autism spectrum disorder has steadily increased in recent years, and more music teachers are encountering students with autism in their studios or music classrooms. Research has shown that people with autism may process music differently than people without autism, and that there are superior abilities in many areas of music learning and perception; but unlocking that potential and helping students with autism navigate possible difficulties can be daunting. In this workshop, participants will start to understand approach teaching music to students with autism in a way that will make learning accessible to the student. An emphasis will be placed on sensory processing difficulties, as music is a multi-sensory activity and this can be challenging to navigate in a music lesson setting. In addition to autism, difficulties with sensory processing are a part of many diagnoses, including FASD, ADHD, sensory processing disorders, anxiety disorders, and giftedness. Understanding sensory profiles can be complex, but is essential to being able to successfully adapt music lessons for students who struggle with these issues.

The following topics will be covered in the two-day workshop:

• Characteristics and learning profiles in autism
• Music processing in people with autism and sensory processing challenges
• Understanding sensory profiles and how to develop sensory-friendly lessons
• Evidence-based teaching strategies and adaptations