

## Video Transcript: First Excerpt from Sleep Interview with Debbie Benkovitz

**Debbie:**

Hi, my name is Debbie Benkovitz, and I'm a music therapist at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC. One of my main jobs here at Children's, something I'm called for more often than not, is to help children relax and sometimes to help them go to sleep. The hospital can be anxiety-producing, and because children are sick they have things done to them—different procedures, starting IVs, getting dressing changes that are uncomfortable, taking medications, doing treatments that don't feel well—and music can actually help children cope with these procedures. Also, there's children who aren't used to being in the environment of a hospital, and quite often, I'm called upon to help them go to sleep.

I'd like to give you two little demonstrations of things that I might do. First example would be working with a young child who maybe is just agitated and restless. Probably, the child is not feeling well, maybe they've been touched and handled a lot during the day by doctors, the environment just is not normal. So I may go to a baby or a toddler and find out what songs they are familiar with, songs that perhaps their families have sung to them, or grandparents, or maybe a song that they learned at school, and it might be a something as simple as this.

*[Debbie begins to gently strum her guitar and hum a verse of Brahms' "Lullaby." After finishing the verse, she continues to strum as she speaks.]*

I can also use the child's name right into the song if I wanted to. Let's say I have a baby named Mary.

*[Debbie continues strumming and sings the following verse to the tune of Brahms' "Lullaby."]*

Little Mary, time to sleep  
Time to close your eyes  
Sweet dreams, Mary dear  
Everything will be alright.

*[Debbie stops singing and playing.]*

And so on, you can imagine how that could work.