Objectives

1. Make a case for OT Leisure Coaching;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the benefits and barriers to participation in leisure activities for children/youth with autism;
3. Describe the pilot findings of an OT Leisure Coaching model program designed to foster leisure participation; and
4. Based on case scenarios, envision opportunities for providing OT Leisure Coaching in school, clinic and community settings using individual, group or school-wide strategies.

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Shifting Our Focus
Strengths and Positive Mental Health (i.e. happiness)

Strategies:

- Create supportive and inclusive environments for enjoyable & meaningful participation → contributes to QoL and positive mental health (gives them a ‘good feeling’) (Vermeulen, 2014)
- Ensure opportunities to be exposed to a broad variety of community-based activities in order to help youth identify and develop strengths, interests, hobbies and talents


Who has the right to participate in play, leisure, sports, crafts, arts, music, theater?

Jason McElwain
**BENEFITS of Leisure Participation**

*Promotes positive mental health & builds resilience*

- Participation in *enjoyable activities* brings about *positive emotions* – joy, pleasure, contentment, creativity ...

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**Meaningful Leisure Participation**

- **Positive Youth Development:** Leisure is a context for positive youth development (Larson, 2000)
- **Key features:**
  - regular participation schedules,
  - direction by one or more adults,
  - rule-guided interaction,
  - emphasis on skill development,
  - performance requires sustained active attention over time and the provision of feedback

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**OT Leisure Coaching**

*An Every Moment Counts Initiative*

**Why needed?**

- Youth with disabilities generally have less access to school and community-sponsored leisure activities.

- **Barriers to participation** – Lack of inclusive programs, transportation, financial resources, developmental status of youth (Fenech, 2008)

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**Vision:** All children & youth have a right to participate in and enjoy healthy hobbies and interests.

**OT Leisure Coaching Pilot Study**

*Phase 1 (Spring 2014) & Phase 2 (2014-16)*

- **Goal:** Help Children and Youth Develop Healthy and Enjoyable Hobbies and Interests
  - Who? 22 O% with 22 children/youth with disabilities
    - School-based
    - Clinic-based
    - Community-based
  - **What?** OT coaching to foster interest exploration and participation
  - **When?** During school or after-school hours

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**Public Health Approach to …. **

**... OT Leisure Coaching**

- **Tier 3** → Individual
- **Tier 2** → Targeted
- **Tier 1** → Universal
Findings Phase 1 ~ Individual Leisure Coaching: The Process

1. Start the conversation – Meet with child/youth and parents – educate them about the importance of hobbies/interest; obtain buy-in
2. Interest Exploration Inventory: Spark an interest – complete Interest Inventory with child/youth;
3. Explore school or community-sponsored options
4. Make a match and a plan entry
5. Just do it! OT coaching to foster success
6. Occupational reflection and future plans

Findings Phase 1 ~ Lessons Learned

• OT’s Role: 1) Amount of time/effort depends on the family’s resources (transportation, finances); the young person’s developmental skills and challenges; 2) Focus first on successful and enjoyable leisure participation, and second, on improving skills (top-down approach)

• Need to build capacity of children/youth and families about the importance of leisure participation and how to identify interests and plan participation

Example: Private Practice OT

School-age male with ASD: Andrew
1. Start the conversation
2. Completed interest checklist; sounded interested in pottery
3. Explored options - found local pottery class at a rec center
4. Made a match – Talked with instructor
5. Just do it! Took the class; needed minimal to no OT input
6. Reflection: “Pottery is perfect!”, sought private lessons; occupational spin-off (Reibero & Cook, 1999)

Focus of rest of session:

OT Leisure Coaching in:
1. School settings
2. Clinic/community settings

• Making a case to do this within your OT role
• How to document and bill for services
• Case vignettes – individual and group

OT Leisure Coaching in School Settings

Teri LaGuardia, Julie Brizes, Paula Michaud, David Weiss

OTs need to make a case for promoting leisure participation as a part of our role in schools during non-academic times of the school day:
• Recess, lunch
• After school

HOW to make a case? First, it’s the LAW!

Addressing extracurricular recreation activities is in IDEA

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Sec. 300.107 Nonacademic services)

States must ensure the following:
(a) ... provision of supplementary aids and services determined appropriate and necessary by the child’s IEP Team, to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities.
(b) Nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities may include ... athletics, ...recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by the public agency, ... Etc.

http://idea.ed.gov/#/state/IN/about/300.107
In providing or arranging for the provision of nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, including meals, recess periods, and the services and activities set forth in Sec. 300.107, each public agency must ensure that each child with a disability participates with nondisabled children in the extracurricular services and activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of that child. The public agency must ensure that each child with a disability has the supplementary aids and services determined by the child’s IEP Team to be appropriate and necessary for the child to participate in nonacademic settings.

How and when can OTs make a case for promoting leisure participation?

1) Talk about the importance of leisure participation while interacting with students and families on a daily basis!
2) IEP meetings – It’s their right to participate! Be a leisure advocate!
   • Section 9 of IEP: NON ACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – In what ways does the child have opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities with nondisabled peers – school or community-sponsored? Talk about some of the student’s interests and how you can help promote successful participation
   • Section 6 of IEP: MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS - How can you embed leisure participation in fine motor, sensory, or social participation goals?

Teri LaGuardia, MOT, OTR/L
How she did it → Recess Groups
• Setting: Suburban school setting
• Look for an ‘open door’ or need for OT services to address social and leisure participation
  – Listening at ETR or IEP meetings
  – Consultation with teachers, SLPs, PTs, school counselor and other staff members
  – Communicating with students
• Do something in response to a need!
  – Concerns noted by parent/team at ETR meeting – 2nd grade and a 4th grade student struggling with social interaction and friendships; both being bullied

Teri LaGuardia, MOT, OTR/L
Recess Groups – ‘Friendship and Activity Detectives’
• What? Developed group to meet the needs of Tier 2, ‘at-risk’ students – included victims of bullying and those identified as ‘bullies’
  – SECOND GRADE - 9 students; 8 weeks
  – FOURTH GRADE – 5 students; 8 weeks
• Focus of groups? Healthy leisure exploration and participation, friendship promotion, SEL, and (playing games)
• Followed HOPE curriculum (Healthy Occupations for Positive Emotions) (Bazyk, 2011) – occupation-based groups with SEL weekly theme

Julie Brizes, EdD, OTR/L: How she did it → OT Leisure Coaching with students on caseload
Setting: Suburban school
Shelly: 10 yo, 5-6th grade, spina bifida & Type 1
• Started the discussion of leisure participation & possible new interests – something ‘portable’
• IEP objective (multi-step fine motor activity)
• Interest Inventory
• Explored High School website for clubs
• Shelly chose crocheting; found scarf pattern
• Taught basic stitches; repeated practice and faded assist
• Encouraged her to work on it at home once full learning of the task occurred

Expanded my Leisure Coaching:

Shelly and Maya

- Started 6th grade project with Shelly – vocational interest is pastry chef
- Explored options: found ‘Youth Chef Academy’ baking class via internet
- Let’s invite friend, Maya!
- Maya: 11 yo, TBI, cortical blindness
  - Leisure activities restricted secondary to blindness
- Talked with families; obtained permission
- Phone contact community setting; discussed access & feasibility
- Assisted students in registering via computer ➔ SUPER EXCITED!

Shelly and Maya: Baking Cookies!

- Met at Youth Chef Academy (YCA)
- OT’s assistance: Only as much as needed for successful participation
  - Oriented Maya to physical surroundings due to visual impairment
  - Recommended seating arrangement
  - Shelly assisted Maya to give her objects or describe position of objects
- Girls’ responses: Excited to bring cookies home to share with family; Texted pictures to friends; Talked to friends about activity at lunch; Planning more cooking experiences;

Other Success Stories

Paula Michaud, MEd, OTR/L ~ Alex

Autism, Anxiety Disorder, Home Schooled

Alex – 16 yo. Single father; twin brother
Home schooled due to extreme anxiety

OT Leisure Coaching strategies:
1) Met with father in private to discuss challenges, strengths, interests
2) Met with Alex and father to discuss self-regulation and coping strategies ➔ bucket analogy

Other Success Stories

Paula Michaud, MEd, OTR/L ~ Alex

Autism, Anxiety Disorder, Home Schooled

3) Problem-solved strategies for attending concert
4) Interest in theatre –
  - Explored opportunities in community; found adapted theatre program
  - Eased into program (identified coping strategies)
  - Peer coach
  - Mary Poppins performance!

David Weiss, OTR/L: How I did it ➔

OT Leisure Coaching in an alternative school

Setting: Alternative school (Positive Education Program-PEP)

Kelson: 13 yo male with anxiety disorder (NOS), ASD, optic nerve hypoplasia, SED (severe emotional disturbance)

- Very social, enjoys playing, helpful with tasks,
- Attending challenges, motor incoordination, no leisure interests outside of home

Family: single mom; low income

- She struggles with behavioral outbursts; calls 911
- Frequent hospitalizations
- Limited neighborhood opportunities for active play; card table with art activities at home for indoor leisure
OT Leisure Coaching Process - Kelson

1. Start the conversation – Talked with mother about importance of leisure; mother – “I want him to be able to be a part of a team like other kids… and have male role models.”
   - Obtained support from principal
2. Interest exploration: Interested in watching football
3. Explore community-sponsored options: Searched for adaptive sports programs; found Achievement Centers for Children adapted football
4. Make a match and a plan: multiple phone calls and visits; fill out application, assist with securing funds, reminders of upcoming events
5. Just do it! OT coaching/support during the football session; direct 1:1 with Kyle; support for volunteers
6. Occupational reflection & future plans: Checked back with mother and Kyle about how things were going; followed up with adapted soccer in winter

OT Leisure Coaching in School Settings

POSITIVE OUTCOMES:
Children: enhanced self-esteem, feeling happy, development of friends and enjoyable leisure activities
Parents – happy, proud and more confident about child’s ability to engage in more leisure pursuits

It CAN be done using embedded strategies:
• Foster leisure during recess, lunch, or after-school times of the day – look for ‘open doors’
• Identify opportunities to work on developing leisure interests as part of IEP goals

OT Leisure Coaching in Clinic and Community Settings

Karen Thompson-Repas, MBA, OTR/L

Making the case is easy!
• Children/youth receive OT services after-school and during the summer which are natural times for leisure exploration & participation to occur for children & youth
• OT has access to parents during or after therapy sessions to collaborate and educate them about the benefits of leisure for mental & physical health and friendship & skill development
• Bottom line: Leisure participation is a part of our scope of practice in OT!

OT Leisure Coaching in a Private Practice

Karen Thompson-Repas, MBA, OTR/L

The Process:
1. Start the conversation: Ask - What do you do for fun? What do you do during your free time? Talk with the child and parents about the health and social benefits of leisure participation
2. Interest Inventory: What would you like to do that you don’t currently do? Use an interest inventory to explore possibilities
3. Explore Community-based Options: Use internet to explore and complete Environmental Scan; provides resources & ideas
4. Make a match and a plan to do it: Act as case manager and offer resources as needed
5. Do it! OT coaching help with successful participation as needed. Bill with CPT Code 97530 Therapeutic Activities - OT Intervention Goals can: 1) Directly focus on developing a healthy hobby or leisure interest; or 2) leisure activity can be used as a means to attain a fine motor, sensory or social participation goal
6. Leisure participation reflection and future plans with youth and family

A sampling of current private practice clients’ leisure pursuits

Athletic (adapted & integrated)
• Taekwondo
• Basketball
• Soccer
• Gymnastics
• Cheerleading
• Baseball
• Skiing
• Horseback riding
• Swimming

Creative Arts
• Piano lessons
• Dance
• Recreation Center arts & crafts

Community
• Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts
• Library: story time, read-a-thon
• Nature Center programs
• Recreation Center programs
• Sensory friendly and no cost films at local theaters

Video – Kelson

Community-Based Recreation/Leisure: Kelson’s Story

Leisure matters for all children and youth! In this video, you’ll see Kelson participating in community-based adapted soccer programs. Despite his developmental disabilities and emotional and behavioral challenges, Kelson has been successfully playing adapted soccer and experiences great joy in doing so. Watch and hear how his mother tells about the benefits of participation for her son and family. Kelson’s success as a therapist, his family, and his coaches all want to see him succeed. Design your own leisure programs and activities for Kelson and youth just like Kelson. Learn more about our programs and how you can engage in significant development and meaningful participation for significant development and meaningful participation for youth with special needs than ever before, and you’ll be inspired to engage in significant development and meaningful participation for youth with special needs than ever before, and you’ll be inspired to engage
OT Leisure Coaching in Outpatient Facility
Mary Lou Kennedy, OTR/L

Setting: Cleveland Clinic Children’s Outpatient Facility; provides OT, PT, ST for children/youth ages birth–21 yo

Background: Became a part of Every Moment Counts initiative–learned about mental health promotion, prevention and intervention and became an OT Leisure Coach
• Shared information with all therapy staff via inservice
• Hosted MH Awareness Day fair as a part of OT Week activities
• Encouraged others to address leisure as a part of OT services

Indivdual OT Leisure Coaching
Mary Lou Kennedy, OTR/L

Dori: 12 yo with mitochondrial disease; received outpatient OT/PT every other week

Background: Participated in adapted aquatics lessons 1-2 times/month for 7 years with OT instructor (individualized lessons)

OT Leisure Coaching: My role as a rec/leisure advocate
• Felt she would benefit from becoming a part of a team—socially and emotionally (eg, making friends, building confidence, etc.)
• OT strategy—Assisted in transition by getting her to attend a practice for a local para olympic swim team—She loved it!
• Result: Joined the team; swims 3x/week; competes in meets; expanded circle of friends both in and out of school; decreased need for outpatient OT/PT

Game Break Group
OT Leisure Coaching in Outpatient Clinic
Jenny Negrey, MOT, OTR/L & Julie Schultze, MOT, OTR/L

Logistics: Two OT facilitators; billed using group code
• 5 weeks, 1 day/week after school for 1 hour
• 7 youth ages 8-11 (range of diagnoses including ASD, anxiety, developmental delays)

Group components:
• Began with a short ice breaker/intro activity (5 min.)
• Played 1 game each week: Charades/Pictionary, Outburst Jr., Puzzles, Trivial Pursuit Kids, Uno/Dominoes
• Group reflection and homework at end: How did you like the game? Would you play it again at home? What did you learn?
• Families received an information sheet each week about how to play and/or modify the game at home

At final group:
• each child picked a game to take home
• Families received a packet on how to implement a family game night at home and an extensive list of appropriate games

Reactions of children & families: Very positive!
• Children learned how to play games, take turns and interact socially in positive ways; developed friendships
• Parents were very please to see their children learning how to play games, make new friends, and be happy.
**Game Break Group**

The Game Break Group: Healthy Hobbies and Interests

- Focuses on healthy hobbies and interests
- Promoting healthy habits and interests
- In an outpatient clinic setting

**Driver’s Ed**

- Anger management group
- Based off book *What to do when your temper flares* (Dawn Huebner)
- Teaches skills to tame anger in a fun interactive way
- Uses activities such as making a no-sew pillow, volcano experiment, etc.
- 10 sessions, billed as OT group

**Young Artists**

- Uses art to promote positive leisure participation and educate caregivers on the importance of leisure participation
- Enhances social skills through participation in meaningful activity
- Each session focuses on a different artist and children re-create one of their famous works of art (Warhol, Picasso, Van Gogh, etc.)
- 8 sessions, billed as OT group
- Art show at end, showcasing all the works of art created with raffle and awards

**Mindful Movement**

- Focuses on breathing techniques, body awareness techniques, yoga poses and relaxation exercises
- Offered to all children; do not have to be a current patient
- Billed as out-of-pocket group; families pay a fee for participation in the 6-8 week group
Mindful Movement

Parent Education

- We have the parents in our office as a captive audience
- Use that opportunity to share research on importance of positive leisure participation
- Share community resources and funding options
- Educate on local resource fairs to obtain additional information

Community-based Leisure ~ Local Recreation Center

The KIDnections Group
Maria Llerena, OTR/L
Jamie Hughes, MA CCC/SLP
Elizabeth Radachi, BCaBA

The KIDnections Group
www.kidnections.com

Who we currently serve?
Children/youth with ASD and other disabilities/challenges
- School age children ages 8+ with social and communicative challenges looking for fun activities outside of school/home/therapy
- Teens with social communication challenges looking to meet new people, learn new skills, spend time away from home/school.
- Teens with physical disabilities wanting to share time with each other in a social setting but with support (cooking party w/ Youth Challenge)
- Children of all ages and abilities wanting to cook with friends

What we do

Classes
- Cooking
- DIY gifts class
- Pack a brown bag lunch
- Plan your own party and meals
- Games
- Arts and Crafts
- Lego Groups

Parties and other
- Cooking parties
- Library programs (Orange library)
- Other organizations (Friendship Circle Camp)
Our classes teach

Self-help (ADL & IADL)
- Hygiene
- Cooking and food safety
- Clean up
- Serving others
- Following directions

Motor Skills
- Writing and drawing
- Art and crafts
- Kitchen tools
- Tying an apron
- Opening, closing manipulating materials

Princess Cooking Party

What else our classes provide

The KIDnections Group cooking class

Exploration of Independence
“She made toast for herself after class. She’s never done that!”
- Drop off, recreational program
- Independence from family
- Fun and safe setting
- Experienced therapists

“She ate a burger!”

New interests
Student’s recipe book – created himself using recipes from class, grandmother, and own findings.

Social opportunity
Parties, having fun with peers Reviews (Recipe, Game) to share with others.
Natural conversation and fun

Promoting mental health in those with significant disabilities or mental illness

Seth Chwast – Cleveland, OH

www.growyourbrainart.com

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vvnfo@ePyZ
Vision: All children & youth have a right to participate in and enjoy healthy hobbies and interests.

OT Leisure Coaching: Make it your business!

Take away message: School and after-school clinic settings provide ideal opportunities to provide leisure coaching.

Enrich your practice and enrich the lives of children/youth by addressing the well being of every aspect of their lives – including, and especially, leisure pursuits!

Every Moment Counts: Promoting Mental Health Throughout the Day

Visit www.everymomentcounts.org to learn about all of our model programs.

Ohio Department of Education, Office of Exceptional Children
3-Year grant led by occupational therapists (2012-2015)

Useful Resources


Useful Resources

Useful Resources

- BOSTnet (Build the out-of-school time network), www.bostnet.org - Check out inclusion guide: Promoting Inclusion of children & youth with disabilities: Tips and tools for after school professionals. Excellent resource.

- National Institute on Out-Of-School Time (NIOST), www.niost.org - Mission is to ensure that all children, youth and families have access to quality programs, activities and opportunities. Website includes publications and resources.

- After School Matters: Promotes positive after school activity participation for teens. www afterschoolmatters.org

References


