Synopsis

References

1. Virtual Playgroup: An Online **Transdisciplinary Play Experience for Toddlers**

With Kathryn M. Loukas, OTD, MS, OTR/L, FAOTA, Jill Blackstock, MOT, OTR/L, LEND **Graduate**; Grace Laughlin, DPT; Eileen Ricci, PT, DPT, MS, P.C.S.; Laurie L. Mack, MA., CCC-SLP; Valerie Jones, LMSW

For over a decade, the University of New England's Transdisciplinary Playgroup has provided an inclusive playgroup' experience in a community setting for toddlers aged 18-36 months both with and without disabilities. Over more than a decade the Transdisciplinary Playgroup has supported children and families; provided education to interprofessional students; and become a backdrop for scholarship. The Playgroup provides an important learning experience for students in UNE's Westbrook College of Health Professions with students from the occupational therapy, physical therapy, and social work programs participating most heavily. A Speech and Language Pathologist is contracted to provide support for children in communication and to teach and model the triad of early intervention services to students. The Maine LEND program has supported the Playgroup as part of the curriculum since it began in 2016.

Evidence has indicated that early intervention through Playgroups improves development, socialization, communication, inclusion, and parent support. Playgroups provide a supportive environment for children to play, socialize, emotionally regulate, and develop. In order to advance playfulness, individuals require the skills to socialize, emotionally regulate, and cooperate with others. Supportive playgroups are capable of providing children with the tools to increase preparedness for transitioning into kindergarten (Knaus, 2016). Children who attend a supportive playgroup have better integration and development of these skills when compared to children who do not attend a supportive playgroup

1. Explore and understand the background, purpose, and activities of the UNE Transdisciplinary Playgroup as an inclusive method of early intervention.

objectives

research.

2. Generate ideas for use of a Playgroup to enhance development, support families, facilitate play, and promote inclusion in a variety of settings. 3. Synthesize how a Playgroup can be translated to the virtual context, explore outcomes of the 2020 online Playgroup, and generate questions for further

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Fabrizi, S. E., Ito, M. A., & Winston, K. (2016). Effect of occupational therapy led playgroups in early intervention on child playfulness and caregiver responsiveness: A repeated-measures design. American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 70(2), 346-365. doi:10.5014/ajot.2016.017012

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Knaus, M., Warren, J., & Blaxell, R. (2016). Smoothing the way: investigating the role of a supported playgroup located at a school. Australian Journal of Early Childhood, 41(2), 59+. Retrieved from http://link.galegroup.com.une.idm.oclc.org /apps/doc/

Noggle, A.K., & Stites, M.L. (2018). Inclusion

prior to starting kindergarten (Knaus, 2016). Skills that are specifically improved by inclusive playgroups and settings include socialization skills through better pragmatic language use and communication with others (Demchick, 2016). In addition to increased socialization, emotional regulation is also improved when children participate in inclusive settings, such as inclusive preschools, where they can play and interact with peers of different abilities (Noggle, 2018). Therefore, playgroups in inclusive settings have the potential to increase children's development of skills to socialize and emotionally regulate while engaged in play with peers.

The benefits for parents of children in playgroup include social support, routine development, sense of belonging, and general satisfaction. Significantly higher proportions of mothers had no support from friends if they had never participated in a playgroup, compared to mothers who persistently attended playgroup (Hancock, 2015). Additionally, playgroup represents a way for caregivers to engage children into their community in ways that fit naturally into their routine (Fabrizi, 2016).

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the implementation of the first entirely virtual Playgroup. The main objectives of this program were to provide an online playgroup experience that families could participate in, as well as a virtual educational experience for first year occupational and physical therapy students at UNE. The Playgroup seeks an inclusive environment that includes typically developing, developmentally at risk, and developmentally delayed children ages 18-36 months. The virtual playgroup was implemented by an OT and

and preschoolers who are typically developing: The lived experience. Early Childhood Education Journal, 46(5), 511-522. doi:10.1007/s10643-017-0879

a PT (both LEND trainees) who served the dual roles of coordinators and practitioners. A speech language pathologist and social worker also participated in the group leadership, as well as faculty from both the OT and PT programs at UNE.

Intriguing results were gleaned from evaluating this online playgroup, pointing to the necessity for further research in best practice. Toddlers and their families reported a benefit from the playgroup despite the online format and students and faculty reported examples of increased language and social development in the children. Parents also reported feeling supported and enjoying the chance to get to interact with other families. A retrospective pre-post method survey was conducted to ascertain OT and PT students own ratings of their pediatric-related skills before and after their involvement with the virtual Playgroup. Overall, students reported an increase in their skills in family centered practice, interprofessional teamwork, child development knowledge, skills in working with children and families, and ability to engage a child through developmental activities and play. Open ended feedback from students revealed that many felt they had learned from observing a transdisciplinary team, from having the opportunity to observe and compare the development of the children, and from hearing the input of students from professions other than their own during the debrief. Most of the constructive feedback that the students gave related to the online aspect of the Playgroup; for example, feeling that they wanted to engage with the children more or finding it difficult to observe the children over Zoom. Overall, pilot results from the virtual Transdisciplinary

Playgroup indicated value for toddlers and their families as well as student education. This group provided an opportunity for a playgroup experience that would not have otherwise been possible due to the pandemic. In addition, students and practitioners were given the chance to observe parents and children together in the natural environment of their own homes, as well as an opportunity to explore the online format for possible future remote playgroups. The virtual method shows promise for families living in remote areas or who have other accessibility challenges. Future research is needed to determine best practices in delivering online playgroups. Short course format will include;

- 1. Presentation of the rationale and evidence to support inclusive playgroups in OT early intervention.
- 2. Discussion of the history and curriculum development of the Transdisciplinary Toddler Playgroup and the educational support at UNE.
- 3. Setting the stage for the how the Covid pandemic threatened the Playgroup legacy.
- 4. Report on the process of development and implementation of the Virtual Playgroup including the accommodations in the curriculum with photos and video clips.
- 5. Report the survey outcomes from parents and students on the pilot virtual playgroup.
- 6. Discussion of the pros, cons, and opportunities of the virtual context, including the proposed tribal Playgroup in 2021-22.

2.Evidence-based
Programs:
Translating from In
Person to Virtual
Delivery

Title

With Ann O'Sullivan, OTR/L, LSW, FAOTA and Kirsten A. Dorsey, MS, OTR/L

Synopsis

This short course will discuss the process of translating an evidence-based program (EBP), which has been developed and tested to be delivered face-to-face, into a virtual format. We will examine what constitutes an EBP, the critical need for fidelity to core elements, and how this affects the translation and testing process. Both speakers have been deeply involved in translation of EBP to virtual delivery, and will share challenges, lessons learned, and some unplanned benefits from this process. Those programs (Matter of Balance and Savvy Caregiver) will be briefly explained and used to inform the discussion. Principles covered can be applied to clinician own work with EBPs or other evidence-based interventions. Target audience is students, educators, OTs working with adults and/or evidence-based programs, and other interested OT professionals.

The Savvy Caregiver program (1) uses a psychoeducation model and involves a 12-hour course with the aims of supporting family caregivers for a person living with dementia, helping them build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to carry out that role and alerting them to self-care issues. A major focus of the program is on finding ways to help the person living with dementia be meaningfully occupied (contented involvement), thus reducing confusion and behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia. In evaluations from the original study and the subsequent program versions, participants report increased caregiver skill, knowledge, and confidence. Results also indicate better caregiver well-being.

objectives

- Articulate what an evidencebased program (EBP) is and why fidelity is critically
- important in translating and delivering EPB
- Explain translation criteria & strategies used in two EPB that can be delivered by OTs
- Understand how to incorporate EBPs into clinical practice.

References

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- 2. Healy, T. C., Peng, C., Haynes, M. S., McMahon, E. M., Botler, J. L., & Gross, L. (2008). The feasibility and effectiveness of translating a matter of balance into a volunteer lay leader model. Journal of Applied Gerontology, 27(1), 3451. http://doi.org/10.1177/0733464807308620
- 3. Brach, J., Juarez, G., Perera, S., Cameron, K., Vincenzo, J., Tripken, J. (2021)
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 53

A Matter of Balance, Managing Concerns About Falls (MOB) was designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels among older adults. This program was developed at the Roybal Center at Boston University. Partnerships between MaineHealth, the Southern Maine Agency on Aging and the University of Southern Maine translated A Matter of Balance to a volunteer Lay Leader model which has been administered by MaineHealth since 2003 (2). MOB is an Administration for Community Living top-tier Evidence Based Falls Prevention program. It is disseminated in 47 states at over 770 locations.

Starting in 2014 for Savvy Caregiver, and 2020 for MOB, these programs began the process of translating to virtual delivery. This presentation will cover the reasons for translating each program to virtual delivery and lessons learned. Translation is not without its challenges; however, it has proven to be well worth the efforts as demonstrated by participant outcomes, participant comments and the discovery of unplanned benefits.

Tele-Savvy and A Matter of Balance-Virtual Translation are in different phases of study and delivery. The presenters will review specific research approaches being used to measure efficacy including quantitative and qualitative initial outcomes (3).

Both program administrators are Occupational Therapists who approach their work through the lens of encouraging meaningful engagement through-out the lifespan. A particular focus will be on fidelity, and

	outcome measurement of their respective programs during the process of translation to virtual delivery. The presenters will explore what translation without fidelity results in, and how important fidelity is to maintain the reputation and outcomes of the intervention.		
Title	Synopsis	objectives	References
3.Q&A: Outpatient Pediatrics Round Table With Paxton Spiller, MS, OTR/L	This would be an open forum for students, new graduates, practitioners within this setting or practitioners moving to this setting (or just within pediatrics in general) to ask questions and converse with other therapists. This will be a forum to ask questions, problem solve, discuss successful treatment modalities, explore challenging topics, family participation, etc.	At the conclusion of this session, participants with gain confidence in communication and asking questions concerning the setting of outpatient pediatrics. At the conclusion of this session, participants will gain foundational knowledge and confidence regarding the outpatient pediatric setting.	Fingerhut, P. (2013). Life participation for parents: A tool for family-centered occupational therapy. American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 67, 3744. http://dx.doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2013.00508 2 American Occupational Therapy Association. (2020). Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain & process (4th ed.). American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 74. https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S2001

Title	Synopsis	objectives	References
4.The Power of Mindfulness: Interventions for Children Round Table With Hannah M. Pullen, COTA/L	This course will take a look at the power of using mindfulness techniques to increase self-awareness, promote functional interactions with the environment and others, and increase self-regulation skills in children. No prior knowledge is require for participants.	Define self-regulation, define mindfulness, utilize mindfulness techniques as providers and teaching age appropriate mindfulness techniques to children.	Beginning Mindfulness by Andrew Weiss, Wherever You Go, There You Are by Jon Kabat-Zinn
Title	Synopsis	objectives	References
5.AOTF: Advancing the Science of OT to Improve Practice and Health With Lawrence Liff, Chief Development Officer at AOTF	AOTF is the nations leading non-profit investing in new OT research and the future OT workforce. Through our mission to build new evidence for practice, support OT students and disseminate information we are strengthening occupational therapy and improving the delivery of care. For over 55 years AOTF has been building new evidence for practice, supporting OT students and all levels and providing research resources and programs to disseminate new knowledge. All of the work accomplished by AOTF is made possible by a community of donors and volunteers and our future success to impact evidence-based practice depends on growing a dedicated and passionate community involved and invested in our work. Currently AOTF has three grant programs focused on filling a critical gap that exists for OT researchers, early-stage research funding. Our Intervention Research Grant, Health Services Research Grant and Implementation Research Grant programs address a	 The Mission of AOTF and How it is Impacting the Profession. Opportunities and Resources for OTs: Grants, Scholarships, Programs and Information Dissemination. How To Help; Volunteer Roles and Advocacy for Evidence-Based Practice 	www.aotf.org, OTJR: Occupation, Participation & Health

variety of topics that OTs have identified as priority areas for the profession and all support efforts to collect pilot data and build proof of concept. This vital investment into early-stage research has yielded essential new evidence for practice and increased the visibility of OT as a multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary, evidence-based health care practice.

AOTF now offers over 50 scholarships to assist OT students obtain their degrees, lower financial burdens and open pathways to this incredible career. In addition, AOTF bestows 6 annual awards and induction into the Academy of Research, highlighting the outstanding work of our professions notable figures.

To meet the demands of clinicians, clients and caregivers we aim to grow opportunities of support. This session will provide attendees with information on philanthropic and volunteer roles as we aim to advance the science of occupational therapy for the second century of OT.

No previous experience or knowledge is required by attendees.

	Synopsis	objectives	References
6.Adapting a Geriatric Cognitive Eval to Telehealth With Kim Dizo, OTR/L and Sarah Weber, MOTR/L	Presenters will share their experiences working at the outpatient geriatric center, specifically during the pandemic. They will explain their OT assessment tool and the process of adapting the in person assessment to telehealth. Specifically we will share ways to assess functional cognition in the geriatric population. This session is open to anyone who would like to further discuss OTs role in assessing cognition over telehealth.	 What are the challenges and benefits of using telehealth as an OT evaluation tool What are some of ways an OT can assess functional cognition via telehealth? What areas of occupational performance can we assess via telehealth? 	John Hopkins Fall Assessment, Trail Making Test, Alzheimer's association
Title	Synopsis	objectives	References
7. KVCC OTA Program Marketing Posters Posters with OTA students	All marketing posters use evidence-based research to assess the need for OT services and/or wellness programs in the local community. The learning objective is to network with and educate the Maine OT community about potential practice environments and professional opportunities for the growth of our profession.	identify novel practice environments for OT services to serve the population of Maine.	AOTA sources, textbooks, college library research and community member interviews. Sources will vary among student presentations.
Title	Synopsis	objectives	References
8. Exploring Paradoxical Lucidity: Promoting meaningful engagement in those with severe cognitive impairments at the end of life? Poster with Regi Robnett, PhD,	Lucidity is the typical cognitive state of adults. However, conditions such as Alzheimer Disease can rob people of their usual clarity. Paradoxical lucidity (PL) is defined as an episode of unexpected, spontaneous, meaningful, and relevant communication or connectedness in a patient who is assumed to have permanently lost [that] capacity (Mashour et al., 2019, p. 1107). Anecdotal stories depicting PL have been shared for centuries, but its etiology and mechanisms have rarely been researched (Chiriboga-Oleszczak, 2017). The purpose of this mixed-methods project is to gather the stories of witnessed episodes of PL, to describe them and their	1. Describe the presentations of paradoxical lucidity (PL) in those with advanced dementia or other severe cognitive impairments; 2. Examine potential sensory or environmental triggers for PL as targets for therapeutic intervention and education	Chiriboga-Oleszczak, B. A. (2017). Terminal lucidity. Current Problems of Psychiatry, 18(1), 34-46. Mashour, G. A., Frank, L., Batthyany, A., Kolanowski, A. M., Nahm, M., Schulman-Green, D., & Shah, R. C. (2019). Paradoxical lucidity: A potential paradigm shift for the neurobiology and treatment of severe dementias. Alzheimer's & Dementia, 15 (8), 1107-1114.

OTR/L FAOTA, and
Thomas Meuser,
PhD and Clair
Michael MS, OTR/L

potential triggers and contextual supports. Over 50 witnesses of PL episodes have shared their experiences, which were universally emotional and memorable. Episodes lasted generally under an hour (up to 5+ hours) and most displaying PL died shortly (within 6 months) after the episode. Illustrative descriptions about PL emerged: 1) A trusted person or professional, perhaps unknowingly, saying or doing the right thing could trigger an episode; 2) PL frequently took place in a sacred environment involving ritual spiritual practices (e.g., saying the rosary and singing hymns); 3) beloved music was often a trigger; and 4) PL sometimes involved the return of one's professional or familial/friend role. Familiar sounds (e.g., music, voices) were the most common sensory antecedents. A deeper understanding of PL events could potentially drive occupational therapy interventions to promote these valued episodes.

Title Synopsis

9.
Managing Pain on the Farm: A simplified pain tool to help farmers maintain productivity and decrease risk of injury.

During our time working with clients through Maine AgrAbility, we have seen many farmers normalize their level of pain and push through to do what needs to be done. As Occupational therapists, having to use a numerical pain scale can be difficult, answers are subjective and not always in line with our observations. Using a numeric pain scale becomes even more challenging when working with a culture of people who may ignore their pain, seeing it as a normal part of their day, and who are reluctant to talk about pain. We realized that it was more important for the farmer to understand how their pain was impacting their life/work performance than it was to

objectives

- 1.Understand how to use the pain brochure as a tool to help clients identify pain.
- 2. Understand how to work with clients to teach them how to independently identify pain and adjust tasks for successful work performance.
- 3. Understand how to apply this tool to other trade professionals that tend to minimize pain.

References

biopsychosocial approach for addressing chronic pain in everyday occupational therapy practice. OT Practice, 22(13), CE1.
Cunningham, J., Kerin, A., Galvin, R., & Robinson, K. (2019). 301 older farmers' experiences of musculoskeletal disorders. Age and Ageing, 48(Supplement_3), iii17-iii65.https://doi.org/10.1093/ageing/afz103.192
Hiebert, B., Leipert, B., Regan, S., & Burkell,

Breeden, K., & Rowe, N. (2017). A

With Brie Weisman, OTR/L, ECHM, CAPS, Ketra Crosson, OTR/L and Kristin Desrochers, OTR/L	have a concrete numerical value. A numerical pain rating scale has a place in quantifying pain to measure changes based on the implementation of different interventions; however, the numbers themselves do not provide direction to farmers on what actions to take to improve health, safety, and work performance. We were interested in creating a tool that provided clear guidance to farmers about when to seek help and change work tasks based on their level of pain. We hoped that by providing clients with a simplified pain scale using the traffic light symbol, it would make it easier for some clients to honestly self- identify their level of pain and determine how they needed to proceed for their own health and safety and the health and safety of their farm. No previous experience or knowledge is required to attend this short course.			J. (2018). Rural men's health, health information seeking, and gender identities: A conceptual theoretical review of the literature. American Journal of Men's Health, 12(4), 863876. https://doi.org/10.1177/155798831664917 7 Swift, A. (2015) Pain management 3: The importance of assessing pain in adults. Nursing Times; 11: 41, 12-17. Volkmer, K. Molitor, W. (2019). Interventions addressing injury among agricultural workers: A systematic review. American Journal of Occupational Therapy; 73(4_Supplement_1):7311505155. https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2019.73S1-PO6004
Title	Synopsis	obj	ectives	References
10. Federal and State Regulatory Round Up: Your Role in Advocacy With Kathleen Weissberg, MS, OTD, OTR/L, CMDCP, CDP	As occupational therapy practitioners, everyone has a role in advocacy. We have the professional responsibility to understand WHAT are we supporting and promoting; explain WHY we need change to occur; state HOW stakeholders and constituents will benefit; and explain WHAT the consequences are if change does not occur. We know that occupational therapy is part of the health care solution, but without advocacy, telling our story, do our congressional leaders know and understand the distinct value of OT? And if we do not tell our story, will we have a		State the role of occupational therapy practitioners in federal legislative advocacy to further the profession of occupational therapy. Define current federal regulatory and legislative issues impacting the practice of occupational	

seat at the table when crucial funding and legislative decisions are made?

Federal policy may seem far removed from your daily practice but it directly affects YOU as a practitioner, student, educator, business owner, or entrepreneur. Federal policy affects every aspect of your career and your future as an occupational therapy practitioner. AOTA's Federal Affairs team focuses on influencing federal policy to the benefit of the profession and our stakeholders.

In this session, the Region 1 Director from the American Occupational Therapy Association Political Action Committee will address your role in advocacy from an individual grass-roots perspective to that on a national level and everything in between. There are many avenues toward advocacy and these will be explored. Attendees to this session will learn about current national legislative issues and priorities for occupational therapy practitioners at the state and federal levels, and hear what AOTA is doing to advocate on behalf of our profession. Additionally, attendees will hear about successful occupational therapy activism by the Federal Regulatory Affairs Team in the 116th Congress and what they are continuing to focus on in the 117th Congress. Participants will have opportunities

to ask questions about legislation and how they can

take direct action to become more involved

therapy and AOTA's efforts toward these.

Title	Synopsis	objectives	References
11. COTAD Student Chapter information with focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion With Emma Baldwin, OTD	Student focused session (but all are welcome). The Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD) operates as group of individuals from across the United States all working towards a common goal of promoting diversity and inclusion within the occupational therapy workforce and increase the ability to occupational therapy practitioners to serve an increasingly diverse population. COTAD Chapters are designed to support occupational therapy students to work together to develop and promote diversity and inclusion within occupational therapy education programs and in the profession. Each Chapter is designed to create opportunities and resources to foster open conversation and increase awareness of different lived experiences to increase cultural humility.	 Participants will be able to identify the need for diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppression work within the realm of OT education. Participants will be able to convey the purpose and benefits of having a COTAD Chapter at their respective universities. 	
Title	Synopsis	objectives	References
Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion: How to get involved and make a lasting impact for our profession. With Mr. Stacy Wilson MS, OTR/L	You have probably heard about the importance of justice, equity, diversity (JEDI), and inclusion in our profession. But what do these terms mean and what can we do to practically implement change in our profession to keep pace with the changing demographics of our world? We will explore ways to improve our profession through JEDI initiatives- to improve health disparities and to create a more holistic practice.	 1.To be able to understand the differences and impact of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion to our profession and public health. 2.To find value in having increased diversity and inclusion both in our education, research, and 	