

Fall 2023

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Recommended Citation

Stanley, K., Boykin, K., & Woolley, H. (2023, October 1). A Occupational Therapy Guidebook for Teachers on Sensory Processing and Sensory Integration. Poster presented at the Virtual OTD Capstone Symposium, University of St Augustine for Health Sciences. Retrieved from <https://soar.usa.edu/otdcapstonesfall2023/12>

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An Occupational Therapy Guidebook for Teachers on Sensory Processing and Sensory Integration

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BACKGROUND

Children with sensory processing (SP) challenges find simple classroom tasks overwhelming and can present with deficits in behavior management, emotional regulation, and occupations due to the inability to self-regulate the sensory input from their environment. In addition, deficits in SP may impact a child's ability to maintain engagement and participation in the learning process. If these SP needs are not met through the school, the child lacks the adequate tools to be successful in learning, which is considered occupational injustice (AOTA, 2020).

By providing teachers with the adequate educational tools to understand sensory processing and sensory integration (SP-SI), identify and access SP needs, and implement recommended strategies/accommodations; they will be able to effectively meet the SP needs of their students. The projected outcome for this project is to increase occupational performance, occupational participation, and the well-being of students with SP deficits, by creating an educational tool to increase their teacher's knowledge on the topic of SP-SI.

PURPOSE

To create an educational guidebook for teachers on SP-SI, that will provide them with the knowledge to assess and assist students who have SP challenges.

METHODS

Informal Needs Assessment:

- Literature Review
- Informal Interviews with Teachers and Clinician
- Shadowing OT in School Setting
- Observations with Daily Journal

Setting:

Hudson Primary Academy in Hudson, FL

- Pre-K – 5th grade
- General and Special Education
- 600+ students
- 45 teachers

Phases of Development:

- Preparation Phase (Weeks 1-4):
 - Literature Review
- Development Phase (Weeks 5-12):
 - Informal Interviews with Teachers and Clinician
 - Shadowing OT in School Setting
 - Observations with Daily Journal
 - Create Educational Guidebook
- Review Phase (Week 13):
 - Capstone Team Reviews Guidebook and Provides Professional Feedback
- Revise Phase (Week 13):
 - Revise Guidebook based on Professional Feedback

PROBLEM

Children with SP deficits experience challenges with processing sensory information, which impacts their ability to participate in school-based activities (Schaff, et al., 2018). These children require a sensory-rich environment and accommodations to regulate sensory input and sustain attention in the classroom setting (Agostine, 2022; Grajo, 2020). Teachers within the school setting are not given the resources or knowledge to assess and assist students who have SP challenges (Bell, 2020; Goodrich, 2014; Jones et al., 2020; Noddings, 2017; Wei et al., 2017; Wild, 2018; Ying et al., 2021).

PROJECT

GUIDEBOOK COMPONENTS

Guidebook Contents:

- Section 1. Introduction to Sensory Processing and Sensory Integration
 - Section 1a. What is sensory processing and sensory integration?
 - Section 1b. How can teachers help their students regulate in the classroom?
- Section 2. Introduction to Occupational Therapy
 - Section 2a. What is Occupational Therapy?
- Section 3. Resources
 - Section 3a. Additional Resources on Sensory Processing
 - Section 3b. Important Tips for Guidebook Use
- Section 4. References

Outcomes:

- To increase occupational performance, occupational participation, and the well-being of students with SP deficits.
- Creating an educational tool to increase teacher's knowledge on the topic of SP-SI.
- Educate teachers on SP-SI strategies/accommodations that can be utilized in the classroom setting.

Deliverables:

- Guidebook
- Webinar

Scan for Guidebook:



Scan for Webinar:



References

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