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The Role of Occupational Therapy in Addressing Community Mobility in Children to Young Adults with Disabilities: A Scoping Review

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The Role of Occupational Therapy in Addressing Community Mobility in Children to Young Adults with Disabilities: A Scoping Review

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Background

Community mobility is defined as the occupation of developing a plan to move around an individual's community by driving private transportation, walking, riding a bike, accessing and using of public transit such as buses, taxis, rideshares, or any other form of transportation systems. Young adults with disabilities have challenges with community mobility which can adversely impact participation in other occupations. Occupational therapy (OT) addresses community mobility in clients, but there is little OT literature that addresses community mobility in children and young adults.

Problem

The role of OT in addressing community mobility in children to young adults with disabilities has not been defined or organized within the literature. This causes a lack of clarity in how OT practitioners can meet the needs of this population.

Purpose

To conduct a scoping review of the literature to define the role of occupational therapy in working with children to young adults with disabilities seeking to become mobile in their communities.

Methods

Employed the 5-step scoping review methodology as described by Arksey and O'Malley (2005), Levac (2010), Peters et al. (2020), Sucharew and Macaluso (2019).

1. Identify the research question

What are the behaviors of occupational therapists, as described in the literature, that define the role of OT in addressing community mobility in children to young adults with disabilities?

2. Identify relevant studies

- Searched databases: CINAHL Complete and ProQuest
- Search terms: (teens* OR children to young adults OR youth OR teenagers OR adolescence*) AND (*occupational therapy OR occupational therapist OR OT*) AND (*community mobility OR driving OR transportation OR cycling or bicycle)

3. Study selection

- Inclusion criteria:
- Address OT practitioners' interventions or assessments
 - In English
 - Published between 2000-2021
 - Peer reviewed
 - Age 0-25
 - Has a disability
 - 230 screened, 28 Selected

4. Chart the data

Employed summary tables

5. Collate, Summarize & Report Results

Results

Table 1
Assessments

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Driving/pre-driving	29	25.44
Physical	12	10.53
Visual	33	28.95
Cognitive	18	15.80
Life Skill	7	6.14
MOHO	2	1.75
Observation	3	2.63
Simulator	10	8.77

Table 2
Interventions

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Occupations and activities:	56	78.67
Interventions to support occupations	8	10.67
Education and training	3	4.00
Advocacy	2	2.67
Group Intervention	3	4.00

OT practitioners' role in this population includes evaluation, consultation, screening, assessment, intervention, and outcome. Of these assessment (39%) and intervention (35%) were the most widely performed aspects of the process of OT. Each section had numerous activities discussed in the literature. The most common assessment tool used by OT practitioners was driving/pre-driving (25%) and vision (29%). Within the driving/pre-driving category, on-road driver training was the most used assessment at 7%. The most commonly used visual assessment was the Optec visual analyzer at 6%. Occupations and activities (79%) was the largest area of the intervention table. Of this section, the most common occupation and activity task was on-road training at 12%.

