


Occupational Therapy for Children

Strategies for Parents

Presenters

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Susanne Smith Roley, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA

Over 40 years of experience in OT with children and families

Positions:
 Susanne M Smith, Inc.
 Private Practice, Orange County, CA.
 Evaluation and Advocacy for Children, Young Adults and Families

Collaborative for Leadership in Ayres Sensory Integration®
 Co-Founder, International Education Program

Ayres Sensory Integration 2020 Vision
 for Scholarship, Assessment, Education
 Co-Founder

Publications:
 Co-editor of 2 books
 Several booklets &
 Over 40 published articles including the
Occupational Therapy Practice Framework 1st and 2nd Editions



Susanne Smith Roley, 2017

- **Aja E. Roley, MA, OTR/L**
 - Board certified and licensed Occupational Therapist
 - Doctoral Candidate Thomas Jefferson University
 - Postgraduate certification in Sensory Integration including administering and interpreting the Sensory Integration and Praxis Tests (SIPT).
 - Independent contractor specializing in the evaluation and intervention for children with a variety of disorders including visual impairment, autism spectrum disorder, developmental delay, attention deficit disorder, and sensory integration and sensory processing disorders.
 - Susanne M Smith, INC. - Evaluation
 - Centerpointe for Children, Irvine, CA - Intervention
- **Dr. Korrie Sparks, OTD, OTR/L**
 - Board certified and licensed Occupational Therapist
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 - Susanne M Smith, INC. - Evaluation
 - Centerpointe for Children, Irvine, CA - Intervention
 - Jellyfish Yoga, Creator

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What is Occupational Therapy (OT)?

- A health-care profession
- In education: a related service supporting educationally-related outcomes in school-based practice



For More Information:
<https://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy.aspx>

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The Aim of Occupational Therapy

Achieving health, well-being, and participation in life through engagement in occupation (things we do) and in co-occupations (things we do with others).



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Pediatric Occupational Therapy

- **Supports children's participation** in the needed and desired activities (occupations) in the child's daily life.

- Student
- Playmate/Friend
- Family Member



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Areas in which OT can help your Child

- School Readiness
 - Handwriting
 - Work production, Homework
 - Accessing the playground
- Self-Care skills
 - Dressing, Grooming, Hygiene
 - Eating
 - Sleeping
- Socializing
- Playing
- Behavioral and emotional regulation



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OT Service Delivery

Pediatric OT's utilize a play-based and client-centered approach to services to promote engagement, growth and participation

- Practicing and teaching skills
- Environmental adaptations
- Task and activity modifications
- Family Education



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INHERENT IN OT IS THE VALUE OF OCCUPATION There is Power in Engagement in Activity



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Suggestions for Parents

- Child development and skill growth requires experience-dependent learning (neuroplasticity)
- Enjoy playtime with your children (guilt-free!)
- Parents are the child's first teacher for learning to enjoy life!



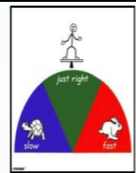
Areas to Consider for Skill Development and Success

- Self-Regulation (Attention, frustration tolerance, behavior, stamina)
- Sensory Reactivity (tolerating the range of intensity of sensations)
- Sensory Perception (speed and accuracy of information processing)
- Postural control (core strength, equilibrium reactions, dynamic trunk)
 - Upper Extremity Strength (scapular stability, co-contraction, grasp)
 - Upper Extremity control (separation of trunk, scapula, upper arm, forearm, wrist and digits)
- Bilateral Motor Control (using two body sides together gracefully)
- Praxis (planning and organizing movements, activities and interactions that are novel, multi-step, and require problem solving including sequencing the steps in an activity, organizing projects, and interacting with people)

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Self-Regulation Strategies

- The Zones of Regulation program by Leah Kuypers
- The Alert Program for Self-Regulation by Mary Sue Williams and Sherry Shellenberger
- Stickids.com
- These programs teach methods to understand one's own temperament and how to use a variety of strategies to keep calm and organized throughout the day.



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Self Regulation Strategies for Attention



- Alternative seating options and opportunities to do work in various positions
 - Ergonomically appropriate chairs and desks (90/90/90)
 - Chairs that swivel and rock
 - Sit-N-Move cushions
 - Foot massagers or fidgets
- Use of a slant board
- Hand and foot fidgets



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Sensory Reactivity Strategies

- Frequently scheduled movement and activity breaks
- Access to a quiet, calm corner for retreat when they feel overwhelmed or upset.
 - Spaces can have calming sensory opportunities such as a weighted vest, beanbag chair, and large pillows.
- Swinging, jumping, climbing, hanging, pushing and pulling activities will also be organizing when the child is feeling anxious, frustrated, sluggish, or inattentive.
- Deep Pressure opportunities through the use of pillows for deep pressure and pressure garments such as under-armor or Lycra fabric

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Sensory Perceptual and Perceptual Motor Strategies

- Access daily to physical and active opportunities
 - Outdoor activities and sports
 - Exposure to non-competitive physical activities just for fun (builds self-esteem and skills)
- Access to a variety of equipment (swings, moving equipment and climbing structures)
- During sedentary activities such as homework provide frequent movement breaks
 - Advocate at school- recess is necessary daily and should not be missed or used as a reward or punishment



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Activities to Promote Postural Control



- Uneven surface negotiation (walk on a rocky path, obstacle course)
- Bike riding
- Scooter
- Swings
- Activities in prone scooter board
- Prone on elbows during board games



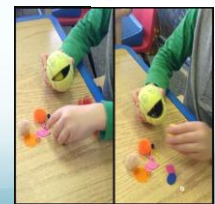
Upper Extremity Strengthening Strategies

- Climbing on the playground
- Monkey Bars
- Ziplines
- Wheel barrow walking
- Yoga Poses
- Tug-of-war
- Painting or writing on a vertical surface



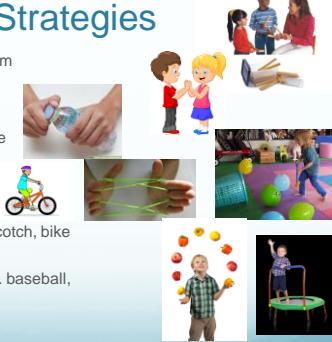
Intrinsic Hand Muscle Development Strategies

- Tennis ball Pacman
- Feed the Monkey (LakeShore™)
- Mancala while squirreling pieces
- Chunky crayons
- Snowball fights (Newspaper)



Bilateral Motor Control Strategies

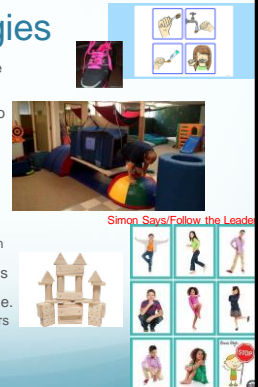
- Music including rhythm instruments
- Clapping games
- Cooperative hand use
- Balloon games
- Ball games
- Jumping jacks, hopscotch, bike riding
- Organized sports e.g. baseball, basketball, soccer...



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Praxis Strategies

- Break down tasks into steps – provide visual chart
- Allow sufficient information and time to understand what is going on
- Help children problem solve
 - how to move their bodies,
 - use various tools, organize space,
 - Sequence multiple parts of a task together
 - Coordinate activities with other children
- Prepare child in advance for transitions and changes in their routine through verbal reminders and a visual schedule.
 - Use of visuals, charts, clocks and timers



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Environmental Strategies

- Environmental accommodations to reduce overstimulation (ambient noise, natural lighting, color and avoid visual clutter)
- Find local parks, libraries, and outdoor spaces for you and your child to explore
- Regularly scheduled movement breaks and opportunities for child-directed sensory exploration with a variety of vestibular, proprioceptive, and tactile activities
- Use of positive reinforcement and chances for success
- Allow time for free unstructured play



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Resources

Website and blog for parents & teachers with fun activities for the school playground or your local park



Resources

Park Slides: 3 of our favorite activities

Remember the first time you went down a new slide as a child? They felt so high, so fast, and sometimes, eventually so FUN! Slides are staple pieces of equipment found in most local parks. They come in all shapes and sizes and can all pretty much be used in similar ways. Park 1.1

[Read more](#)

Fine Motor Skill Necessities Developed at the Park

This is one time of year that our phones are ringing a little more than usual. Summer is over and the kids are settling in at school. It's parent conference time, which tends to expose concerns that often result in OT referrals. Challenges with fine motor skills are routinely pointed out in these conferences. Observable 1.1

[Read more](#)

Park Swings: 4 Ways to Use Them (therapeutically)

Flying through the air, feeling weightless in the water, and laughing until ribs come out your nose - can anyone think of moments more carefree than these? Fine-tuning skills can hold a child's life that feeling of gliding through the air on park swings. Park Swings 4 Ways to Use Them (therapeutically)! November 1.1

[Read more](#)

Resources

- Pathways.org is a great non-profit organization that has many free educational resources for parents!
 - <https://pathways.org/topics-of-development/play/>
 - Webinar: <https://pathways.org/news/free-webinar-sensory-issues/>
 - (This site also has resources in Spanish and other languages)
- Pediatric Therapy Network
 - Publications including pamphlets on SI for Teachers, Parents, Mealtimes and Autism
 - pediatrictherapynetwork.org

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Resources



- American Occupational Therapy Association About Occupational Therapy. Retrieved from <https://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy.aspx>
- Sensory Integration and the Child by A. Jean Ayres Ph. D
- The Healthy Children website has a place to ask questions! <https://www.healthychildren.org/english/tips-tools/pages/default.aspx>
- The Importance of Play in Childhood Development (handout), Aja Roley MA, OTR/L
- Check out this video from pediatrician and adolescent specialist Ken Ginsburg, MD, FAAP <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Building-Resilience/Pages/The-Importance-of-Play-Video.aspx>

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