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Editorial Notes

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## Editorial Notes

*As occupational therapists who have worked many years in the field of intellectual and developmental disability (mental retardation), we are proud and excited to be the guest editors of this issue. Rarely is this population the focus of academic and research interest in occupational therapy, whether in Israel*



*Dr. Shira Yalon-Chamovitz Efrat Selanikyo*

*or internationally. Nevertheless, in our clinical practice as occupational therapists, we often come across, children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities at all stages of life. We encounter people with intellectual and developmental disability both in settings designated specifically for this population, and in settings designated for other populations, such as people with autism, cerebral palsy, and learning disabilities. Over the past few years the therapeutic model for this population has been changing, with the medical model gradually being replaced by the social model. For occupational therapy, this paradigm shift is expressed such that our profession is now viewed as part of the overall support system aimed at improving quality of life, as opposed to previously where occupational therapy focused on skill-learning.*

*In this issue the various articles highlight this trend without overlooking the unique contribution of occupational therapists in promoting development and function for this population. The article by Dafna Asher, Michelle Shapiro, Dana Roth and Merav Hadar-Frumer, "**Effects of Hydrotherapy Treatment with and without Sensory Adaptation on Young Children with Developmental Disabilities**", presents a novel approach to sensory intervention in young children and emphasizes the importance of sensory modulation as a basis for preparedness for treatment and functioning. The article by Galia Ran, "**Interview Based on the COPM Questionnaire for Adolescents with Special Needs**", recognizes the ability of adolescents with intellectual disabilities to choose and determine treatment goals. In addition, the article highlights that fact that occasionally adaptation and modification of existing tools is necessary for making them appropriate for people with cognitive disabilities. Likewise, the "**Book Review**" column presents examples of books specifically adapted for this population, taking into account the areas of interest they address, as well as language and cognitive level. The article by Yael Shidlovsky-Press and Naama Sudkevitz, "**The Development of a Fitness Room for People with Cognitive Developmental Disabilities: A Case Study**" emphasizes the importance of affording control and choice to people with intellectual disabilities in the lowest functional levels, and the importance of enabling them to participate in normative activities such as working out in a fitness room. The article by Orly Gat and Shira Yalon-Chamovitz, "**Perceived QOL among Adults with Severe Intellectual and Physical Disabilities, Family Members and Caretakers**" focuses*

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directly on the question of quality of life among adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through comparing their perception of quality of life to the perception of their quality of life by family members and caretakers. The results of the research, which reveal a gap between the perceptions of the adults themselves to that of the family and caretakers, testify to the importance of self-management for people with intellectual disabilities. The "**Technology and Internet**" column provides concrete examples of sites that are managed by self-advocacy groups and organizations for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and in the "**Personal Glimpse**" column, Efrat Selanikyo points out the gap between the aspiration to be an enlightened society that includes those who are different, and the difficulty of implementing this in connection with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We hope that this issue will help us recognize that as professionals, and as a society, the right to be equal must be supplemented with the right to be different.

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