
Abstracts from Hebrew

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Effects of Hydrotherapy Treatment With and Without Sensory Adaptation on Young Children with Developmental Disabilities

Key words: sensory modulation, children with developmental disabilities, snoezelen

This study describes a treatment that combines two therapeutic interventions: hydrotherapy - water treatment, and Snoezelen - a multi-sensory stimulation therapy with a child-centered approach. This combined intervention therapy, termed Hydro-Zen, is conducted in a therapeutic pool, which incorporates elements of Snoezelen in order to create an environment with sensory stimulation adapted to the individual needs of each child. The goal is to allow the child to experience the hydrotherapy treatment that is optimally suitable for him/her with respect to its sensory aspects

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of an adapted sensory stimulation treatment in hydrotherapy on the child's performance, when compared to the same treatment in the same pool without adapted sensory stimulation.

This study examined three children, aged eighteen months to three years, with a variety of developmental disabilities. Each child received 12 treatments without adapted sensory stimulation and 12 treatments with the adapted sensory stimulation. Treatments were recorded by an observer, and some were taped on video. A check list assessment was developed for this study with 31 items referring to functional and emotional aspects. For each item, the number of occurrences of the behavior was recorded, as well as its intensity, and what seemed to have lead to its occurrences.

The analysis for each child individually yielded mixed results. A positive trend was indicated in favor of Hydro - Zen treatment, for items such as head control, hand and feet movements and higher intensity of laughter. When data analysis was conducted for each treatment of the three children as a group (73 treatments), the prominent trends indicated a decline in the intensity of restlessness, quantity and intensity of self-stimulation, and an increase in the number of floating positions in the Hydro-Zen. These results may indicate that the children felt more relaxed while being treated. However, the results also indicated a decrease in the amount of eye contact made by the child during Hydra - Zen treatment.

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In light of the overall positive results, it appears that providing hydro therapy treatment through the child-centered Snoezelen approach increases the special characteristics of each of these therapies and resulted in more successful therapeutic results. Therefore, it appears that Hydro - Zen treatment promotes an improved quality of life for children with significant disabilities.

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Interview Based on the COPM Questionnaire for Adolescents with Special Needs

Key words: Personal transition programs, client-centered, occupational performance

As part of their work within the special education system, occupational therapists work with adolescents with special needs and therefore participate in the planning and implementation of their personal transition programs. Personal transition programs are developed in order to prepare students for the transition from a supportive school environment to independent life in the community. These programs are based on the principles of the client-centered approach, in that adolescents and their parents are active participants in the occupational therapy process.

The initial phase of planning and implementing personal transition programs focuses on diagnosis and assessment, performed by the educational-rehabilitative team that includes occupational therapists. The assessment was done using the COPM (Canadian Occupational Performance Measure) questionnaire.

The complex nature of the population of adolescents with special needs makes it difficult to use the COPM questionnaire in its standard format. Therefore, occupational therapists who value the importance of allowing adolescents to participate in the planning and implementing of their personal transition programs, must be flexible and creative in using the COPM. They must adapt the questionnaire, such that it remains faithful to the principles of client-centered occupational therapy while at the same time be suited to the adolescent's abilities.

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The current article presents an interview based on the COPM questionnaire, developed by this author, at the "Ha Tomer" school in Nez-Ziona. The interview was performed as part of the process of planning and implementing personal transition programs for adolescents with special needs.

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Development of a Fitness Room for People with Cognitive Developmental Disabilities: A Case Study

Key Words: Cognitive developmental disabilities, physical fitness, gym room

Research has proven that ensuring physical fitness is important for all people, promoting emotional and physical health while ensuring quality of life. Research examining the cognitive developmentally disabled population has found them to have an extremely low level of physical fitness. The researchers conducting these studies stress that this population is in danger of developing various illnesses due to lack of activity and low level of fitness.

In light of these facts, the Moriah staff initiated the establishment of a fitness room in the Moriah facility, which serves as home to 93 residents aged 6-35 with complex developmental disabilities and varying levels of retardation ranging from low-medium to severe.

The uniqueness of the fitness room, which was established based on the principle of normalization, is the integration of normative sport activity alongside an active social club, supporting the development of social connections while engaged in a meaningful activity during the residents' free time. The equipment in the room was adapted to meet the various individualized needs of the residents.

The purpose of this piece is to describe the process of planning and executing the establishment of a fitness room in the facility according to the needs of the residents; the equipment chosen; the adaptations required; and the development of a working model in the room. The essay will stress the involvement of the occupational therapy staff in the establishment and planning of the room.

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