

Sensory Processing within the Pediatric Population

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Project Description & Sites

The overall purpose of my residency project was to gain advanced knowledge in a specialty area of pediatric therapy, specifically sensory integration. I obtained this through conducting retrospective research, completing an intervention manual for children with somatodyspraxia, treating patients using sensory integration theory, completing sensorimotor evaluations, and participating in a mentorship under a licensed OT with experience in pediatrics and sensory integration. I also observed and participated in leadership and management meetings to gain a clearer understanding of running an outpatient clinic.

My site was at Piller Child Development at two of the locations: Mesa, Arizona, and Ahwatukee, Arizona.

Project Completion and Outcomes

- ❖ Student will increase knowledge and clinical skills in a specialty area of practice, specifically sensory processing.
- ❖ Student will develop leadership and management skills needed in the field of occupational therapy.
- ❖ Student will initiate a practice-based research study under the supervision of a licensed OT.

Mission & Vision Statements

Project Mission Statement: To gain knowledge and experience in sensory processing techniques above that of an entry-level practitioner.

Project Vision Statement: To promote the benefits of sensory processing techniques within the pediatric population and advocate for the importance of occupational therapy's role in sensory processing.

Using Play to Improve Sensory Processing



Illustration of colorful handprints arranged in a circular pattern.

Deliverables

- Parent presentation and handout on sensory processing and play
- Management meeting hours log
- Practice-based research study on somatodyspraxia
- Intervention manual for somatodyspraxia

Literature Review

- Common interventions for children with sensory processing difficulties include cognitive interventions, sensory-based, Ayres Sensory Integration®, task-based training/developmental skill building, and environmental modifications (Reynolds et al., 2017).
- Importance of utilizing a multi-faceted approach and individualizing treatment plans (Reynolds et al., 2017).
- Somatodyspraxia is one form of sensory processing difficulties and often coincides with decreased motor planning and decreased processing of both the tactile and proprioceptive systems (Bundy & Lane, 2020).
- Children with somatodyspraxia may have difficulties with self-care skills (e.g. tying shoes, etc.), academics (e.g. handwriting, holding a pencil, etc.), play and leisure (e.g. avoiding gross motor activities/sports), and may have decreased self-esteem (Ayres & Robbins, 2005; Miller & Collins, 2012).



Future Implications for OT

- Need for high quality research analyzing effectiveness of interventions for children with somatodyspraxia.
- Creation of an intervention manual for treatment of somatodyspraxia.

KEY REFERENCES

*Full reference list and image reference list available upon request