AOTA® Resources To Support Pediatric Practice

Challenges and Opportunities for Children and Youth With an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

This document identifies three challenges often encountered by occupational therapy practitioners working with children and youth with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and offers tools and resources available through the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) that may help to meet these challenges. This is a working document. The information provided below is not all-inclusive, nor is it arranged in any particular order.

1 CHALLENGE: Occupational therapy's role in serving students with autism in the schools is not fully understood or used.

OPPORTUNITIES:

Advocate

- Conduct a staff in-service using the powerpoint on school-based practice, which can be downloaded from http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Secure/Practice/Children/PowerPoint%20Role%20of%20OT%20with%20children%20and%20Youth%20in%20School%20Based%20Practice.pdf
- Share the "Tips for Educators," which reviews how occupational therapy practitioners support educators as well as students with autism. http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/consumers/Youth/Autism/Autism%20Teacher%20Tip%20Sheet.pdf
- Distribute copies of the Fact Sheet entitled "Occupational Therapy in School Settings." http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/Professionals/WhatIsOT/CY/Fact-Sheets/School%20Settings%20fact%20sheet.pdf
- Promote occupational therapy's role in inclusion by sharing the Fact Sheet on Universal Design for Learning. http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/Professionals/WhatIsOT/CY/Fact-Sheets/UDL%20fact%20sheet.pdf
- Share the AOTA Fact Sheet on Autism. http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/Professionals/WhatIsOT/CY/Fact-Sheets/Autism%20fact%20sheet.pdf

Refer to AOTA Official Documents

- Refer to the Official Document entitled "Occupational Therapy Services in Early Childhood and School-based Settings," especially chart on pages 5 and 7. http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Secure/Practice/OfficialDocs/Statements/OT-Services-Early-Childhood-and-Schools.PDF
- Refer to the Official Document entitled "The Scope of Occupational Therapy Services for Individuals With an Autism Spectrum Disorder Across the LifeCourse." http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Secure/Practice/OfficialDocs/Statements/Scope-OT-Services-Individuals-With-ASD-Lifecourse.PDF

Provide occupation- and evidence-based practice

- Use your full scope of practice by addressing non-academic outcomes that lead to school success, including social participation and mental health. Some tools that may help include:
  - Fact Sheet on School Mental Health. http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/Professionals/WhatIsOT/CY/Fact-Sheets/OT%20%20School%20Mental%20Health%20Fact%20Sheet%20for%20web%20posting%20102109.pdf
  - FAQ on School Mental Health. http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Secure/Practice/Children/School%20Mental%20Health%20FAQ%20Webfin.pdf
- Promote occupational therapy's role in addressing positive transition outcomes for future community living, employment, and post-secondary educational plans and goals.
  - Go to the AOTA transition Web site link: http://www.aota.org/Practice/Children-Youth/Transitions.aspx
  - Share the AOTA Transition Fact Sheet. http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/Professionals/WhatIsOT/CY/Fact-Sheets/Transitions.pdf
  - Refer to the AOTA FAQ on Transitions. http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Secure/Practice/Children/transitions.pdf
  - Share the AOTA Fact Sheet on Facilitating Employment of Individuals With Developmental Disabilities. http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/Professionals/WhatIsOT/CY/Fact-Sheets/Workers%20with%20DD%20fact%20sheet.pdf
- Refer to the evidence-based review of interventions for autism used in or of relevance to OT. http://dx.doi.org/10.5014/ajot.62.4.416
- Refer to the AOTA *Occupational Therapy Practice Guidelines for Children and Adolescents with Autism.* http://myaota.aota.org/shop_aota/prodview.aspx?TYPE=D&PID=843&SKU=2212

Learn More

- Enroll in the self-paced clinical course, *Collaborating for Student Success.* http://myaota.aota.org/shop_aota/prodview.aspx?TYPE=D&SKU=3023
- Enroll in the CEonCD™ *Autism Topics Part II: Occupational Therapy Service Provision in an Educational Context.* http://myaota.aota.org/shop_aota/prodview.aspx?TYPE=D&SKU=4881
- Enroll in the self-paced clinical course, *Mental Health Promotion, Prevention, and Intervention With Children and Youth: A Guiding Framework for Occupational Therapy.* http://myaota.aota.org/shop_aota/prodview.aspx?TYPE=D&PID=65413407&SKU=3030
- Enroll in the online course, *Occupational Therapy in School-Based Practice: Contemporary Issues and Trends: Autism and Related Disabilities: Considerations for Occupational Therapy in the School Setting (Session 3).* http://myaota.aota.org/shop_aota/prodview.aspx?Type=D&SKU=olsb3