

Evidence-Based Practice Resources

Children and Youth

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The American Occupational Therapy Association's (AOTA's) Centennial Vision provides a clear path for occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants working with individuals from birth to young adulthood and their families by stressing excellence in service that is informed by evidence. The Centennial Vision also encourages all occupational therapy practitioners to be aware of innovative and emerging areas of practice.

Having easy access to evidence-based practice resources may be a challenge for those working with children and youth outside the medical model. Pediatric practice sites may lack access to the medical libraries available in hospital-based settings. In addition, practitioners working in pediatrics may visit multiple sites on a given day, limiting the time available for searching the Internet. Also, evidence-based practice (EBP) resources need to accommodate the varied and wide range of clinical conditions and limitations in occupational performance, which pediatric occupational therapy practitioners encounter on a daily basis. Recent updates to AOTA's EBP Resource Directory, available in the Evidence-Based Practice and Research section of the AOTA Web site (www.aota.org) should make the process of finding and accessing relevant Internet resources that much easier. To access the EBP Resource Directory, click on Practitioners or Educators-Researchers, and then on Evidence-Based Practice and Research. The Children and Youth EBP Resources can be found in the Selected EBP Resources section of the EBP Resource Directory. You will need to log in as an AOTA member to access this information.

A particularly useful resource in this section for practitioners looking to quickly develop a basic understanding of EBP should check out *Evidence-Based Practice [EBP]—What Does It Really Mean for Early Education and Intervention?* This PowerPoint, created by Virginia Buysse, PhD, at the FPG Child Development Institute at UNC–Chapel Hill, has many ideas for application of evidence to practice, policy and research.

Other resources included in this section of the Resource Directory include general practice guidelines that are available for download. The practice guidelines available on the National Guideline Clearinghouse, for example, include autism, developmental delay, cerebral palsy, and traumatic brain injury. The New Zealand Guidelines Group Web site also has a practice guideline on autism. Other Web sites focus on a specific disability or treatment area, with specific application to occupational therapy. CanChild Centre for Childhood Disability Research, based at McMaster University, has evidence on a variety of topics in the Keeping Currents section. One example is *An Update on Constraint Therapy in Children With Hemiplegia*. Other examples of Web sites relevant to occupational therapy are Tots 'n Tech Research (which has information on assistive technology); Evidence Based Review of Moderate to Severe Acquired Brain Injury (ABIEBR); and Center on the Emotional and Social Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). Web briefs available for download from CSEFEL include *Helping Children Understand Routines and Classroom Schedules*, and *Using Environmental Strategies To Promote Positive Social Interactions*. In addition, the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center, and Specialized Intervention for

Children and Transition-Age Youth With Severe Emotional Disabilities focus on issues related to transitions.

Web sites recently added to AOTA's EBP Resource Directory provide evidence-based resources for innovative existing and emerging areas of practice. For example, information on injury prevention that includes bicycle and car seat safety and violence prevention can be found at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Children's Safety Network, the Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center, and the National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Promotion from SAMHSA. The Community Guide and Healthy Youth from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provide evidence-based resources on childhood obesity.

Regardless of whether you work in an existing or emerging area of pediatrics, the EBP Resource Directory Web sites listed above easily provide useful and valuable information to inform, guide, and foster the provision of occupational therapy services from an evidence-based perspective. Reading the information from these sites and determining how to incorporate the findings into your clinical expertise is a welcome challenge that can be embraced by all responsible practitioners working with children and youth. ■

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