Advancing Pediatric Occupational Therapy Practice: The Development of a Sensory Environment and Behavioral Management Plan

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OVERVIEW OF CAPSTONE SITE

Elite Performance and Rehab - Pediatrics

Located in Vicksburg, MS.

The only pediatric outpatient clinic in Vicksburg, MS.

Services Provided: Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, and Occupational Therapy.

Grand Opening: January 2020

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT and/or IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of the doctoral capstone was improving Elite Performance and Rehab’s pediatric practice by developing a plan for a sensory environment and behavioral management strategies for future implementation. The plan consisted of five sections including: visual and auditory sensory items, oral motor and olfactory sensory items, tactile sensory items, proprioceptive and vestibular sensory items, and behavioral management strategies. Therapists and other team members at Elite Performance and Rehab were presented with a portfolio of the sensory environment plan and educated on how to manage different behaviors by utilizing Child Adult Relationship Enhancement (CARE) training. The Capstone Mentor and other key stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the project plan by offering oral and verbal feedback.

LITERATURE SUMMARY

Children with ASD often have sensory processing difficulties that ultimately affect their engagement in everyday activities (Knox, 2015).

These sensory processing difficulties directly influence children’s opportunities to practice and develop skills like social participation and adaptive behavior in response to their environment (Tomchek, 2015).

The combination of behavioral and sensory interventions yielded positive results in children with ASD (Lydon, Healy, & Grey, 2017).

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Phase I: informal process via telephone consisting of semi structured qualitative interview.

Phase II: informal process via in person interview consisting of semi structured qualitative questions in list format.

PROJECT GOALS / OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: The capstone student will demonstrate knowledge and application of the Jean Ayres Sensory Integration theory to guide the capstone project by week 2

Goal 2: The capstone student (with the help of the capstone mentor) will determine what items are needed for the sensory room by the end of week 3

Goal 3: The capstone student will compile a detailed list of items for the sensory room that outlines the utilization of each tool by week 7.

Goal 4: The capstone student will disseminate program plan and capstone project to key stakeholders both at the site and to faculty/staff at the end of the capstone experience

Goal 5: The capstone student will demonstrate program plan satisfaction by usage of evaluation tool by week 14.

This capstone project aimed to assist Elite Performance and Rehab - Pediatrics in exploration of sensory products and space design for a sensory clinic. It also provided training behavior management techniques using the Child Adult Relationship Enhancement (CARE) principles. Future research could include assessment the efficacy of the usage of the CARE’s principles.