

Occupational Therapy for Children
and Adolescents with Autism:
It is about More than Handwriting

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Be as you are in this moment



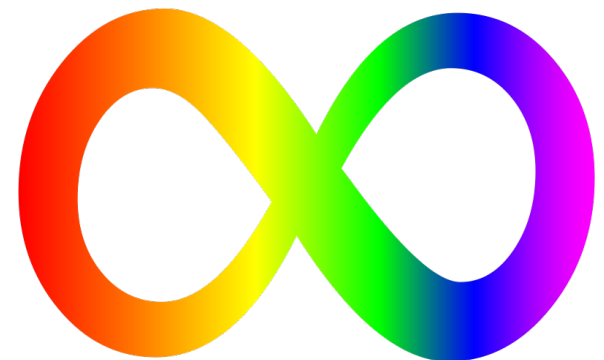
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A note
about language...

Objectives

- At the end of this talk, I would like for you to know
 - how occupational therapists can help autistic individuals
 - how occupational therapists can help improve mental health



What is Occupational Therapy? (OT)



- + Bathing
- + Dressing
- + Eating
- + Care of Others
- + Driving & Community Mobility
- + Home Management
- + Play
- + Leisure
- + Safety Procedures
- + Sleep
- + Financial Management
- + Meal Preparation
- + Social Participation



Common
Question:
What is the
difference
between OT
and PT?

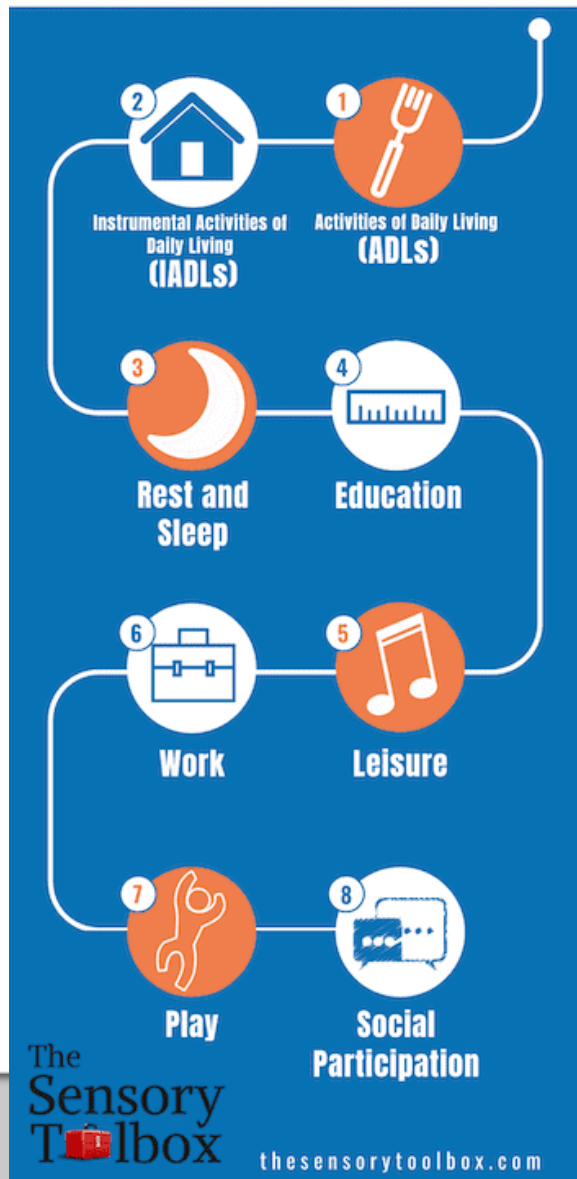
- **OT:**

- Treats the whole person
- Holistic approach (wellness promotion, rehabilitation, etc.)
- Focuses on individuals meaningful activities

- **PT:**

- Treats a specific impairment
- Approach is biomechanical (mobility, alignment, etc.)

THE 8 AREAS OF OCCUPATION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY



Common Question:
What does an OT do
besides help with
handwriting

Getting back to chosen activities!

Activities of Daily Living

iStudentNurse.com/ADLs



Toileting



Bathing



Eating/Feeding



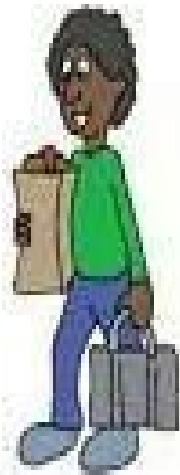
Dressing



Grooming



Transferring



SHOPPING



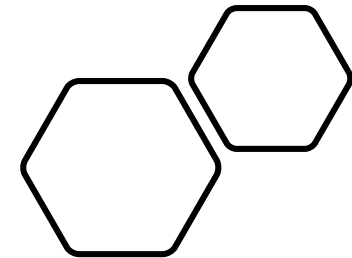
COOKING/CLEANING



USING TELEPHONE
OR TRANSPORTATION



MANAGING MONEY
AND MEDICATIONS













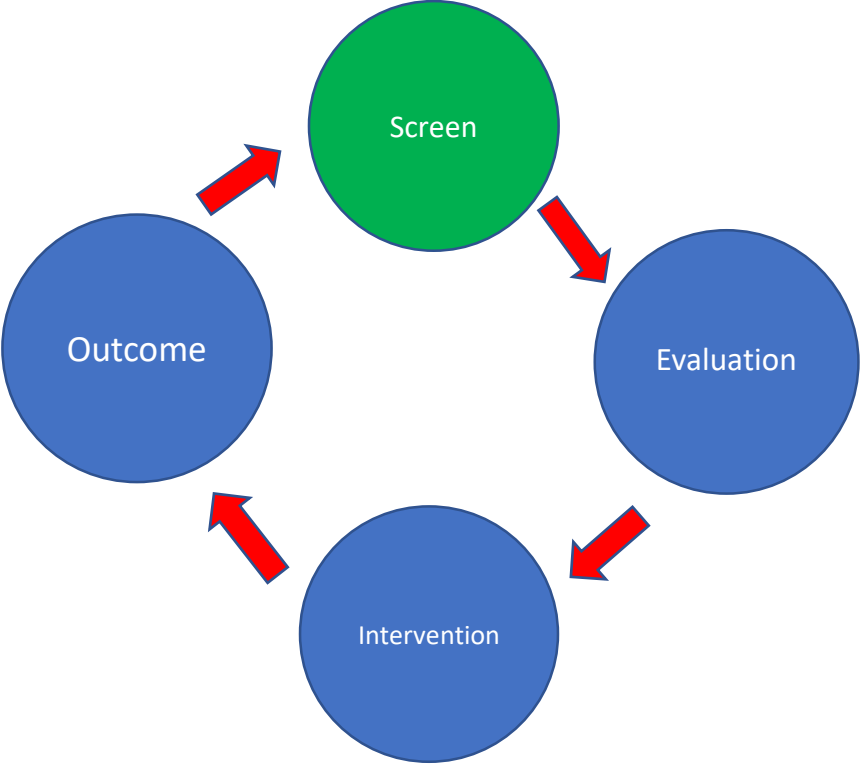




Types of Interventions an OT Can Create:

- Help individuals participate in school and social situations
- Help individuals recover from mental or physical injuries

Steps an OT completes:



**Cycle Repeats





A story about Maggie

I cry and shield my eyes from the sun and other bright lights.

I have "selective hearing or difficulty listening"

I am a picky eater, I resist new foods and textures

I complain about tags in my clothing

I seem to be unaware of normal touch or pain; I often touch other too hard or too soft

I hate being tickled or cuddled

I have poor gross motor skills, such as running, and riding a

I always walk on my tip toes

I hate having my hair washed, brushed or cut



I have trouble focusing and/or concentrating

I am overly sensitive to loud sounds such as vacuums and blenders

I am always smelling people, food and objects

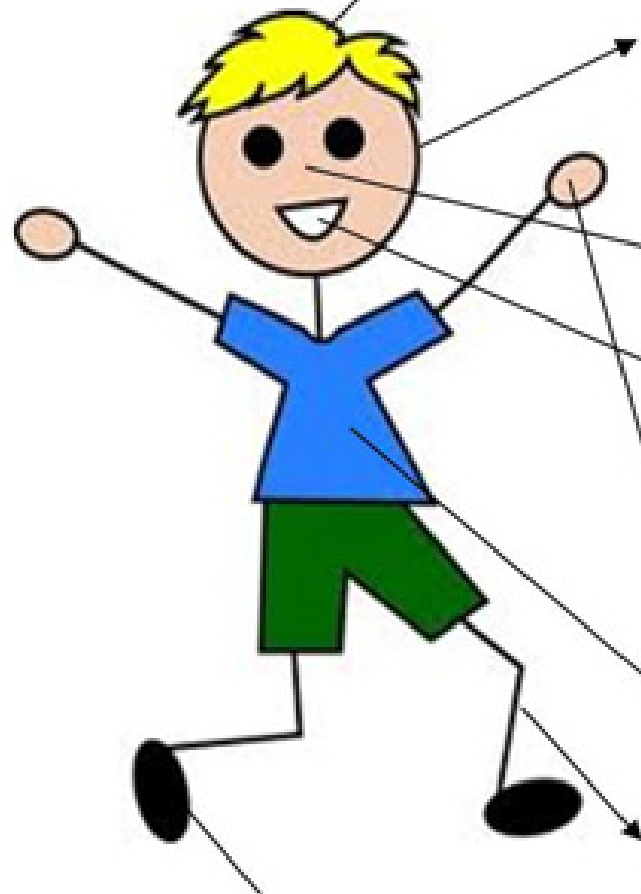
I chew on everything

I have poor fine motor skills such as handwriting and cutting

I have difficulty dressing myself

I sit with my legs in the "W" position

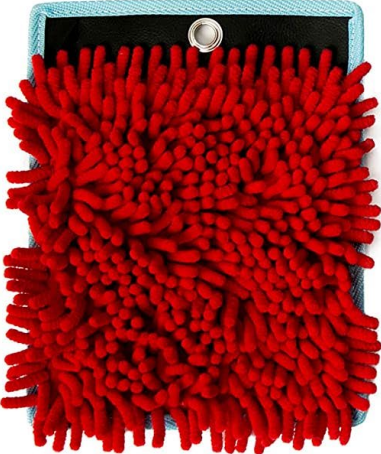
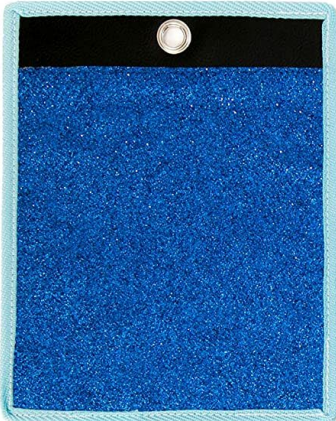
I put my socks on "just so" or maybe I never go



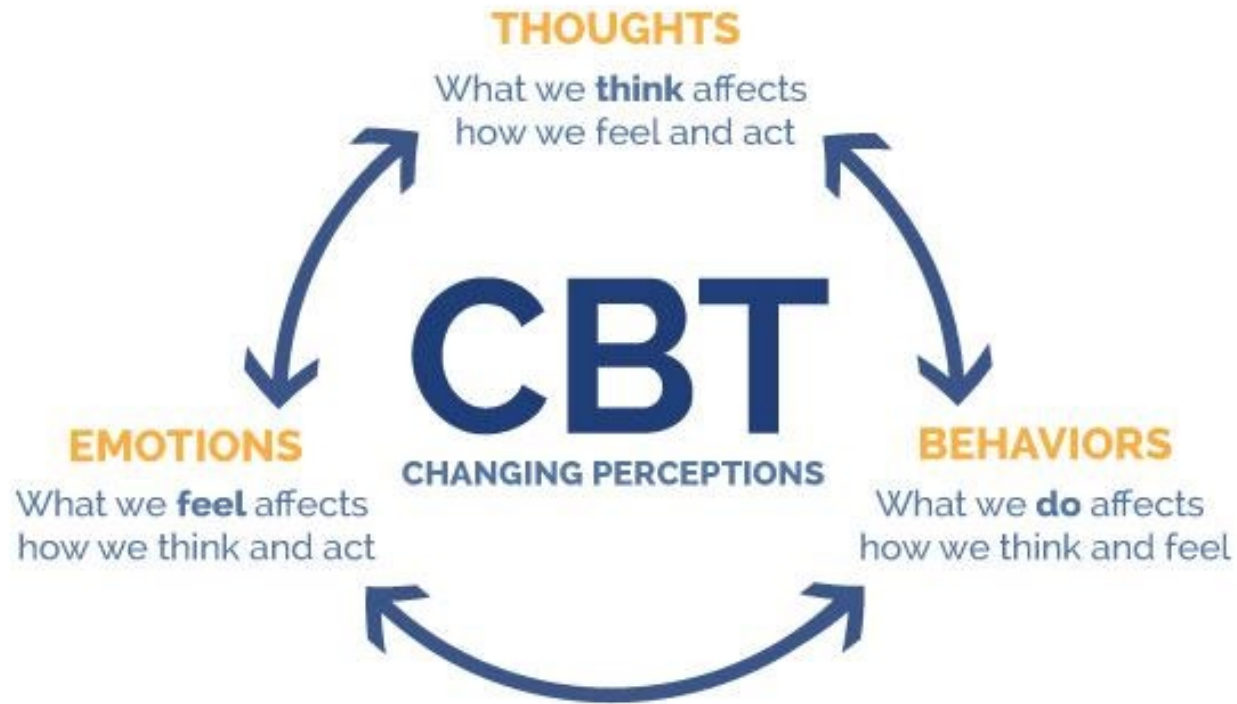
The Senses



The Senses



Cognitive Treatment Programs



Stimulus



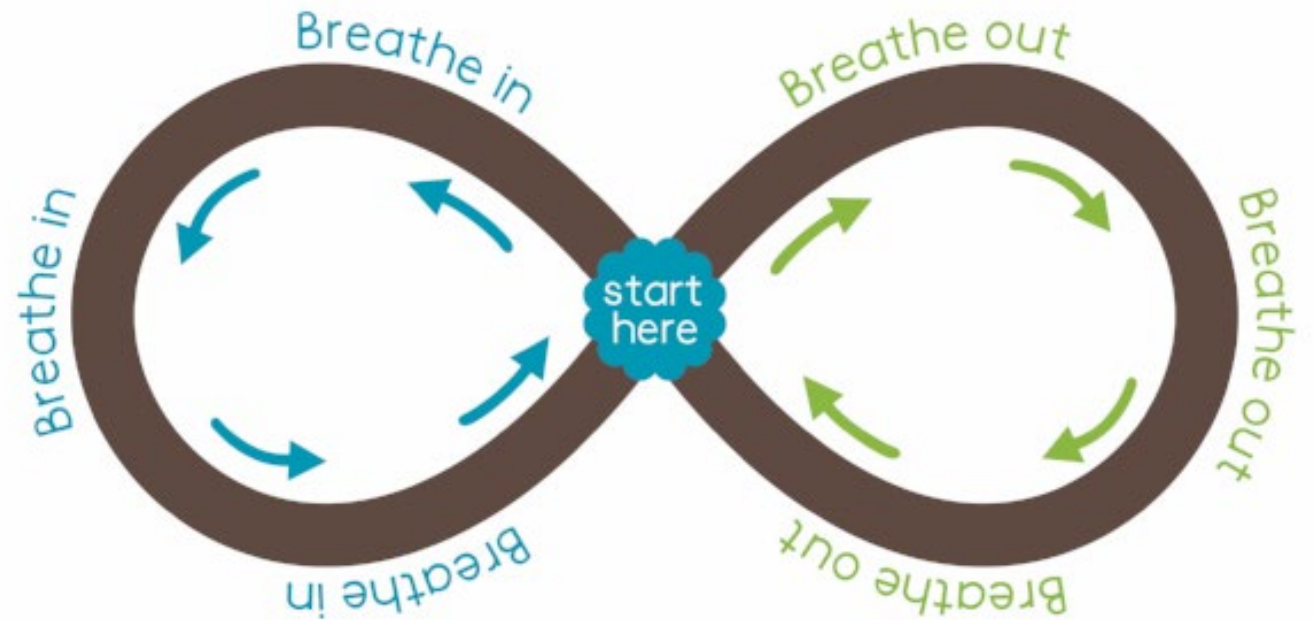
Reaction





Intervention

Strategies



Socioemotional Treatment Programs



A STORY ABOUT JAMES



Early Risk Factors of Mental Health

- Emotional, behavioral, academic and interpersonal issues arise
 - Aggressive behavior towards others in school
 - More common in boys than girls



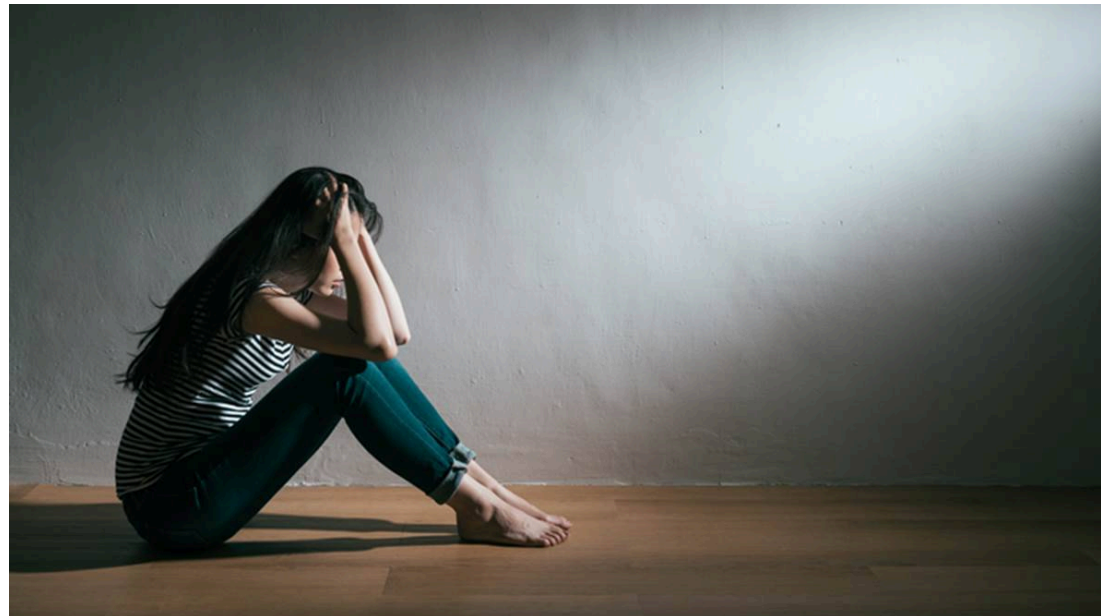
Early Risk Factors of Mental Health

- Emotional, behavioral, academic and interpersonal issues arise
 - Peer difficulties
 - Weak friendships



Early Risk Factors of Mental Health

- Emotional, behavioral, academic and interpersonal issues arise
 - Depressive symptoms
 - Oftentimes can lead to productivity loss and suicide



Early Risk Factors of Mental Health

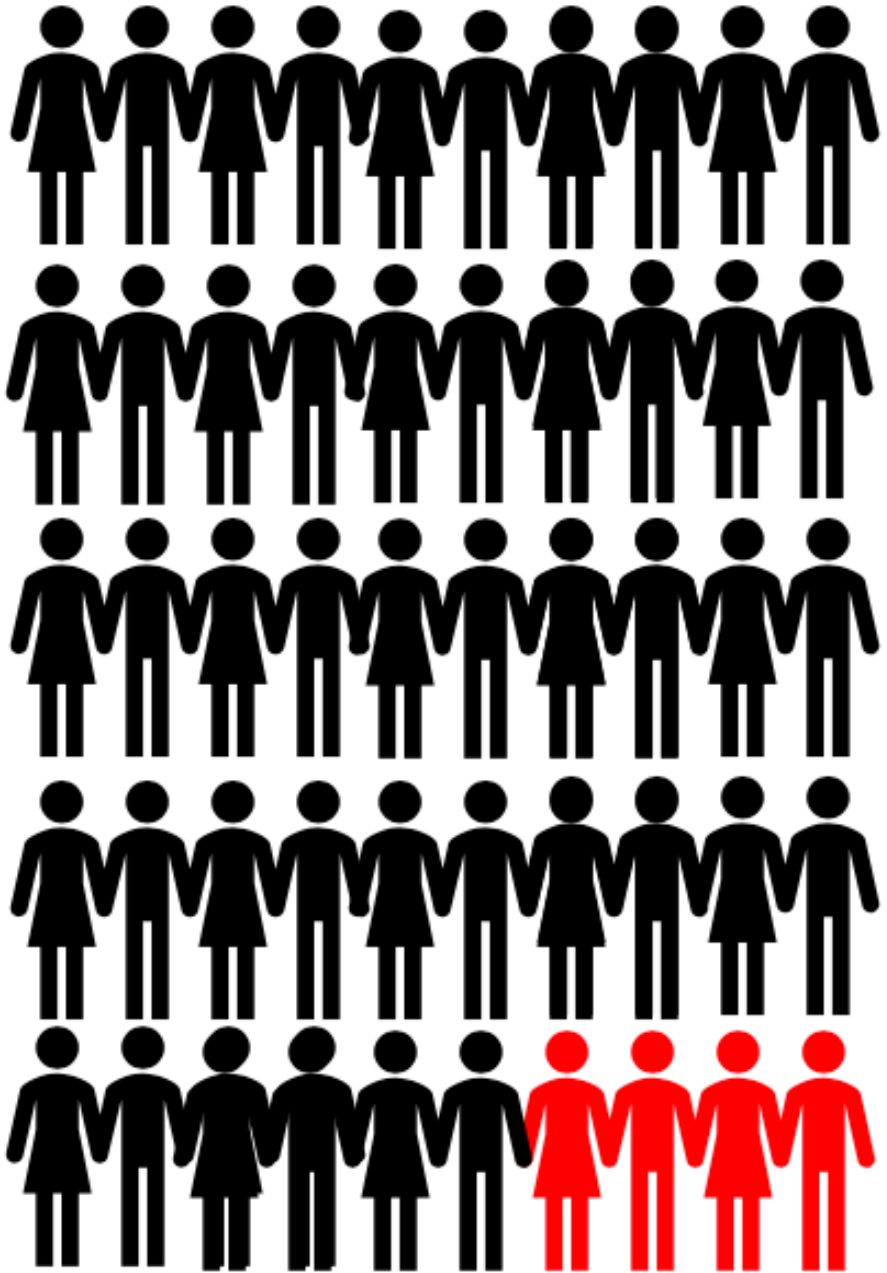
- Emotional, behavioral, academic and interpersonal issues arise
 - Academic problems
 - Bullying occurring in school, poor grades, school drop out



Practical tools that optimize mental health for all children

- Therapy has positive affects
 - Various therapies will help children based on the specific thing they are struggling with
- Recognizing the problem at the earliest stage will have the best results for how to help
 - Early intervention= best intervention





- Depression is a commonly reported mental health condition in adolescence
- Estimates ~ 7.5% in the typically developing (TD) population
- USPSTF has recommended universal screening across **ALL adolescents.**



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- **Depression, and depressive symptomatology, is very difficult to observe in those with ASD!**
 - **Why?**
 - Overlapping features with ASD
 - Altered social motivation
 - & Impaired episodic memory

Occupational Therapy Can Help With That!



Any Questions???



Thank you!



Feel free to contact me at:

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