

Using a sensory integrative focus, occupational therapists aim to support the individual to reach a state of “calm alertness” which is



With the ability to assess sensory preferences, the occupational therapist can provide insight into an individual's motivators and reinforcers, that can be used to support learning in all environments.

The Pyramid Approach to Education provides a framework for teaching all types of skills, and occupational therapists can utilise this framework to emphasise and focus on

- the individual's motivation to engage in the learning process;
- providing communication opportunities to ensure the individual has some choice and control within the learning situation; and
- providing learning experiences through functional activities to support long-term independence

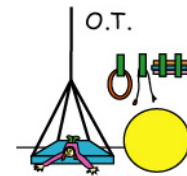


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OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND THE PYRAMID APPROACH TO EDUCATION

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“Occupational therapy is a profession concerned with promoting health and well being through occupation. The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in the activities of everyday life” (WFOT)

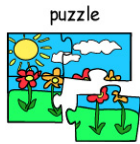


As OT's we are concerned with supporting the individual to develop skills that will lead towards independent functioning in self-care, play/leisure, vocation, and socialisation.



Regardless of our practice modalities and approaches, OT's work towards independent skill development, and the Pyramid Approach to Education provides a framework to do this.





puzzle



dress up



paint



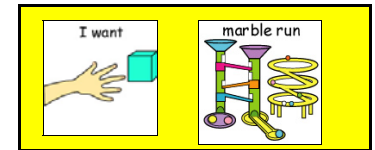
koosh

The Pyramid Approach provides a framework to support skills development, with a focus on

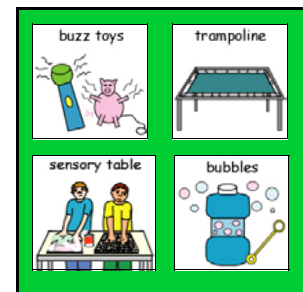
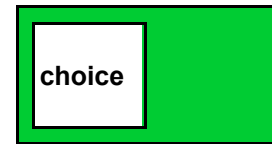
- Functional activities,
- Ensuring the individual is an 'active' participant in the learning process,
- Generalisation of skills to all 'real' situations

To ensure that the child benefits from 'therapy' we must capture the child's interest so that he/she is an interested, active learner - both OT and Pyramid share the focus of drawing the child to the 'lesson', to capture the child's motivation to ensure learning will occur

And these concepts fit with OT practice seamlessly.



We can use Pyramid strategies to teach daily routines, providing physical prompting and backward-chaining to ensure independence is achieved.



We can capture and support motivation by using visual systems, to promote communication, concept development and choice-making within functional activities



work



play



wash hands



snack

When taught effectively, visual strategies can support the individual's ability to learn routines without requiring ongoing supervision or reminders



bath



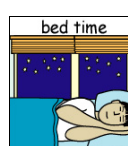
dry



put on



brush teeth



bed time

We can teach new skills using activities that are inherently reinforcing for the child, or add a reinforcer at the completion of a task

