




Addressing Changing Needs and New Roles of School-Based OTs & PTs to Optimize Team Collaboration, Post-Pandemic



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Learning Objectives

- ❖ Explain the impact that the pandemic has had on students, school staff, and families
- ❖ Describe potential roles OT & PT can have in addressing changing needs in the schools
- ❖ Discuss strategies that address optimal educational team performance and collaboration including challenging situations



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COVID 19: Impact on Children & Youth

- ❖ Increases in formal diagnoses: ~ 4 million diagnosed with anxiety disorder, ~2 million diagnosed with depressive disorder
 - Most vulnerable: older adolescents, females, neurodiverse or with chronic conditions
- ❖ Routines disrupted at home:
 - Inconsistent access to school programming, social activities and predictable routines
 - Increased behaviors, sedentary activities, increased screen time (engagement), dysregulated sleep (napping/boredom)
 - Parental stress: work/life balance, new routines, financial insecurity (food shelter, job), increase in substance abuse, neglect
 - Decreased participation in daily activities, except electronically related produced externalizing problems (hyperactivity & disruptive behaviors) and fewer prosocial behaviors, motivation, persistence, affect

(Chen, 2022; McKim, et al., 2021; Samjiet al., 2021)





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Impact on Children & Youth (con't)

- ❖ Young children: clingy, uncooperative, bored, attention seeking, anxiety, decrease in prosocial behavior, hyperactivity
 - Less extended family contact
- ❖ Older children: increased reported cases of anxiety, depression, PTSD, attention seeking, poor academic performance, social isolation, depression
- ❖ Adolescents: Increased reported symptoms of depression, anxiety, PTSD, decreased attention and increased impulsivity, suicidal ideation, social withdrawal, sleep disturbances, increased screen time (sleep disturbances), decreased physical activity, poor nutrition
- ❖ Neurodiverse: poor tolerance of uncertainty & lack of structure and routines, changing parent roles, changes in behavior, frustration, aggression, planning and time management, academics, antisocial behaviors

(Chen, 2022; Tseng et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2021; Guessoumet al., 2020; Meade, 2021)





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Impact on Children & Youth (con't)

- ❖ Routine disruptions at school:
 - Loss of meaningful occupations, structure, predictability, nourishment, MH counseling (70-80% of school-age students receive services at school)
 - Physical activity, socialization & social-emotional skills development & practice
 - Virtual learning: absenteeism, disengagement, virtual learning resources
 - Inadequacies- teachers responsible for developing content and using technology
 - Increase in reported anxiety, depression and stress

(Silva, et al., 2021; McKim, et al., 2021)



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Impact on Families



Pandemic caused undue stress:

- ❖ Sick, dying family members, separation from family & friends
- ❖ Financial concerns: loss of job, uncertainty
- ❖ Change in role from parent to teacher
- ❖ Relationship challenges

Increased reports of:

- ❖ Negative interactions with children including yelling, disciplining, using harsh words
- ❖ Concerns about domestic violence
- ❖ Anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation

(Chen, 2022; McKim, et al., 2021; Samjiet al., 2021; Lee et al., 2021; Gadermann et al., 2020; Meade, 2021)




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Impact on Families

Parents of autistic children:

- ❖ 97% of parents/caregivers reported being stressed/overwhelmed due to disruptions in services for their child
- ❖ 95% of parents reported mental health issues/concerns
- ❖ Limited understanding/ability to set-up their child’s daily routine and deal with their child’s problematic behaviors




(Chen, 2022; McKim et al., 2021; Samjiet al., 2021)





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Impact on the Educational Team

- ❖ **Physical impact:** fatigue, weakness, poor endurance, respiratory complications, cognitive fog (i.e. confusion, fatigue)
- ❖ **Psychological impact:** decreased participation in meaningful activities, disruption of roles related to service provision in the schools, decreased quality of life with changes in functional activities and isolation, loss of loved ones, social isolation; secondary traumatic stress (STS)
- ❖ COVID-19 survivors experience symptoms including fatigue, cognitive processing difficulties, limited occupational engagement weeks/months following initial infection
 - One in five COVID-19 survivors is diagnosed with a mental illness (i.e., depression, anxiety, insomnia, dementia) with **no previous mental health concerns**



(Lannigan & Tyminski, 2021; Taquet et al., 2021; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021)






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Impact on the Educational Team

- ❖ COVID-related stress, trauma, and burnout led to unhealthy coping behaviors, resulting in:
 - 12% rise in substance use along with poor sleep patterns, unusual eating patterns, and deteriorating chronic conditions (Panchal et al., 2020);
 - Rates of anxiety and depression increased as much as 93% (Sinclair et al., 2020).
- ❖ What are some of the changes you are seeing in your educational teams?
 - Well functioning teams?
 - Dysfunctional teams?





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Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)

- ❖ Emotional stress as a result of hearing about traumatic experiences of others including: seeing high levels of stress in others as a result of trauma, retelling a story of someone who experienced trauma. Symptoms include:
 - Increased anxiety and concern about safety
 - Intrusive, negative thoughts and images related to traumatic stories
 - Fatigue and physical complaints
 - Feeling numb or detached from students
 - Feeling powerless or hopeless about students and work
 - Diminished concentration and difficulty with decision making
 - Desire to physically or emotionally withdraw from people or situations that trigger difficult thoughts and emotions
- ❖ Also referred to as **Burnout** or **Compassion Fatigue**
(Trauma Sensitive School Training Package, 2020)

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Warning Signs of STS and Vicarious Trauma	
Hypervigilance	Excessive alertness for potential threats or dangers at and outside of work. Always being "on" and "on the lookout"
Poor Boundaries	Lacking a balanced sense of your role so that you take on too much, step in and try to control events, have difficulty leaving work at work, or take the work too personally
Avoidance	Coping with stress by shutting down and disconnecting
Inability to Empathize/Numbing	Unable to remain emotionally connected to the work
Addictions	Attaching to distractions to check out from work, personal life, or both
Chronic Exhaustion/Physical Ailments	Experiencing physical, emotional, and spiritual fatigue or inexplicable aches and pains exceeding what you expect for an ordinary busy day or week
Minimizing	Trivializing a current experience by comparing it with another situation that we regard as more severe
Anger and Cynicism	Using cynicism or anger to cope other intense feelings that we may not understand or know how to manage
Feelings of Professional Inadequacy	Becoming increasingly unsure of yourself professionally, second-guessing yourself, feeling insecure about tasks that you once felt confident to perform

(Trauma Sensitive School Training Package, 2020)



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Self- Assessment and Planning Tool

- ❖ Refer to the Self-Care Self-Assessment tool (see handout)
- ❖ Note where you rate yourself in all the areas of self-care including: physical, psychological, emotional, relational, spiritual, and workplace/professional.
 - Pay particular attention to those areas where you rate yourself 'never' or 'rarely'.
 - Reflect on the follow-up questions
 - Complete the self-care plan including what you will commit to do next month.

(American Institute for Research, 2020)

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Resiliency

- ❖ Key factors associated with resiliency:
 - Sense of control, meaning, purpose
 - Self awareness and emotional regulation skills
 - Social support & healthy coping style
 - Humor and optimism
 - Cognitive flexibility & positive thinking
 - Adaptability to change



(American Institute for Research, 2020)

We cannot be good collaborators unless we take good care of ourselves

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Related Service Providers (RSP) need to create safe environments, recognize common symptoms of traumatic stress, & shift their responses to support individuals who are in distress


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Using a Trauma Informed Care (TIC) Model:

- Understand the health effects of trauma, including coping styles and behaviors (yours & others)
- Know your own history and reactions
- Know how to care for yourself
- Be aware of the potential for secondary trauma
- Practice "trauma stewardship," (i.e. caring for others without taking on their trauma yourself)
- Respectfully and collaboratively discuss negative coping behaviors (yours & others)that may be impacting team function
- Create a "safe space" for team meetings- confidentiality, open communication
 - Use person-centered care practices (e.g. ask about concerns, give as much control as possible, and ask what can be done to make others more comfortable)







(Raja et al., 2015)

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School Self-Care Assessment & Plan

- Refer to the handout entitled 'School Self-Care Plan'
- Use as a team building activity to objectively evaluate the school environment and recommend to administration the strategies that can promote staff and school-wide self-care and **resiliency** (American Institute for Research, 2020)



AREA	ALREADY DO	WOULD LIKE TO DO
Training & education		
Support & supervision		
Employee control & input		
Communication		
Work environment		



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Share responsibility to create a healthy work environment

What You Can Do	What Your School Can Do
Increase your knowledge and awareness of the effects of trauma and STS.	Educate staff about the effects of trauma, STS, and related conditions and provide regular opportunities for staff to address potential issues related to STS.
Assess your current level of burnout, STS, and vicarious trauma.	Identify and monitor STS and related conditions among staff. Here are two tools that may be helpful: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Compassion fatigue self-test http://www.ptsdsupport.net/compassion_fatigue-selftest.htmlProfessional quality of life scale, ProQOL 5 http://proqol.org/ProQol_Test.html
Stay connected to other people and groups that are supportive and nourishing.	Encourage and develop formal strategies for peer support and mentorship.
Identify and incorporate specific self-care strategies for promoting resilience and maintaining a healthy work-life balance (e.g., exercise, good nutrition, supportive networks).	Create a culture that fosters staff resilience that includes: fair leave policies, adequate benefits, a physically safe and secure working environment, sufficient supervision, support and resources to do the work, and processes for shared decision making.





(Trauma Sensitive School Training Package, 2020)

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Building Professional Relationships & Communicating With Stakeholders in a Changed School Environment





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Purpose of Team Collaboration

- ❖ Collaboration is an ongoing process that guides team members to enable access and facilitate outcomes for students
- ❖ Includes a partnership of communication, joint decision-making and a focus on inclusive practices
- ❖ Key areas for collaboration include service delivery models, knowledge acquisition, joint problem solving, acknowledging and addressing barriers to the collaborative process, and overall team satisfaction in meeting student needs
- ❖ Teams that collaborate report more positive student outcomes, less parental complaints, increased team generated IEP goals

(Barnes & Turner, 2001; Gallagher & Richards, 2020; Orentlicher, et al., 2019)





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Questions to Ask Yourself

- ❖ How do YOU approach a team meeting?
- ❖ What perspective do you maintain?
 - Is your approach positive, negative, ambivalent?
 - Can you keep previous teaming experiences at bay to not influence your thoughts/actions in team meetings?
- ❖ Do you self-reflect on your performance in team meetings/collaborations to determine what works and what didn't work?
 - Were your interaction effective, did they produce the desired effect for the student?
 - Did the most important things get accomplished?
- ❖ What did you do to facilitate individual team members' talents?
- ❖ What do you do to help the team function optimally and address each student's educational needs?



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Each Team Member Needs to Assume Responsibility for Team Performance



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HOW DO WE DEFINE COLLABORATION?



Interactive team process focusing all team members on enhancing the student's functional performance and academic achievement.

Team members are: the student, family/caregivers, educators and related service providers.

➤ Includes:

- Hands-on services for students
- Team supports
- Systems supports









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HANDS-ON SERVICES

- ❖ Interventions that **promote participation and learning** in academic and non-academic activities with peers
- ❖ Provided **within daily routines and contexts using accommodations and modifications to facilitate independence** and the least amount of adult assistance
 - Can consider outside the context of activities and routines if focus is acquiring skills and behaviors or for student privacy
- ❖ Paired with team supports and/or systems supports





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TEAM SUPPORTS

❖ Strategies and interactions used to enhance the competency of another team member to facilitate a student's performance

➤ Mentoring and coaching team members to acquire and refine knowledge/skills

○ Increase knowledge, skills, mastery of new information

➤ Recommend classroom strategies before referring for an assessment (e.g. RtI, MTSS)

➤ Participating on teams to assess and develop IEPs

➤ Jointly implementing interventions (e.g. co-teaching, centers)

➤ Identify strengths, interests and needs and develop targeted student intervention plans

➤ Collecting data and completing observations to assess efficacy of interventions (e.g. electronic forms, Microsoft forms)

➤ Your examples?

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SYSTEM SUPPORTS

❖ Formal and informal initiatives, programs, communications that ensure the district/program is meeting federal, state and local requirements for student education

➤ Task forces that address transition to work, curriculum development, assessment accommodations, playground design, bullying prevention

➤ Teams that provide specialized instruction (e.g. assistive technology, low incidence disabilities)

➤ Parent/caregiver education (e.g. homework routines, organizational strategies for students)

➤ Developing/refining guidelines for the provision of Speech, OT and PT services in the district

➤ Continuing education regarding evidence-based interventions, best practice for Speech, OT and PT

➤ Your examples?

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Service Models and Team Collaboration

Blending hands-on services, team and system supports allows for flexibility so team members can decide how to address student goals of learning and participation.

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STARTLING STATISTICS

- ❖ 50% of new educators leave teaching within 5 years
- ❖ Key reasons: *Limited professional development and opportunities to learn from colleagues*
- ❖ Challenges of facing new team members and itinerant services

(Hanft, Shepherd & Reed in Clark & Chandler, 2013)

- ❖ Even greater attrition rate post-COVID: between 12-25%


(Educational Resource Strategies, 2021)




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CHALLENGES TO COLLABORATION

Interpersonal/Personal:	Systems:
❖ Ineffective communication or social skills	❖ Insufficient time and resources to support team collaboration
❖ Perceived loss of control, levels of competence	❖ De-valuing collaboration vs. direct services
❖ Unwillingness to share knowledge or expertise	❖ Inflexibility in curriculum and assessment procedures
❖ Fear of change	❖ Lack of training for the skills of collaboration
❖ Lack of knowledge about IDEA requirements: LRE, IEP process, use of EBP strategies	❖ Excessive caseloads
❖ Attitude toward and expectations of one's role; collective decision making	







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GROUP ACTIVITY: REFLECTIONS ON TEAM COLLABORATION

- ❖ Complete **Worksheet 3.2A** rating one specific team you interact with regularly and where there are collaboration challenges
- ❖ Share your findings with your group.
- ❖ What about the characteristic of collaboration ratings surprised you? Were there characteristics that you had not considered previously?





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COLLABORATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF TEAMWORK

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CORE CHARACTERISTICS OF COLLABORATIVE TEAMS

Voluntary participation

- Commitment to engage in an interactive relationship
- Willingness to nourish the interactive process

Equality among members

- No one member is more important than the student and family
- Responsibilities, ideas, opinions are respected and given equal consideration
- Relinquish the expert role

Common purpose

- Shared purpose that reflects professional and personal values and beliefs
- Integrated goals

Joint responsibility for outcomes

- Accountable for success or failure to meet outcomes
- Interdependence among team members, decreased discipline specific boundaries

Sharing resources to learn from one another

- Share skills, talents, knowledge and materials
- Understanding curriculum content, state standards, teaching techniques

Collective decision-making

- Perspectives and concerns are discussed, conflict resolved through compromise for the best possible decision

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COLLABORATION AND ADULT LEARNING

Adults are self directed, autonomous learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">How can we work together effectively?Here's the info I promised you- let me know if you need anything else or have any questionsWhat would you like me to do?
Adults bring knowledge and life experiences. Previous life experiences, culture etc., influence a learning experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Have you ever worked with students like _____?Tell me about your other work experiencesHow long have you been at this school?
Adults are goal oriented and know what they need to learn and why	<ul style="list-style-type: none">What are your goals for us working together?Have I given you some choices or suggestions that will meet your goals?
Adults want practical info that makes sense, is doable and appears helpful	<ul style="list-style-type: none">What would be the best time to try this idea given your daily schedule?I'd like to explain why I think this might work and how it will help your student meet his goals.
Adults want to be treated with respect, valued for their knowledge, opinions and life experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I want to hear your opinion on this



(Hanft and Chandler, 2013)

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EFFECTIVE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS



- ❖ Communication
 - Team members must understand each other’s roles
 - Collaborative interactions require active listening, use of transferrable terms which are easily understood by all team members
- ❖ Problem solving
 - Recognize teachable moments and help others identify what’s working well in addition to identifying challenges to a student’s learning and participation
 - Teams must find solutions to the time dilemma
- ❖ Developing and implementing a plan
 - Therapists provide information to assist team members in making choices about intervention strategies
 - If others are responsible for implementing interventions, it’s important to provide specific information about why, how and when to use the strategy, and use feedback
 - *Therapists must also be willing to implement other’s strategies*



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EFFECTIVE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS


- ❖ Interpersonal effectiveness
 - The ability to develop and maintain trust, use communication skills to convey competence and confidence and apply principles of adult learning
 - Interpersonal challenges, miscommunication can arise from a perceived loss of power, workspace, materials or challenges to familiar teaching routines
- ❖ Coaching and mentoring
 - Grounded in the beliefs of trust, clear communication and shared problem solving of identified goals
 - Coaching and mentoring provide team and system supports so members can acquire or refine skills and knowledge
 - On the job support through questioning, encouraging reflection to evaluate needs and implement effective strategies
 - Responding to questions, providing advice and resources to help a novice perform competently



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COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR OPTIMAL TEAM FUNCTION

- ❖ Communicate through a common language: jargon free
- ❖ Give and receive feedback willingly: what’s your comfort level, openness
- ❖ Facilitate team operations: schedules, roles, decision making, conflict management
- ❖ Facilitator, recorder, timekeeper, jargon buster, reflector
- ❖ Problem solving is a foundational element to effective collaboration



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Communication

Things to consider when *someone else* is talking:

❖ Listen to see if the speaker is expressing an opinion or if data is being shared

➢ Ask for data that supports what a person is saying

❖ Use active listening strategies: make eye contact and lean forward

❖ Take notes on what you hear and ask for clarification

❖ Allow the speaker to finish so you don't miss important data that can impact your understanding of the content

➢ Ask questions or restate what you heard if you need clarification

Pacer Center (2020)

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Communication

Things to consider when *you* are talking:

❖ Keep the focus on the student

❖ Be prepared, write your questions/comments down to make sure your important points are discussed

❖ State your issues and concerns clearly. Communicate in an honest and direct manner.

❖ Direct your comments and questions to the person who can address or answer them the best

❖ Restate your concerns if you feel you were not heard the first time

❖ Be confident in recommending the appropriate educational program/services for the student

Pacer Center (2020).

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GROUP ACTIVITY: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS CHECKLIST

❖ Evaluate your interpersonal skills using Worksheet 3.1A


❖ Review your ratings on Worksheet 3.2A

❖ How does the information from these 2 worksheets help you understand your skills on your team(s)?


❖ Are there differences between teams?

❖ Be prepared to share info from your discussion in your small groups

from:



to:



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Shifting from Consultants to Collaborators:
Your Role on the Educational Team






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GETTING INTO A COLLABORATIVE SERVICE
DELIVERY ROUTINE

What unique skills and knowledge do RSPs bring to the educational system?

- ❖ Adapt the physical, visual, and temporal environments for student learning
- ❖ Collaboration through assessment tools
- ❖ Collaboration in developing IEP goals
- ❖ Collaboration through data collection







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REFRAME PERCEPTIONS OF THERAPY

- ❖ Collaborative consultation: members mutually agreeing to enter into the relationship with equally important roles, & an agreed upon scope and focus of their collaboration (Cahill & Lopez-Reyna, 2013)
- ❖ Student educational goals not Speech, OT or PT goals
 - RSPs understand how students assume and develop the student role and how they develop social emotional skills (Cahill & Lopez-Reyna, 2013)
- ❖ Support student learning in all contexts and environments
- ❖ Use an ecological approach





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TOP DOWN APPROACH: ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

- ❖ Gather info about what the student needs to do & the context in which they need to do it (Cahill & Lopez-Reyna, 2013)
 - Identify functional skills to enhance engagement, participation and learning in all environments
- ❖ Arrange observations according to daily routine function i.e. classroom, gym, library, transitions, assembly etc.
- ❖ These domains function as the context to embed intervention





Enhancing school and community outcomes together

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BENEFITS OF USING AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

- ❖ Determine expectations in the natural environment
- ❖ Determine critical skills needed in current and future environments
 - Skills being taught must be valid for the student and socially valid
- ❖ Promote instruction in the natural environment
- ❖ Promote generalization in context and within and across environments
- ❖ Encourages collaboration among team members






Enhancing school and community outcomes together

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CONDUCTING AN ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT WITH YOUR STUDENTS

- ❖ Speak with the teacher(s) to arrange an observation of the targeted behavior(s)
- ❖ Observe targeted behavior(s) within all contexts/environments
- ❖ Use both standardized and non-standardized functional assessments







Enhancing school and community outcomes together

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WHAT THERAPY ASSESSMENTS WILL YOU SELECT?



- ❖ **Pediatric Evaluation of Disability Inventory (PEDI-CAT)** Haley, S. M., Coster, W.J., Ludlow, L.H., Haltiwanger, J.T., and Andrellos, P.J. (1992). <https://www.pedicat.com/>
- ❖ **School Function Assessment (SFA)** Coster, W.J., Deeney, T., Haltiwanger, J.T., and Haley, S. (1998). <https://www.pearsonassessments.com/store/usassessments/en/Store/Professional-Assessments/Behavior/Adaptive/School-Function-Assessment/p/100000547.html>
- ❖ **Sensory Processing Measure (SPM-2)** Parham, D., Ecker, C., Miller-Kuhaneck, H., and Gannon, T. (2020). <https://www.wjswpublish.com/spm-2>
- ❖ **Sensory Profile-2 (School Companion) (SP-2)** Dunn, W. (2014). <https://www.pearsonassessments.com/store/usassessments/en/Store/Professional-Assessments/Motor-Sensory/Sensory-Profile-2/p/100000822.html?tab=overview>
- ❖ **SCOPE Version 2.2 (Short Child Occupational Profile)** Bowyer, P.L., Kramer, J., Ploszaj, A., Ross, M., Schwartz, O. Kielhofner, G. and Kramer, K. <https://mohg-irm.uic.edu/productDetails.aspx?aid=9>
- ❖ **Early Functional Communication Profile** Jensen, S.L. (2012). Retrieved from: <https://www.linguisticsystems.com/products/product/display?itemid=10834>



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WHAT THERAPY ASSESSMENTS WILL YOU SELECT?



- ❖ **Social Skills Rating Scale** Elliott, S.N. <http://www.pearsonclinical.com/education/products/100000115/social-skills-rating-system-ssrs.html>
- ❖ **SOSI-M: Structured Observations of Sensory Integration – Motor** (2021) by Erna Imperatore Blanche, PhD, OTR/L, Gustavo Reinoso, PhD, OTR/L, and Dominique Blanche Kiefer, OTD, OTR/L <https://www.wjswpublish.com/sosi-m-structured-observations-of-sensory-integration-motor.html#:~:text=The%20SOSI-M%20is%20a%20new%20national%20standardized%20assessment,proprioception%2C%20vestibular%20processing%2C%20motor%20planning%2C%20and%20postural%20control>
- ❖ **BRIEF-2: Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function, Second Edition** (2015) by Gerard A. Gioia, PhD, Peter K. Isquith, PhD, et al. <https://www.wjswpublish.com/brief-2-behavior-rating-inventory-of-executive-function-second-edition>
- ❖ **SMALS: School Motivation and Learning Strategies Inventory** (2014). by Kathy Chatham Stroud, PhD, and Cecil R. Reynolds, PhD <https://www.wjswpublish.com/smals-school-motivation-and-learning-strategies-inventory>



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COLLABORATION & INTERVENTION


- ❖ Define & expand our scope of practice so other team members understand
- ❖ Provide direct “hands on” intervention- in context and out of context
- ❖ Collaborative Role: Team Supports- collaborative consultation, co-teaching, progress monitoring, mentoring team member, providing in-services, and participating and developing IEPs
 - Document these on the IEP
- ❖ Collaborative Role: Systems Supports
 - Early Intervening Services and Response to Intervention Resources- therapist participation





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COLLABORATION IN DEVELOPING IEP GOALS



- ❖ Each school team is unique in how it functions or dysfunctions
- ❖ Be a detective: learn how each team functions
- ❖ Provide your information on time and in the format required





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COLLABORATION THROUGH DATA COLLECTION



- ❖ Often you are not the individual tracking the supports you designed
- ❖ Quick and easy tools for tracking- Microsoft forms, rubrics, track time, frequency of a behavior observed or not observed, use of a tool etc.

Date	10-2	10-3
Number of minutes seated in circle time with cushion	2 minutes	2.5 min



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MOVING FORWARD: ACTION STEPS FOR COLLABORATION





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COMPONENTS OF COLLABORATIVE SERVICES

- ❖ Flexible Services and Supports
- ❖ Supplemental aids and services, accommodations and modifications, assistive technology, transition services
- ❖ Communication within teams





Enhancing Learning and Participation for All

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REMEMBER TO...

- Link related services directly to the student’s learning and socialization goals
- Promote student learning and participation in school
- Find out what worked and didn’t work in previous collaborative experiences to identify and implement more effective collaboration





Enhancing Learning and Participation for All

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DELIVERING FLEXIBLE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Using creative problem solving to document all the services provided

- ❖ Hands-on visits also have time to provide team support
- ❖ Team teach or co-lead activities or centers
- ❖ Use electronic communication (Microsoft forms etc.)
- ❖ Develop handouts that address common classroom issues
- ❖ Teacher in-services re: SPEECH, OT, PT
- ❖ Revise schedule to rotate visiting schools in AM or PM
- ❖ 3:1 scheduling- services to students individually or small groups 3x per month with 1 session specifically for collaboration and consultation (documented on the IEP)
- ❖ Frequency for related services: weekly, monthly, annually
 - Intermittent services and supports, changing intensity
- ❖ Workload vs. caseload: Direct service to student vs those provided **on behalf** of the student



Enhancing Learning and Participation for All

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Addressing Changing Needs and New Roles of School-Based OTs & PTs to Optimize Team Collaboration, Post-Pandemic

Building Professional Relationships

Intentional collaboration, can facilitate:

- ❖ Sharing discipline-specific expertise and distributing skills across the team providing students with greater access to services and supports
 - Expansion of skills across disciplines
- ❖ Goals from all disciplines being addressed throughout the routines of the school day; greater dosage of intervention
- ❖ Better communication, cooperation, and role clarification between providers
- ❖ Opportunities to practice and learn skills that are of peak interest, motivating and naturally occurring in the school environment

(Rausch et al., 2021)

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Building Professional Relationships-Necessary Components

Buy-in and resource support from administration: release time, meeting time, time for communication

- ❖ Each team develops **norms** including *shared and equal ownership of the school environment, learning opportunities, and data collection* to ensure consistent collaboration
 - Set norms regarding how team members engage with one another (an example)
 - Be respectful of the shared expertise of all team members.
 - Student outcomes and accomplishments are the responsibility of all team members.
 - Role assignments are clear and flexible.
 - Development and use of a conflict resolution process which includes considering differing perspectives and supporting the team in modified consensus building to move the team forward.
 - *Accept that agreement and disagreement are a part of teaming; both can result in paths to achieve common goals.*

(Rausch, Bold & Strain,2021)



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Building Professional Relationships-Necessary Components

- ❖ Information sharing:
 - Sharing instructional strategies focusing on current evidence of student progress, strengths, preferences, and interests
 - Shared data collection focusing on student goals to monitor progress across all school environments
- ❖ Role support:
 - Advising one another when selected interventions are complex or require skills not in everyone's repertoire; expanding professional skills
 - Sharing ideas to broaden skills, improve observation
- ❖ Enrichment:
 - Developing a broader awareness and understanding of other discipline's expertise
- ❖ Examples of these from your teams?

(Rausch, Bold & Strain,2021)


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Addressing Changing Needs and New Roles of School-Based OTs & PTs to Optimize Team Collaboration, Post-Pandemic

CONNECTING WITH RELUCTANT TEAM MEMBERS

- ❖ Consider YOUR readiness for collaboration before you attempt to influence perceptions and expectations of others
- ❖ Demonstrate a win-win attitude of the benefits of collaboration
- ❖ Considerations of TIC approach
- ❖ What are some of the strategies you have used successfully with reluctant team members?






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FINDING COMMON GROUND

Learn to Negotiate

- ❖ Separate the problem from the person
- ❖ Agree on objective criteria
- ❖ Keep communication open
- ❖ Share and respect other's interests
- ❖ Brainstorm options with mutual gain
- ❖ Find the best alternative to the agreement
- ❖ Make real and fair commitments to team







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**PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER:
TEAM PROCESS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

- ❖ Use the School Self-Care Assessment & Plan to identify areas you can address
 - Training & education, support & supervision, employee control & input, communication, work environment
- ❖ Set a Positive Tone
- ❖ Define issues you want to address
- ❖ Desired Outcome-what is the end result the team wants?
- ❖ Team Reflection on the outcome



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What can you do?

What behaviors do you bring that **help** team collaboration?

- ❖ Support caregivers (requires time & resources) through relationship building- we don't know their lived experience personally, as a family, as a community
- ❖ As an educational team, discuss other needs of your students and their families and see what the school/district can do
- ❖ Send OT/PT kits home that don't require internet access
 - Pipe cleaners, beads, scissors, markers, chalk, tennis ball etc.
 - Gross motor obstacle courses, movement breaks, community playgrounds

(Lannigan & Tyminski, 2021)



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What else can the RSP do?

- ❖ Focus on social emotional skill development, building relationships and wellness in staff AND students
 - Importance of human connection and socialization
- ❖ Teachers' perceptions of their *personal self-efficacy* influence their attitudes in dealing with student with educational challenges AND mental health needs
 - Promote MH literacy including staff and students: social and/or support groups
 - Every Moment Counts- mental health promotion initiative
 - <https://everymomentcounts.org/>
 - Embedded strategies, comfortable cafeteria, refreshing recess, leisure activities
 - AOTA Mental Health Toolkit
 - <https://www.aota.org/practice/clinical-topics/school-mental-health-toolkit>
- ❖ Conduct in-services about MH development in children & adolescents, sensory processing, social-emotional learning, positive behavioral supports

(Humbert et al., 2021; McKim et al., 2021; Huang et al. 2021)



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What can the RSP do?

- ❖ Help teachers modify tasks, school environments & routines
 - Incorporate physical activity into learning within the classroom
 - Incorporate executive functions skills including organization, attention, time management
- ❖ **Maintain your own balance**
 - Physical exercise, sleep, nutrition, screen time, connection

(McKim et al., 2021)

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Addressing Changing Needs and New Roles of School-Based OTs & PTs to Optimize Team Collaboration, Post-Pandemic

Revisit the School Self-Care Plan

❖ How can you promote staff and school-wide self-care and resiliency?

❖ **Together** identify what your teams already do well and identify ways to address areas you would like to improve upon

AREA	ALREADY DO	WOULD LIKE TO DO
Training & education		
Support & supervision		
Employee control & input		
Communication		
Work environment		

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THIS IS LEO: DESIGN A PROGRAM FOR HIM

Leo just entered high school. He participates in both regular and special education. He participates in regular education for homeroom, lunch and special school events. This year he will explore pre-vocational activities. His challenges are poor control of his wheelchair. He struggles with remembering his schedule and other sequencing tasks. He will be trained to work in the school cafeteria sorting silverware. His hand skills are adequate for this task.



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GROUP ACTIVITY: LEO

❖ Using the information about Leo, small groups will complete the case study handout sections Places, Paces and Collaborative Roles

❖ Compare/contrast similar and different findings

❖ Be prepared to share your discussion with the full group

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Addressing Changing Needs and New Roles of School-Based OTs & PTs to Optimize Team Collaboration, Post-Pandemic



THANK YOU!!



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