

The slide features a light blue background with a thin gold border. It is decorated with several butterflies in shades of orange, red, and green, and various flowers including orange daisies, yellow daisies, and pink blossoms. The main title is centered in a large, white, serif font with a subtle drop shadow.

Supporting Holistic Recovery:

Experiences with Trauma-Informed
Sensory and Emotional Regulation
Program Development in an Emerging
Practice Setting

Dr. Kaitlyn Springer, OTD, OTR/L

TNOTA Conference 2024



About the Speaker

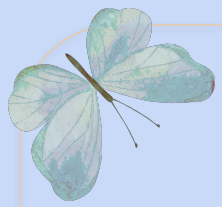
- University of Tennessee at Chattanooga OTD Graduate May 2024
- Currently practicing in Cleveland, TN at Bradley Medical Center in OP Peds & Acute Adults



Short Course 8 Objectives

1. Develop a basic understanding of the **effects of trauma** , particularly during childhood, on neurological factors including sensory processing.
2. Promote **advocacy for the diverse roles** of occupational therapy in recovery and other psychosocial and emerging practice settings.
3. Engage in intraprofessional **collaboration** to identify current and emerging avenues for occupational therapy practice, research, and advocacy in **psychosocial** settings through active discussion.

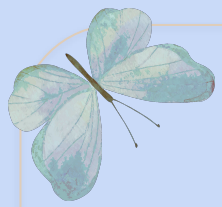




Trauma Literature Review

- Trauma is linked to functional & physiological **neurological** changes due to sustained hypervigilance (Matson et al., 2023)
- Mothers with SUD display less responsive & more negative **parenting** (Jirikowic et al., 2022)
- ACEs increase **risk** of developmental delays, behavioral dysregulation, sensory processing challenges, & parenting stress (Gronski et al., 2013; Jirikowic et al., 2022; Yochman & Pat-Horenczyk, 2019)
- Co-regulation & positive adult relationships promote **resilience** (Jirikowic et al., 2022)
- OTs are **leaders** in trauma-informed care (TIC) (AOTA, 2018)





Functional Impacts of Trauma

- Executive function
- Emotional regulation
- Interoceptive awareness
- Reward sensitivity
- Threat processing and stress response
- Arousal states
- Sensory processing
- Motor skills
- Higher rates of symptoms like dissociation

(Cross et al., 2017; Hendrikse et al., 2022; Herringa, 2018; Matson et al., 2023; Schaan et al., 2019; Schmitz et al., 2023; Yochman & Pat-Horenczyk, 2019)





3 Tiers of OT in Mental Health



Tier 1

Universal
(Primary
Prevention)

Tier 2

Targeted
(Secondary
Prevention)

Tier 3

Intensive
(Tertiary
Intervention)

(AOTA, 2016)



blue monarch®

Mission

“to provide a long-term, residential and therapeutic Christian community for women and their children to break adverse cycles and rebuild their families” (Blue Monarch, n.d.).

Vulnerable Populations

Impacts 20.9% of Tennesseans

(Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, 2023)

1+ score in 63.6% & 4+ in 19.3% of Tennesseans

(Swedo et al., 2023)

SUD

ACEs

Pervasive & progressive, hindering multiple occupations & roles

(Martin et al., 2011; Ryan et al., 2023)

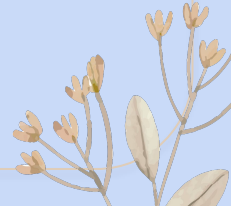
Strong dose-dependent relationship with lifetime negative health effects

(Felitti et al., 1998; Public Health Management Corporation, 2013)





Needs Assessment

- Primarily an **immersive, ethnographic** approach
 - Informal interviews with residents & staff
 - Brief Parental Self-Efficacy Scale
 - Observational field notes
 - Community profile literature search
 - Meetings with staff to confirm alignment with needs
- 



Blue Monarch's Needs



Sensory
& Emotional
Regulation



Developmental
Screening
Protocol



Co-Regulation
while
Parenting



Bondaroo
& Dinner
Time



Guiding Frameworks

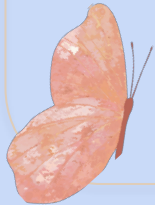
Model of
Human
Occupation



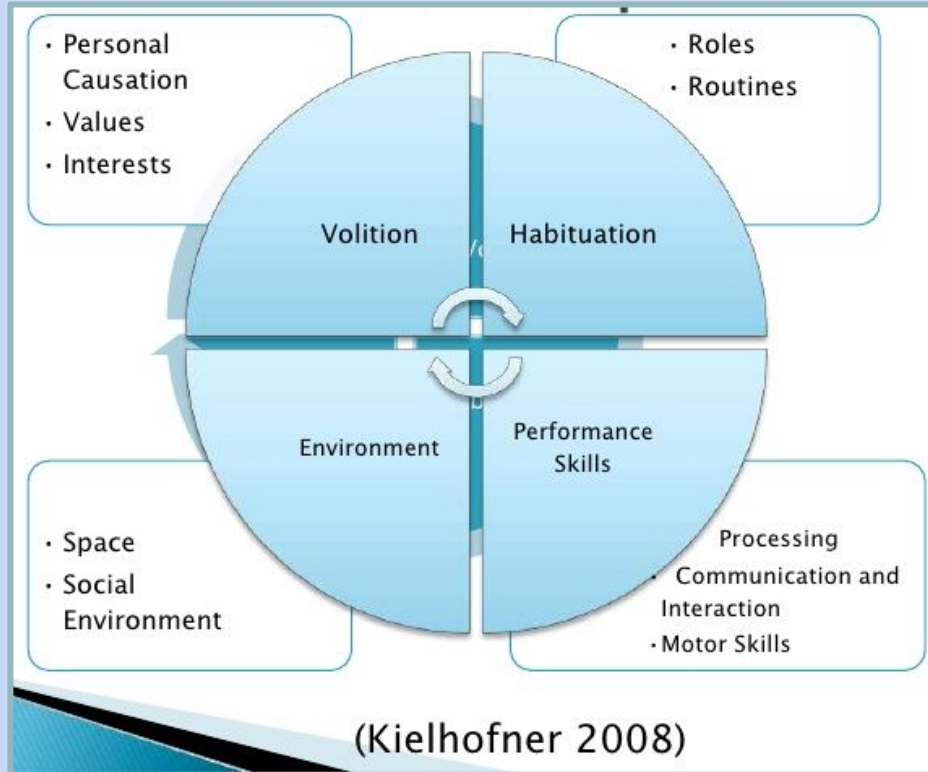
Ayres
Sensory
Integration



Sensory
Therapies
and Research



Framework 1: MOHO



- Aligns with recovery model (Higgins, 2008; Pierre, 2013)
- Parenting skills:
 - increasing self-efficacy
 - prioritizing mothering role
 - addressing routines in natural setting

Framework 2: ASI

- Effective for assessment & intervention for childhood trauma population (Joseph et al., 2021; May- Benson & Teasdale, 2019; Soma et al., 2021; Whitney, 2020)
- Sensory diets
- Sensory environment
- Emphasis on movement & proprioceptive input

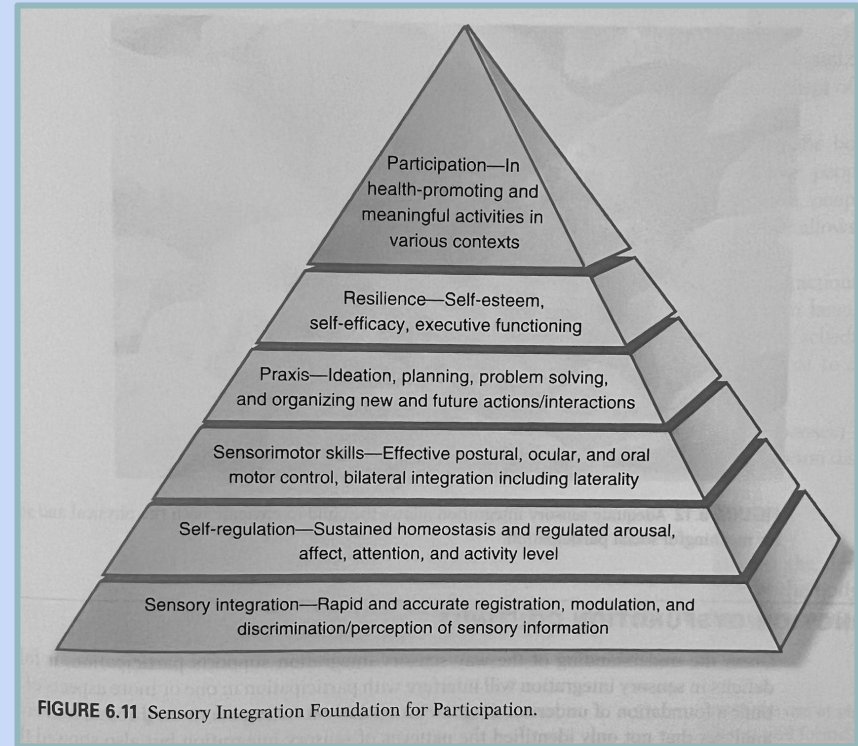
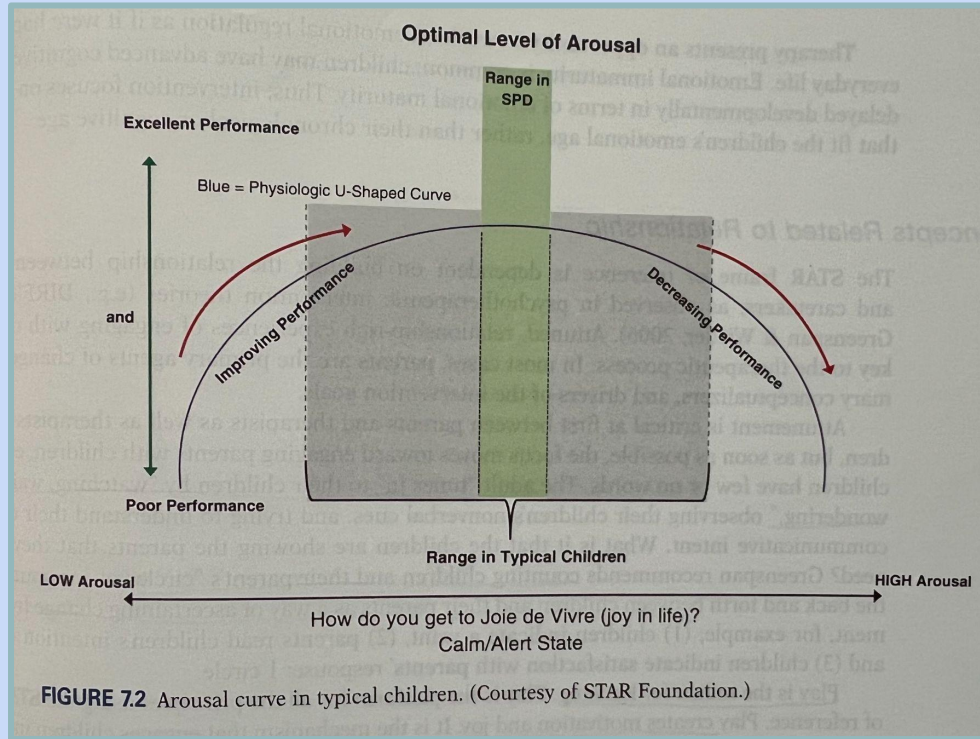


FIGURE 6.11 Sensory Integration Foundation for Participation.

(Roley et al., 2020, p. 105)

Framework 3: STAR



- Parent-child relationship (Miller et al., 2020)
- Parents-only education on sensory strategies & lifestyle (Miller et al., 2020)

(Miller et al., 2020, p. 167)

Sensory & Emotional Regulation Mothers' Education



BIG Feelings in Little Bodies & Growing Minds

Introduction to Sensory
& Emotional Regulation
by Kaitlyn Springer, OTS
UTC Occupational Therapy
Doctoral Capstone



Sensory Zones, Profiles, & Diets

Sensory & Emotional Regulation
Training Part 2
by Kaitlyn Springer, OTS
UTC Occupational Therapy
Doctoral Capstone



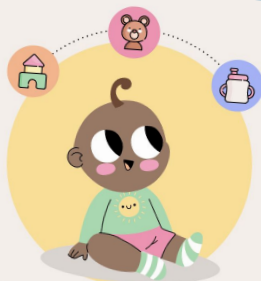
Managing Meltdowns / Dysregulation

Sensory & Emotional Regulation Training Part 3
by Kaitlyn Springer, OTS
UTC Occupational Therapy Doctoral Capstone



Sensory Activities for Infants & Toddlers

Sensory & Emotional Regulation
Training Part 4A
by Kaitlyn Springer, OTS
UTC Occupational Therapy Doctoral Capstone



Regulation Activities for Children 3+

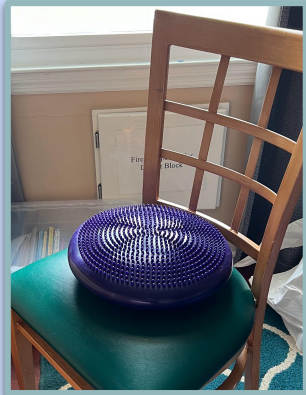
Sensory & Emotional Regulation
Training Parts 4B, 4C, 4D
by Kaitlyn Springer, OTS
UTC Occupational Therapy
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Parenting Classes in action



Promoting Regulation & Participation: *Home*

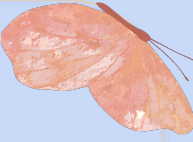


Promoting Regulation & Participation: *Community Integration*

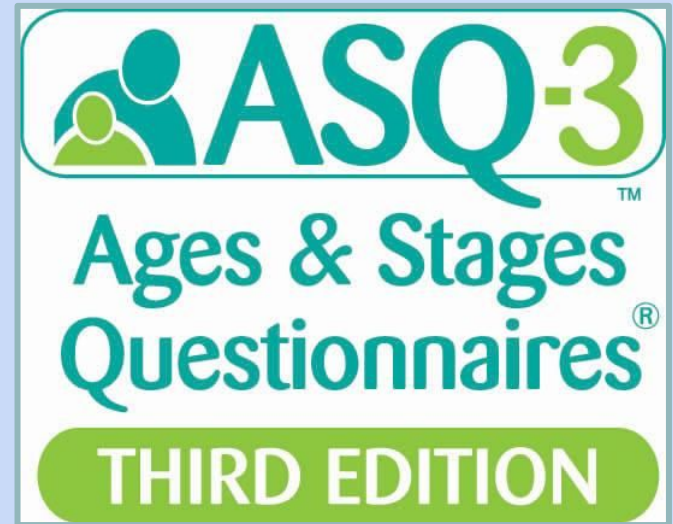


Consultation:

Developmental Screening Protocol



Developmental Milestones & Screening Tools	
Table of Contents	
Areas of Development	3
Infancy	4 – 16
0 – 2 Months	4
3 – 4 Months	7
5 – 6 Months	9
7 – 9 Months	12
10 – 12 Months	14
Toddlerhood	17 – 29
13 – 15 Months	17
16 – 18 Months	21
19 – 23 Months	24
2 Years	26
Young Childhood	30 – 36
3 Years	30
4 Years	32
5 Years	35
Middle Childhood	37 – 47
6 Years	37
7 – 8 Years	39
9 – 10 Years	42
11 – 12 Years	45
Appendix A: Developmental Screening 1 – CDC Milestones Checklist	48
Appendix B: Developmental Screening 2 – Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3)	49
Appendix C: Infant & Child Development – A Descriptive Guide With Visual Aids	50



Milestone Moments: https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/images/milestone-movement-booklet-cover-short-4-2021.jpg?_a=46357

ASQ-3: https://www.acc-society.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ASQ3_622e1fdb-6968-41bd-9aa7-89a0587f12d8.jpg

Sensory Room Grant

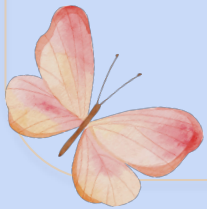


Floor plan designed by Kaitlyn Springer using FloorPlanner.com



Program Evaluation

- **Post-Survey** of Parenting Classes & Home Interventions
 - 50% of resident mothers completed
 - 1 Likert scale + 7 open-ended questions
 - 33% agreed and 67% strongly agreed the series was **relevant** to them as a mother
 - Most practical elements: sensory diets, managing meltdowns, & managing state regulation (or “energy levels”)
- **Feedback** from Staff & Other Stakeholders
 - Positive feedback from Founder & Board President
 - Attunement to resident & organizational needs



Quotes from Residents & Staff

“The sensory activities to get calm / energy were very informative to me.”

– Resident Mother

We’ve had a lot of interns through the years here, and you are the first I’ve seen to make the level of impact and connect with the families the way you have. You and the previous capstone student have really shown me how valuable OT can be in recovery.

– Susan Binkley, Blue Monarch Founder (paraphrased)

“Being taught these things opened my eyes and gave me a different perspective on sensory struggles and managing meltdowns.”

– Resident Mother



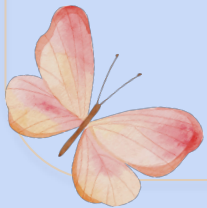
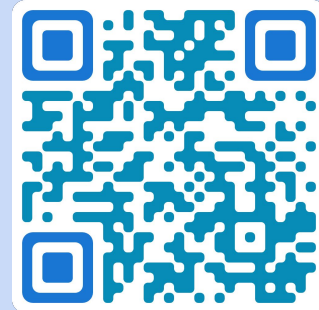
Sustainability Plan:

OT Job Description

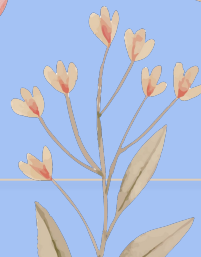
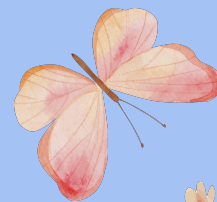
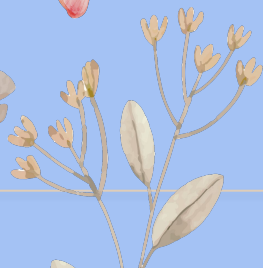
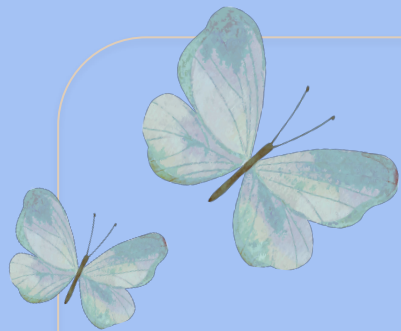


Blue Monarch has decided to pursue hiring a full-time, on-site OT!!!

- Expanding children's programming
- Developmental assessments
- Group & individualized occupation-based interventions with resident mothers & children



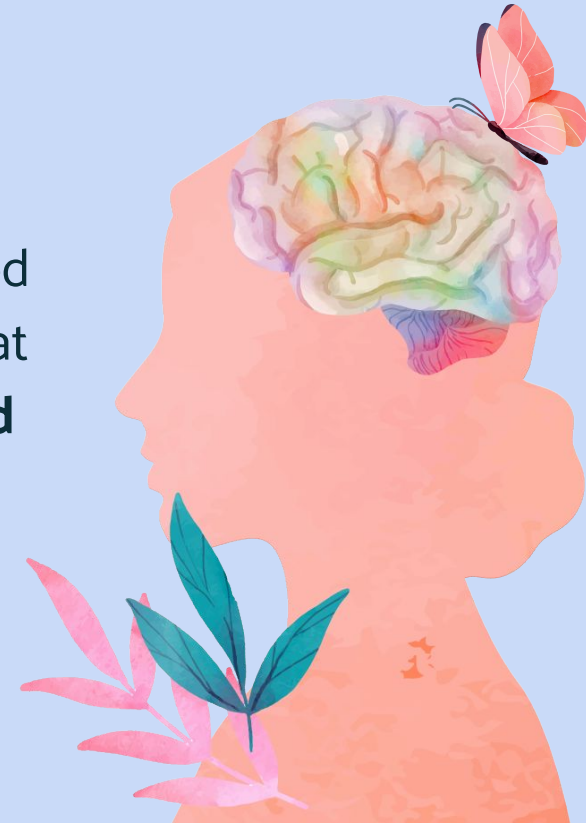
Discussion

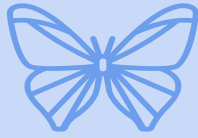




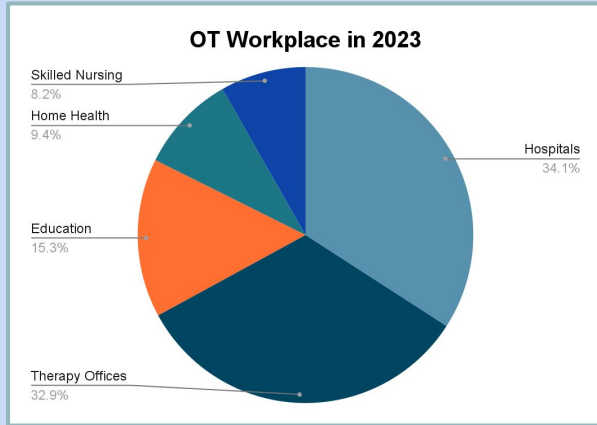
OT in Mental Health

- Share other **examples** showcasing occupational therapy's modern role in mental / behavioral health!
 - Refer back to Tiers 1-3
- Given that OTPs are currently *not* considered qualified mental health professionals (QMHP) in this state, what are practical ways we can **increase our presence and impact** in mental health settings within our scope?
 - Describe any OTPs you know that are trailblazing in non-traditional mental health settings in TN!





Across Settings



Statistics from
Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024).
Occupational therapists: Work environment.
In BLS. U.S. Department of Labor.
<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapists.htm#tab-3>

- How can we address clients' mental health needs in our **assessments and interventions** across diverse practice settings?
 - Across the lifespan?
- What steps can be taken to strengthen **research** efforts analyzing OT and mental health?
- What one **advocacy** step will you take on behalf of our patients and profession in regards to prioritizing mental health?

Acknowledgements



THANK YOU

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to the Tennessee Occupational Therapy Association, for a platform to discuss mental health in our profession



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Thank you!

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