



Volunteers of America Los Angeles

Services Provided by VOALA

- Affordable housing
- Assistance for people with disabilities
- Assisting homeless people
- Behavioral and mental health services
- Children, youth, and families' programs
- Services for older adults; substance use disorders
- Veterans

Head Start and Early Head Start

- Major services offered by VOALA to families with low income, homeless families, those with disabilities, and children in foster care.
- Early education for children 18 months to 5 years of age, child development, parenting support, nutrition and preparation for elementary school.

Summary of Needs Assessment

- Resources and additional training needed for their staff
- Classrooms were not providing enough sensory stimulation for their students
- Gaps in teacher training that could be filled by an occupational therapist
- Teachers' main concern was dealing with challenging behaviors in the classroom

Area of Need: Program to educate staff and teachers on sensory processing and emotional regulation of students



Sensory Processing and Emotional Regulation Training Workshops for Teachers of Head Start Elizabeth Arroyo, OTD/S Faculty Mentor: Danielle Friberg, OTD, OTR/L Site Mentor: Lavada Minor, Ph.D.

Literature Review

- 5%-16% of children in the U.S. have difficulties processing and integrating sensations (Schaaf, Dumont, Arbesman, & May-Benson, 2018).
- Connection between children having sensory processing and sensory integration challenges and the way they partake in daily activities, academics, play, and leisure compared to children that do not (Miller-Kuhaneck & Watling, 2018; Schaaf, Dumont, Arbesman, Benson, 2018).
- Groups led by a therapist have been shown to have improved group outcomes in regards to parent training programs versus groups without a trained therapist (Kingsley & Mailloux, 2013).

Purpose Statement

To provide the staff and teachers of Head Start and Early Head Start at Volunteers of America Los Angeles with a larger knowledge base of sensory processing and emotional regulation for children in all aspects, including classroom design.

Learning Objectives

To create a program to educate Head Start teachers on sensory processing and emotional regulation

To apply knowledge on sensory processing and emotional regulation in order to aid teachers in classroom design

Develop skills in program evaluation by analyzing and providing evidence for the effectiveness of the program

Classroom Design Consultations

- Created Classroom Sensory Checklist to provide 1:1 consultations and recommendations for teachers
- Observed the items, tools, décor, and strategies used in classrooms that supported the sensory processing and emotional regulation of students

| Tracher | 0 | Loutin |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| | Contact info: | Location: |
| c | lassroom Sensory C | checklist |
| | Tactile/Touch | ***** |
| oManipulatives: | | |
| oTheraputty? Playdol | n? Magna-tiles (large/smail)? Le | gos (smal/large)?: |
| oOther fidgets: | | |
| oSensory Bins: small fuzzy t balls, feathers, packing pear | | rater beads, kinetic sand, pasta, cotton |
| oSand box/moon san | d area: | |
| oPlay dirt set: | | <u>s</u> |
| oVibrating Tools/Massager: | | |
| oSoft Foam Blocks (large or | small): | - |
| o ^{Other.} | | |
| | Auditory/Sound | |
| oAuditory Center: maracas, o | Irums, crinkle paper, clappers, el | tc. |
| eHeadphones (to block out noise): | | |
| oOther: | | |



- 6, 1-hour workshops for teachers and staff • Workshops addressed classroom management, understanding how sensory processing difficulties can present in the classroom, and classroom design to better meet the sensory needs of their students • Material delivered in forms of lectures, questionnaires, discussions, learning activities, and hands-on activities • Participants:
 - 40 teachers from Head Start and Early Head Start recruited by site managers

Topics

| 1 | Sensory Processing and Emotional Regulation | |
|---|---|--|
| | | |
| 2 | Sensory Processing Disorder and Other Diagnoses | |
| | | |
| 3 | Sensory versus Behavior | |
| | | |
| 4 | Vestibular and Proprioception | |
| | | |
| 5 | Visual, Tactile, & Auditory | |
| | | |
| 6 | Olfactory, Gustatory, and Interoception | |
| 0 | | |

Deliverables

- **Physical and Electronic Binder**
- Planning Worksheets and Outlines
- Tip Sheets
- Research Articles
- **Resources List**
- **Executive Summary**

Behavior Tips

. ABCs of Behavior · Antecedent: the buildup of events, the contributing factors, and sometimes the triggers that lead to your child's behavior. Take a deep breath and think what has lead up to this behavior. Behavior: the response your child has in reaction to the antecedent. Focus on the specific actions you want to change. Consequence: what happens after the behavior that makes it more or less likely the behavior will occur again. This step will be the defining factor if the child will continue to repeat the behavior or change

. If Sensory-Based: XOccurs because sensory system is not working correctly XOccurs with the same or similar stimu XWill be difficult to soothe or calm them XWill require sensory input or just let it pass XChild may look distressed and very emotional

 XChild will be exhausted after melt down XDoes not stop when they "get what they want" . What to do: Provide them with their preferred sensory Kemember: Proprioception is the best

modulator! Start with heavy work, deep pressure, movement Allow them to go into the Calm Down Corner Sometimes, you just have to let it pass. upervise to make sure they don't injure themselves

4 Primary Purposes of Behavio btaining a desired object or even oiding a situation scaping from an undesired obj even, or demand ensory function Novement Activities: Sing/Dance songs: Hokey Pokey; Head, Shoulder, Needs, and Toes Upside down, rocking, and spinning movements using cardboard box XAnimals walks, wheel barrel walks XAlternating Movements: jumping

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Deep Pressure Activities ¥Yoga Poses Joint compression XSqueezes, Hugs XMove furniture in the room Wipe tables or boards XCarry heavy object: crate with toys across the room

Sensory Diet for the Classroom What is sensory processing/integration? he way the nervous system receives messages from the sense

VHAT CAN GO WRONG? r some children, sensory information goes into the brain, but loes not get organized properly and can reflect in adverse ehaviors or reactions. (7)

erprets them, and turns them into responses.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP? ional therapists are equipped with the knowledge ols to provide assistance in implementing interventions. ither one on one or on a consultant level, to provide childre with the best resources in order to facilitate their learning in the lassroom. One way of doing this, is by implementing a sensor

brain locates, sorts, orders sensations, ke a traffic officer rects moving cars. hen sensations flow in well-organized or tegrated manner, the brain can use those ensations to form perceptions, behaviors, When the flow of disorganized, life can be ike a rush hour traffic Children can either perience too much or too little stimulation, or information, through their senses and cause these "traffic jams". (7)

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- •Teachers' knowledge increased after receiving training •Based on results, teacher training workshops may help better meet students' sensory needs in the classroom
- School-based occupational therapists could extend their
- scope of practice by implementing teacher trainings to better meet students' needs in the classroom
- •This program could be done as primary prevention in order to address all students' classroom sensory and emotional regulation needs to enable better education and participation



Project Outcomes

Classroom Design Consultations

•No classroom had Calm Down Corner

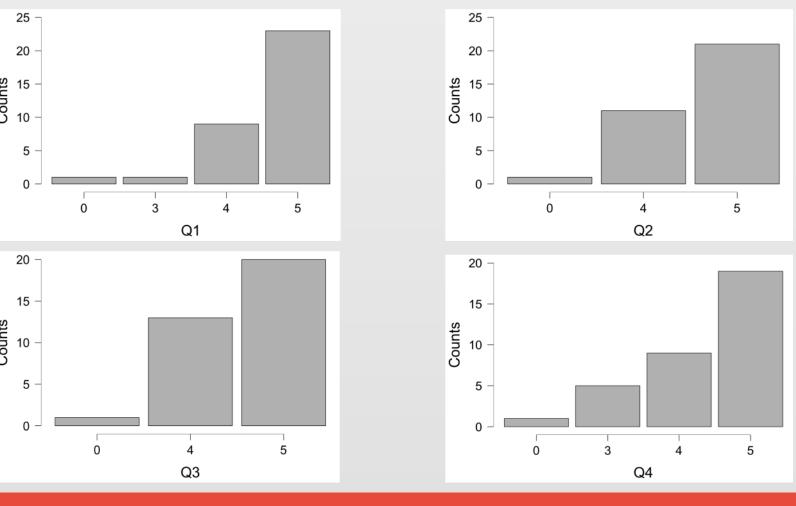
•"This is helpful", "I wish we had this before", and "I wish we had more of these" – Teachers

Teacher Training Workshops

Survey Questions:

- The course materials (slides, video, handouts, etc.)
- were helpful and appropriate
- The training improved my skills and knowledge on the training topics
- I will apply what we learned in training to my work
- What is your overall assessment of the workshop Likert Scale:
- 0=blank, 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral,
- 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree
- Question 4 had a different scale: 0=blank, 1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=very good, and 5=excellent

Responses for Workshop 4:



Discussion

References available upon request.