



A Senior Program for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities at an Adult Day Program

A-Jay Anne Sabater, OTD/S.

Site Mentor: Elise Leizerovich, OTD, OTR/L

Faculty Mentor: Ronnie Dallatorre, OTD, OTR/L

West Coast University Center for Graduate Studies



Site Description

- OV's Willing Workers is a community-based adult day program that provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities
- Mission: "Ensure that Individuals at Willing Workers perform to their highest potential and become full participants in their communities"
- Values:
 - Compassion, dignity, diversity, excellence, and honesty
- Guiding principle:
 - Put the individual first: Individuals are at the core of everything we do
- Five departments:
 - Adult Development
 - Creative Arts
 - Behavioral Management
 - Activities
 - Community Integration Employment

Identified Needs

1. Program development: Senior program
2. Staff training to educate on how to best assist individuals
3. Social media to market services

Literature Review

- Developing programs should be client-centered and sustainable in order to be effective (Carmeli & Imam, 2014)
- Programs that were recently conducted expressed that it stimulates memory, improves social skills, promotes proficiency, promotes creative expression, and promotes communication (Cuomo et al., 2020)
- Goals of an effective program should promote healthy aging, discover barriers in occupations, and explore opportunities and challenges that older adults face (Hahn et al., 2015)

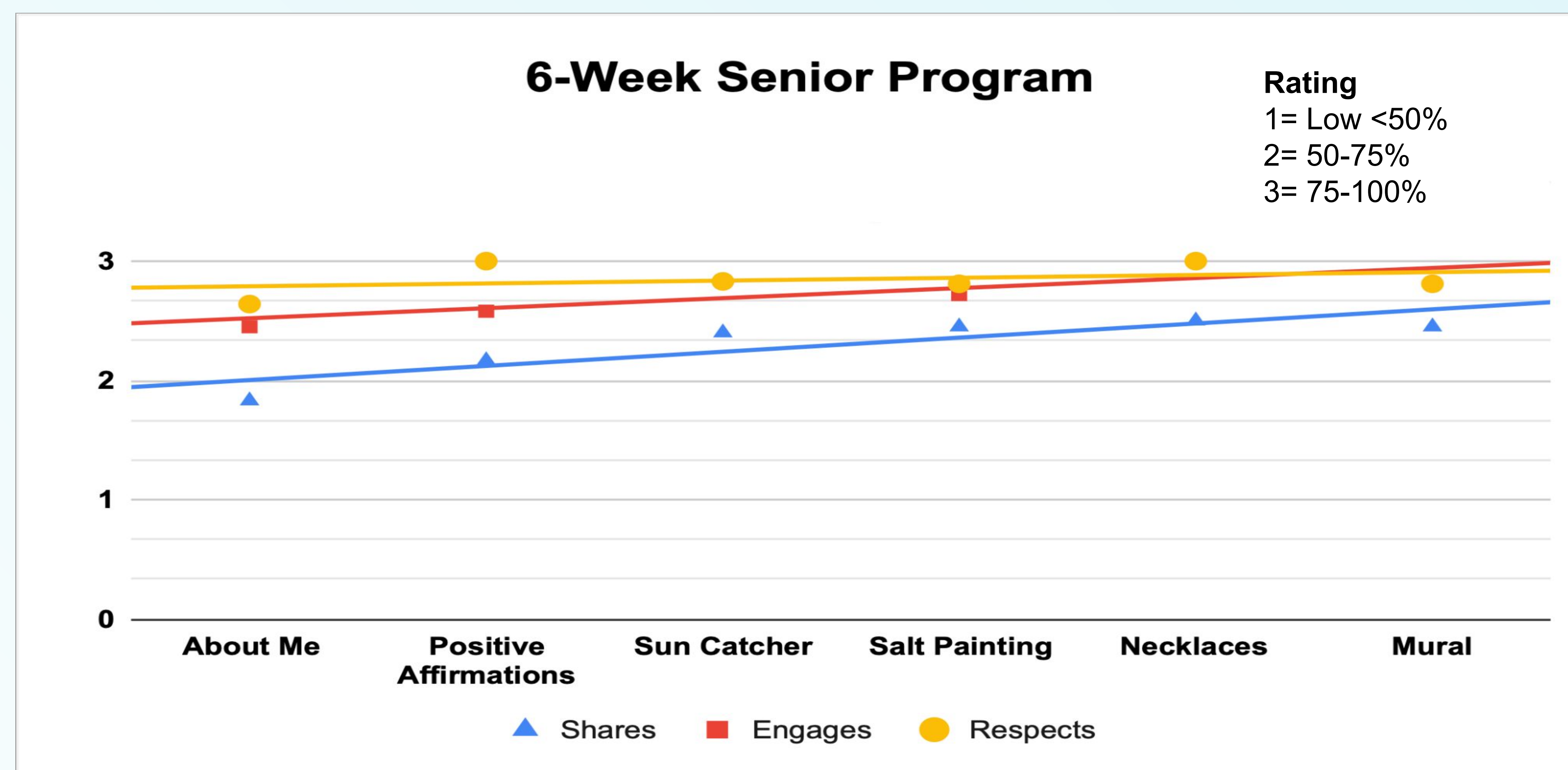
Learning Objectives

1. By the end of DCE, the doctoral student developed a senior program for individuals with developmental disabilities at OV's Willing Workers
2. By the end of DCE, the doctoral student implemented and evaluated the senior program at OV's Willing Workers
3. By the end of DCE, the doctoral student increased her advocacy skills for adults with developmental disabilities

Methods / Implementation Plan

- **Purpose** of senior program: To improve the quality of life and promote independence for seniors with developmental disabilities through meaningful activities
- **Goals:** Promote social participation, promote community integration, understand the importance of coping strategies, promote self-regulation, facilitate in self-care, and engage in problem-solving
- Seniors (N = 14) split into 4 groups for split sampling
- **Group sessions**
 - Frequency: 1x/wk
 - Duration: 1 hour/session

Outcomes



Quantitative program themes:

- Trendline for participation level in sharing in response to questions and/or prompts, engagement level in activity, and level of respect for materials, peers, and staff all had an upward trend

Qualitative program themes:

- Improved independence: Able to stay on task longer
- Improved coping skills: Able to identify strategies to utilize at home, on-site, and in community
- Improved social engagement: Able to self-initiate conversations with peers and staff

Scholarly Deliverables

- 6 group protocols
 - Social skills
 - Positive affirmations
 - Self-expression
 - Sensory strategies
 - Coping strategies
 - Collaboration
- 4 staff training educational handouts
 - Empathy
 - Communication
 - Respect and patience
 - Professionalism
- 17 social media posts
 - Instagram



Discussion / Implications

- A senior program was created using a client-centered approach that allowed for increased independence in daily living tasks to improve quality of life for seniors with developmental disabilities
- Findings exhibited positive outcomes on independence, coping skills, and social engagement
- Occupational therapy should be provided at all adult day programs, especially for those with developmental disabilities to provide stimulating environments that enrich well-being
- With the knowledge and strategies that occupational therapists are experienced in, various domains can be focused on to increase quality of life
- Occupational therapists have the opportunity to reduce health disparities

Future Directions

1. Larger sample size
2. Additional evaluation methods to determine effectiveness
3. Implement year-long program

References

