

# Mapping the Knowledge, Relevance, & Implementation of a Trauma-Informed Approach Among OTs Working With Children Ages 0 to 12 Years

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**PURPOSE:** Childhood trauma has been linked to negative consequences for various aspects of children's development. Maltreated children experience multiple difficulties in cognitive, emotional, motor, sensory, linguistic, social, and functional domains. Trauma-informed approach (TIA) considers aspects of development together with aspects of trauma, and has significant potential to promote the recovery of traumatized children. Literature indicates a lack of studies that evaluate TIA implementation among occupational therapists (OTs). Study aims were to map the knowledge on trauma, the perception of relevance to practice, and the implementation level of TIA among OTs working with children aged 0 to 12 years.

**DESIGN:** This cross-sectional study included fifty OTs, recruited via social media and interest groups [96% women; aged 24–65 years (M=38.54, SD=10.28); 0.2–35 years of seniority (M=13, SD=9.71)].

**METHOD:** An online survey assessed the participants knowledge, relevance perception, and implementation level of TIA in their practice, included 35 items on a scale of 1 (very small extent) to 5 (very large extent). We used descriptive statistics, t-tests and Cohen's d to assess differences between knowledge, relevance perception, and implementation.

**RESULTS:** Knowledge on trauma was significantly lower than the perception of its relevance ( $t = -9.56, p < .001, d = 1.35$ ), and the implementation level of TIA ( $t = -3.2, p < .01, d = .45$ ). The implementation level of TIA was significantly lower than relevance perception ( $t = 7.90, p < .001, d = 1.12$ ). Seniority of working with children was correlated to the implication level of TIA ( $r = .31, p < .05$ ).

**CONCLUSION:** Findings indicate high perception of the relevance of TIA for practice among OTs working with children, compared to a low level of knowledge, regardless of seniority. It is essential to raise awareness of identifying traumatized children and promote TIA among OTs who work with them.

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