

Trauma-Informed, Sensory-Based Pediatric OT Interventions: A Systematic Review

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PURPOSE: To provide a current narrative regarding interventions that incorporate the use of both sensory-based and trauma-informed care approaches to interventions within pediatric occupational therapy with children with trauma histories.

DESIGN/METHOD: This systematic review followed the AJOT and PRISMA guidelines for conducting systematic reviews. Inclusion criteria were articles published after 2014, and that involved occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and/or level II fieldwork occupational therapy students who work in pediatric settings that must include both trauma-informed and sensory-based approaches.

DATA SOURCES: CINAHL, EBSCO, AJOT, BJOT, CJOT, AOTJ, OTJR, OTMH

RESULTS: Three scoping reviews and one retrospective chart review met inclusion criteria. Results of this review show moderate strength of evidence for the combined use of trauma-informed care and sensory-based occupational therapy interventions for children with complex trauma histories.

CONCLUSION: This review supports occupational therapy practitioner efficacy in addressing self-regulation and safe engagement in occupations using sensory-based interventions intentionally applied via a trauma-informed approach to care. Although individual interventions successfully demonstrated identified outcomes from treatment, a standard methodology for formulation is lacking.

IMPACT STATEMENT: This systematic review provides increased evidence that more research is needed to identify specific strategies and guidelines for formulating meaningful intervention that prioritizes principles of trauma informed care, in order to help reduce the negative impact of trauma on children's daily participation in occupations within the context of occupational therapy practitioners' skills in addressing the need for safe sensory and occupation-based experiences.

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