Using a Routines-based Approach to Promote Family-Centered Practice in Early Childhood O&M Intervention

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Early Childhood O&M

• O&M intervention with young children needs to begin as early as possible.

• Anthony et al. (2002); Cutter (2007); Scott (2015); Skellenger & Sapp (2010)
Principles of Early O&M

O&M intervention for infants and toddlers should include:

- Motor development, including the development of **purposeful** and **self-initiated** movement.
- Sensory skill development.
- Concept development.
- Mobility aid use.
All O&M skills need to be viewed holistically – they all influence each other and there is no “order” in which they need to be taught.
Principles of Early Childhood Intervention

- Early childhood intervention is most effective when it occurs within the context of:
  - Family-centred practice
  - Natural learning opportunities
  - Transdisciplinary teams
1) Functional behavioural competencies are promoted through strengthening *self-initiated* and *self-directed* learning in children.

(Dunst, 2007)
2) Parents and key caregivers must be supported in developing the confidence and competence to promote their own child’s learning and development.

(Dunst, 2007)
3) The early intervention practitioner should limit their direct intervention with the child, concentrating primarily on supporting and strengthening the capacity of parents through the modelling of evidence-based best practice.

Early Childhood O&M

• So how do we ensure that our early childhood O&M intervention is effective?
• O&M experiences must occur daily and throughout the day.
• Build into the family’s everyday routines.
Modification of the traditional O&M curriculum to include:

Sensory experiences and body awareness that will facilitate the development of discrimination skills and position in space.
Early Childhood O&M

Hands-on experiences that facilitate concept development including:

• Object concepts
• Play and exploration skills
• Early environmental experiences
O&M with Infants & Toddlers

• Environmental awareness and exploration.

• Establishment of social relationships that foster confidence to move and explore.

• Facilitation of optimal independence in daily routines, including movement to and from storage and activity areas.
O&M with Infants & Toddlers

• Use of routines to provide repetition, generalization, and functionality.

• Environmental modifications:
  ➢ Adapting children’s first learning environments such as the cot or first floor play space so as to promote their understanding of spatial relations and purposeful movement exploration.
Useful Tools: Early Childhood O&M

Examples of early childhood O&M assessment protocols include:

Anthony, T.L.
- Inventory of Purposeful Movement Behaviours
- O&M Assessment: Early Years of Birth through Three Years

Useful Tools: Early Childhood O&M

New Mexico School for the Blind & Visually Impaired: O&M Inventory

http://nmsbvi.k12.nm.us/ominventory.html
Useful Tools: Early Childhood Intervention

- Robin McWilliam (2010).
- Routines-based approach to assessment and intervention.
Routines-Based Intervention

Allows practitioners to:

- establish **positive relationships** with families, and
- develop **functional goals** within the context of everyday routines.
How Does a Routines-based Interview Work?

1) Ask parents about their main concerns.

2) Ask parents to describe what happens during a typical day, not only for the child but for themselves, siblings, peers...
How Does a Routines-based Interview Work?

3) If parents describe a part of the day as being difficult for them, mark it as a ‘star concern’ to be returned to later on in the interview.

4) Once the daily routine has been identified, ask parents to rate each time of day in terms of 1 – 5 rating of satisfaction.
How Does a Routines-based Interview Work?

5) “Worry and change” questions are identified – what is keeping parents awake at night, what would they change in their life?

6) Recap with a summary of information, identifying child-level needs, child-related family needs, family-level needs.
7) The **family** chooses the outcomes they wish to work on – these become the intervention goals.

8) The **family** orders the goals in terms of priority and importance.
• Choose an appropriate assessment tool.

• Focus on the child’s strengths during assessment, not on what they cannot do.
## Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Comments:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moving with a purpose</td>
<td><strong>Strengths:</strong> Standing independently. Cruising small distances along furniture to reach goal. <strong>Goals:</strong> Jane will move around an obstacle to reach a toy or object. Jane will transition from two-handed cruising to one-handed cruising with support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of auditory information for orientation</td>
<td><strong>Strengths:</strong> Using listening behaviours to locate favourite toys. <strong>Goals:</strong> Jane will respond to sounds at a distance of 1 metre or more.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Tool: New Mexico School for the Blind & Visually Impaired: O&M Inventory  
[http://nmsbvi.k12.nm.us/ominventory.html](http://nmsbvi.k12.nm.us/ominventory.html)
The family decides on three or four goals to embed into their daily routine.

**Goal:** Jane will transition from two-handed cruising to one-handed cruising with support.
- The family and O&M specialist develop a mini-route that Jane is motivated to travel on many times during the day.
- The O&M specialist coaches parents in how to support one-handed cruising with Jane when she travels this mini-route.
Benefits of a Routines-Based Approach

• Allows children to learn through repeated interactions with the people they spend the most time with – their family or caregiver.

• Goals are **functional** and **appropriate** for the family.

• The family/caregiver owns the goal.
Key Points

• Infants and toddlers learn best through everyday experiences and interactions with familiar people in familiar contexts.

• All families, with the necessary supports and services, can enhance their child’s learning and development. (McWilliam, 2010, p. 6)

• The primary role of a service provider in early intervention is to work with and support family members and caregivers in children’s lives.
Key Points

• The foundation for O&M skills are built during infancy and early childhood.

• O&M concepts and skills are developed in the child’s home environment and community.

• Parents are a child’s first and most important teacher.
References


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