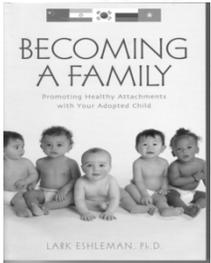


NYSCCC 25th Annual
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What You Should Know about
Sensory Processing Disorder

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Why am I making this presentation?

- Sensory processing and emotional trauma
- Sensory processing dysfunction's negative impact on psychotherapeutic progress

What is sensory processing?

- 8 Senses
 - Taste
 - Touch
 - Hearing
 - Vision
 - Smell
 - Proprioception (position)
 - Vestibular (movement)
 - Interoception (Internal sensations)
- Sensory Processing and Integration
 - Sensory organs' and brains communication to use sensory information for function

Here's the story

- Sensory processing and self-regulation
 - Psychotherapy Perspective
 - Occupational Therapy Perspective

Objective 1:
3 areas in which Occupational Therapy (OT) plays a critical role in parenting & treating children with Disorders of Trauma and Attachment (DTA)

- Role of an Occupational Therapist
- Role of the child
 - Social interaction
 - Self-care
 - Education

Objective 2

- Three ways that sensory processing approaches can uniquely benefit children & teens who have experienced early emotional trauma and breaks in attachment (addressing
 - self-regulation,
 - therapeutic interventions,
 - and home accommodations):

Social Interaction

- Changing tasks is extremely difficult for some children, and can create havoc in family life. If the following techniques work for your child, your family's life will be incredibly better:
 - Verbal preparation or visual/tactile cues in anticipation of upcoming change (10-minute warning)
 - Have the child engage in something known to be soothing before asking the child to engage in something difficult (cookie jar of activities)
 - Use transitional object during transitions so something concrete remains the same (Alex's bear)

Self-Care

- Self-care is such a difficult issue for children of trauma. A few ideas to help a child help themselves in this area could be:
 - Allowing for a bath instead of a shower (or vice versa). Allow the child to monitor water temperature to their needs, (within safe boundaries)
 - Using a chart for matching clothes and weather
 - Be a team and clean out the closet/drawer/cabinet together at the same time each week.
- Group discussion
 - Hygiene Issues

Education

- So many of our children are very bright but struggle in school.
 - Work with school personnel to make sure your child is able to use techniques introduced by your OT that help keep a child focused (sponge ball, "chewies," earplugs, etc)
 - Ask school to identify a "sensory break" area where your child can go when he or she is becoming overwhelmed. ("Prevention is better than cure.")
 - Allow for de-compression time and activities after school before expecting your child to focus on homework.

Objective 3: Recognize potential Sensory Processing Disorder in your child's behaviors

- When do I need to take my child for an evaluation of sensory processing?
 - Basic red flag: If there is interruption in 'normal' function or development, it's time to see if there is a sensory-related explanation. (see hand-out)
- <http://www.sensory-processing-disorder.com/sensory-processing-disorder-checklist.html>

Objective 3: Recognize potential Sensory Processing Disorder in your child's behaviors

- How do I know an Occupational Therapist understands and can effectively work with my child who has a background of trauma?
 - Ask about specific training in trauma work
 - Ask about work with adopted or foster children
 - If it isn't working, leave

Objective 4: Practice several safe and simple techniques, for home and office

- "Do NOT try this at home, without better understanding of this area."
- BUT, you may already know "what works."
- Here are a few standards that work with almost all children ...
 - Experiment with differences between light and deep pressure
 - Sweatbands
 - Box of fidgets
 - Rocking and swinging
 - Jumping/joint compression/trampoline

Bridges Among OT, Psychotherapy, School and Home

- EVERYONE in your child's life has to work as a team. Name your team, and keep communication open and flowing.
- Share with your team a few articles that "speak" to you as a parent, request that each team member read them, and discuss the articles before beginning work with each member of the team.
 - One recommended article is "Attachment, Trauma, and Occupational Therapy Practice" by Tina Champagne.
 - Article on the long-term and far-reaching effects of early trauma.

It's a Pleasure to Be with You!

To contact me about possible speaking/consulting times, please email lark@larkeshleman.com or call 443-282-0238
