

Conference Presentation Abstract

Title:

Helping Hand: A Constraint Induced Movement Therapy Group

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Summary:

Helping Hand a constraint induced movement therapy group combines occupationally based treatment with client and parental support. The development and outcomes of this program for children with ABI and stroke is highlighted. Results reveal positive changes in occupational performance, and upper extremity function with carryover noted at six months. Positive reports from parents and participants indicated high levels of satisfaction with the program.

Introduction: Constraint Induced Movement Therapy (CIMT) research demonstrates improved upper extremity function for children who have an acquired brain injury (ABI) or stroke (Gordon et al, 2007). These findings have contributed to client and family hopes and expectations for motor recovery, coupled with an increased demand for service. In response to this demand and following a best practice review, the Helping Hand Program, a group based modified CIMT program was developed. This interdisciplinary program combines occupationally based treatment techniques promoting self-care and play, with client and parental support groups.

Objective: This presentation highlights the development and outcomes of the Helping Hand Program for 17 children with ABI or stroke aged 3- 16 years. Methods: Inclusion criteria and program curriculum were developed, which incorporated the concepts of shaping and grading of activities. Pre and post program assessments including the Assisting Hand Assessment, Motor Activity Log, Quality of Upper Extremity Skills Test, Canadian Occupational Performance Measure and qualitative questionnaires were administered. Follow-up at 6 months post program was conducted.

Results: Positive changes in occupational performance, upper extremity function and clients' perceptions of performance were found. Follow-up at 6 months supported maintenance of skills. Parents report increased motivation and participation in group based programming.

Conclusion: The Helping Hand program provides children with acquired brain injuries opportunities for participation in a responsive family centred context. Constraint induced movement therapy when provided in a supportive group context with an emphasis on occupation provides a "sea of possibilities" for clients, families and clinicians.