Nicaragua Leisure Activities with PALs Modification Levels

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Nicaragua Leisure Activities with PALs Modification Levels

Description

Overview

Each year an interprofessional team of health professional students and faculty from the College of Health Professions, Pacific University Oregon, travel to Nicaragua to promote the health and wellness of older adults living in hogars (charity homes). The work presented here, describes and illustrates the experience and contributions of the Occupational Therapy (OT) students who participated in the project this year.

Pre-Trip:

Four students from the School of Occupational Therapy were chosen to participate in the Nicaragua Project, a team composed of 22 students and 6 faculty from 5 health profession disciplines. To prepare for the 10-day service-learning trip, team members participated in 4 meetings where they performed team rapport building, fundraising and donation collection, and Nicaragua culture exploration. The students participated in two large fundraising events: the Warrior Dash and a donation drive for needed supplies at the annual Occupational Therapy Association of Oregon conference.

During Trip:

The interdisciplinary team was divided into two groups, performing service learning in hogars for older adults in Granada and Estelí. Two OT students were placed in Granada, and two in Estelí. Service was provided in the hogars for five days. The students began with interdisciplinary screenings, followed by individual treatments sessions, co-treatment when possible, caregiver training, group leisure and movement activities, and use of the Pool Activity Level Instrument for Occupational Profiling (PALS) for assessment of residents.

PALS assessments were administered with 8 individuals spanning the four cognitive levels. In Estelí, caregiver guides were placed in the individuals’ medical records to guide caregivers in activity modification. Spanish caregiver education manuals were also left with each facility.

In addition to care of residents, each facility hosted a community education seminar with information provided by all disciplines. Occupational Therapy focused on providing information about working with vision, hearing and cognitive loss from the caregiver manual.

After Trip:

After piloting the PALS in Nicaragua, we found it to be a culturally relevant assessment, which provided the opportunity to facilitate caregiver training in activity modification. Students created a leisure activity modification tool, based on the PALS cognitive assessment, to train caregivers in Nicaragua to meet the varied ability levels of the older adults with whom they work. This assessment allows the caregiver to best work with the residents at their level for leisure activities and is included in this document. A PowerPoint presentation delivered that the Pacific University School of Occupational Therapy's annual Research and Practice Symposium in April 2012 is also included.

Additionally, the occupational therapy students wrote a journal article titled “Navigating Cultural Differences in Interprofessional, International Service-Learning”. The article has been submitted for publication in Health and Interprofessional Practice, and for this reason it is not included within this document.
Disciplines
Occupational Therapy

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Occupational Therapy Innovative Practice Nicaragua Project 2012 Abstract

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PALS assessments were administered with 8 individuals spanning the four cognitive levels. In Estelí, caregiver guides were placed in the individuals' medical records to guide caregivers in activity modification. Spanish caregiver education manuals were also left with each facility. In addition to care of residents, each facility hosted a community education seminar with information provided by all disciplines. Occupational Therapy focused on providing information about working with vision, hearing and cognitive loss from the caregiver manual.

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Nicaragua Leisure Activities with PALs Modification Levels

Adapted from the Pool Activity Level (PAL) Instrument for Occupational Profiling by Jackie Pool

Pacific University Nicaragua Project
5/3/2013

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Painting

Purpose of Activity:
- To be social with other residents and enjoy colors and textures.
- To improve how eyes and hands work together (hand-eye coordination).
- To improve fingers, hands and arms movement (fine and gross motor skill).

Materials/Supplies:
- Acrylic paint
- Paint brushes with different sized handles
- Objects to paint with: marbles, sponges, plastic bags
- Plain white paper
- Egg cartons or paint cups to hold paint
- Water cups to wash brushes
- Tables (different heights needed for wheelchairs to fit underneath)
- Chairs
- Markers (If residents are not able to paint)

Space Needs:
- Space with room for tables, chairs and wheelchairs.
- Good lighting for residents to see the activity.
- Water with area to wash brushes.

Directions:
1. Put paint, brushes, water and paper in the middle of the table so that residents can share.
2. Let residents choose their seat.
3. Instruct residents to paint whatever they want on their paper.
4. Ask residents to talk with other members during the activity.

PALs Activity Levels Modifications: Painting

Planned: The person can work toward finishing activities, but may not be able to solve problems.

Caregiver’s role:
- Let the person take control of the activity and successfully complete the steps.
- Help the person to begin talking with other people.
- Help the person solve problems as they happen.

Activity modification:
- Give an example of a finished picture.
- Let resident pick colors and what they want to draw. Help them choose colors or think of ideas if they cannot do it on their own.
- Ask resident to share a story about their drawing.
- Have resident help return items to correct place and wipe table when finished.
- Give resident crayons, if resident would like them or has difficulty painting.
**Exploratory:** The person cannot finish the activity without help, but can be guided to finish the activity one step at a time.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person enjoy doing the activity, without focusing on the end result.
- To separate the activity into easy steps.
- To make directions short and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity, because they may not begin the activity on their own.

Activity modification:
- Help resident join the activity.
- Give an example of a finished picture.
- Set 3 colors in front of resident.
- Ask the resident to choose one brush and then remove the others.
- Give resident simple one step instructions: “Try using the green paint”, “Try painting a tree”.
- Ask the resident to talk about their picture.
- Give resident one task to do during clean up, eg. wipe table.

**Sensory:** The person may not finish the activity, but can be helped to finish small parts of the activity.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person enjoy doing parts of the activity, without focusing on the end product.
- To help the person do the activity one step at a time.
- To make directions simple and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity and interact with others.

Activity modification:
- Give the resident a paint container of 3 or 4 basic colors and blank paper.
- Ask resident to use brushes, fingers, stamps, or sponges to make different shapes.
- Ask resident to share what they like about their own picture and others’ pictures.
- Ask resident to talk about their favorite part of the activity.

**Reflex:** The person may not be aware of their surroundings or their own body, but may respond to touch, colors, smells, and sounds.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person be aware of their body.
- To help the person to be more aware of their environment.
- To help the person enjoy spending time with another person.
- To make sure the person’s environment is not too bright, too loud, or too stimulating.

Activity modification:
- Ask resident to touch paint and brushes with hands.
- Ask resident to look at the colors in the bottle, on paper, and on their hands.
Tell them what other residents are painting, what the colors make you think of.
Ask them to share stories, if they can speak.

**Dancing**

**Purpose of Activity:**
- To have fun and spend time with other people.
- To exercise muscles in the arms, legs, and body.
- To exercise the heart and lungs.

**Materials/Supplies:**
- Stereo/CD player for music
- CD with music of choice

**Space Needs:**
- Large, open, flat area.

**Directions:**
1. Play music of choice.
2. Ask residents to dance when standing.
3. If resident cannot stand have them move their arms and upper body to the music.

**PALs Activity Levels Modifications: Dancing**

**Planned:** The person can work toward finishing activities, but may not be able to solve problems.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- Let the person take control of the activity and successfully complete the steps.
- Help the person to begin talking with other people.
- Help the person solve problems as they happen.

**Activity modification:**
- Help resident in joining the activity.
- Ask resident to dance, moving their body as much as they can.
- Ask residents to teach other residents dance moves.
- Ask residents to take turns choosing songs and share stories about the songs.

**Exploratory:** The person cannot finish the activity without help, but can be guided to finish the activity one step at a time.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing the activity, without focusing on the end result.
- To separate the activity into easy steps.
- To make directions short and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity, because they may not begin the activity on their own.

**Activity modification:**
- Ask resident to dance, moving their body as much as they can.
● Ask resident to help choose the music.
● Ask resident if they would like to dance with a caregiver or another resident.
● Ask residents to take turns choosing songs and share stories about the songs.

**Sensory:** The person may not finish the activity, but can be helped to finish small parts of the activity.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing parts of the activity, without focusing on the end product.
- To help the person do the activity one step at a time.
- To make directions simple and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity and interact with others.

**Activity modification:**
- Guide resident to dance floor.
- Ask resident to dance, moving their body as much as they can.
- Ask resident to copy other peoples’ dance moves.
- Watch for residents who may be frowning, breathing hard, sweating a lot, bumping into things, or tripping. If you see a resident doing any of these things, ask them to sit down or relax in another room.
- Remind residents that “we are having fun with our friends, enjoying music, and moving our bodies, making us healthy.”

**Reflex:** The person may not be aware of their surroundings or their own body, but may respond to touch, colors, smells, and sounds.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person be aware of their body.
- To help the person to be more aware of their environment.
- To help the person enjoy spending time with another person.
- To make sure the person’s environment is not too bright, too loud, or too textured.

**Activity modification:**
- Tell the resident about the other residents dancing.
- If the resident enjoys the music, move them closer to the dancing.
- If the resident is in their chair or bed, play music while gently moving their arms and legs to the beat.
**Bowling**

**Purpose of Activity:**
- To be social with other residents.
- To exercise arms, legs, and body.
- To improve balance.
- To improve how hands and eyes work together (hand-eye coordination).

**Materials/Supplies:**
- Balls that are not heavy and roll well, different sizes are good.
- Bowling pins: 6-10 pins.
  - Use empty 500mL water bottles, ⅓ of bottle filled with dirt or water.

**Space Needs:**
- Large room with level ground and open space.
- Room needs to have good light, without sun glare.

**Directions (sequence of activity):**
1. Set up bowling pins on the ground, 7-8 cm apart in the shape of a triangle.
2. Choose ball of good size for the resident, based on their needs.
   a. Larger and lighter ball for residents with less ability to move arms.
   b. Smaller ball for residents who can move arms easily.
3. Ask resident to stand 3 meters away from the bowling pins, standing with good balance or sitting in a chair.
4. Ask resident to bend at the hips and roll the ball towards the pins using one hand, or two hands if they need to. You can also help them roll the ball, if they need.
5. Repeat until all pins are knocked down.

**PALs Activity Levels Modifications: Bowling**

**Planned:** The person can work toward finishing activities, but may not be able to solve problems.

- **Caregiver’s role:**
  - Let the person take control of the activity and successfully complete the steps.
  - Help the person to begin talking with other people.
  - Help the person solve problems as they happen.

- **Activity modification:**
  - Ask resident to help set up bowling activity by moving light furniture, setting up pins, and filling “pins” with water or dirt.
  - Ask residents to help keep score.
  - Ask residents to cheer for each bowler.
  - Ask residents to share stories about playing similar games.
**Exploratory:** The person cannot finish the activity without help, but can be guided to finish the activity one step at a time.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person enjoy doing the activity, without focusing on the end result.
- To separate the activity into easy steps.
- To make directions short and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity, because they may not begin the activity on their own.

Activity modification:
- Help resident in joining the activity.
- Ask resident to help set up pins and fill “pins” with dirt or water.
- Show the resident how to bowl by doing it yourself.
- Ask resident to count how many pins they have knocked down.
- Ask residents to cheer for each bowler.
- Ask residents to share stories about playing other ball games.

**Sensory:** The person may not finish the activity, but can be helped to finish small parts of the activity.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person enjoy doing parts of the activity, without focusing on the end product.
- To help the person do the activity one step at a time.
- To make directions simple and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity and interact with others.

Activity modification:
- Ask resident help you fill “pins” with dirt or water.
- Set up fewer pins, to make the game easier for the resident.
- Teach resident how to play by holding the ball with them and rolling it together.
- Ask residents to cheer for each bowler.

**Reflex:** The person may not be aware of their surroundings or their own body, but may respond to touch, colors, smells, and sounds.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person be aware of their body.
- To help the person to be more aware of their environment.
- To help the person enjoy spending time with another person.
- To make sure the person’s environment is not too bright, too loud, or too textured.

Activity modification:
- Ask resident to feel the weight and texture of the pins and ball.
- Hold pin and ask resident to hold the ball reach to touch the pin.
- Tell resident about the events of the game, such as who is bowling next, how many pins they knocked down.
Balloon Toss

Purpose of Activity:
- To be social with other residents.
- To exercise arms, body, heart and lungs.
- To improve how hands and eyes work together (hand-eye coordination).

Materials/Supplies:
- Large, colorful balloons
- Chairs for residents who need to sit

Space Needs:
- Large, open area.

Directions (sequence of activity):
1. Blow up balloons.
2. Have residents sit or stand facing each other in a line or circle, provide chairs as needed.
3. Toss balloon to resident by using their name to alert them to the game.
4. Ask residents to hit the balloon as many times as they can and to keep it from hitting the ground.
5. Ask residents to call other residents’ names before they toss it to them.

PALs Activity Levels Modifications: Balloon Toss

Planned: The person can work toward finishing activities, but may not be able to solve problems.

Caregiver’s role:
- Let the person take control of the activity and successfully complete the steps.
- Help the person to begin talking with other people.
- Help the person solve problems as they happen.

Activity modification:
- Ask resident to help blow up balloons.
- Ask resident to talk to other residents, by saying their name and telling them to “get ready”.
- Show resident different ways to hit the ball with hands, head or feet.
- Ask resident to teach other residents how to do the same.
- Multiple balloons being tossed at the same time can make the activity more fun.
- Ask resident to help clean up balloons and balloon pieces if balloons pop.

Exploratory: The person cannot finish the activity without help, but can be guided to finish the activity one step at a time.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person enjoy doing the activity, without focusing on the end result.
• To separate the activity into easy steps.
• To make directions short and easy to understand.
• To help the person begin the activity, because they may not begin the activity on their own.

**Activity modification:**
- Help resident in joining the activity.
- Ask resident to blow up balloons.
- Show resident different ways to hit the ball with hands, head or feet.
- Ask them to teach other residents how to do the same.
- Ask resident to help clean up balloons and balloon pieces if balloons pop
- Resident may need reminders about why they are doing the balloon toss. It may be helpful to let them know there is no fiesta if they are confused by the balloons.

**Sensory:** The person may not finish the activity, but can be helped to finish small parts of the activity.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing parts of the activity, without focusing on the end product.
- To help the person do the activity one step at a time.
- To make directions simple and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity and interact with others.

**Activity modification:**
- Ask resident to help blow up balloons.
- Use one balloon at a time.
- Ask resident to toss the balloon with a partner instead of the group.

**Reflex:** The person may not be aware of their surroundings or their own body, but may respond to touch, colors, smells, and sounds.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person be aware of their body.
- To help the person to be more aware of their environment.
- To help the person enjoy spending time with another person.
- To make sure the person’s environment is not too bright, too loud, or too textured.

**Activity modification:**
- Give deflated balloons to the resident to feel.
- Have resident feel the air coming out of the balloon that is inflated.
- Tell resident about the balloon game the other residents are playing, how many times they hit the balloon before it touched the ground.
Morning Exercise Group

Purpose of Activity:
● To socialize, relax and develop daily morning routines.
● To increase exercise of the body, heart, and lungs.
● To increase exercise of the mind.

Materials/Supplies:
● Chairs for residents who need them.

Space Needs:
● Enough room for residents to put their arms up and out without hitting anything.

Directions (sequence of activity):
1. Sit or stand with the residents, breath slowly, and speak calmly:
   a. Breath in slowly, breath out slowly- take long breaths. (x3)
   b. Lift your arms slowly in front of you, over your head, and back down. (x5)
   c. Lift your arms slowly to the side of you, over your head, and back down. (x5)
   d. Lift your right arm to the side of you and place your hand on top of your head, tilt your right ear to your right shoulder. (hold for 5 seconds x 2)
   e. Lift your left arm to the side of you and place your hand on top of your head, tilt your left ear to your right shoulder. (hold for 5 seconds x 2)
   f. Roll your head forward, to the left, back, then to the right slowly. (x2)
   g. Change directions. Roll your head forward to the right, back, then to the left slowly. (x2)
   h. Put your hands on your knees.
   i. Put your left foot in front of you, and your right foot behind you. Lean forward as if you are picking something up from the ground, then return to sitting position.
   j. Put right foot in front of you, and left foot behind you. Lean forward as if you are picking something up from the ground, then return to sitting position.
   k. Put your hands on your hips, lean forward, to the right, back, and to the left. (x2)
   l. Change directions, lean forward, to the left, back, and to the right. (x2)
   m. Breath in slowly, breath out slowly- Take long deep breaths (x2)

PALs Activity Levels Modifications: Morning Exercise Group

Planned: The person can work toward finishing activities, but may not be able to solve problems.

Caregiver’s role:
● Let the person take control of the activity and successfully complete the steps.
● Help the person to begin talking with other people.
● Help the person solve problems as they happen.

Activity modification:
● Ask resident to help bring other resident’s to the activity area.
- Ask resident to follow along with instructor.
- Tell resident they are doing well and ask them to move their body the most they can slowly and safely.

**Exploratory:** The person cannot finish the activity without help, but can be guided to finish the activity one step at a time.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing the activity, without focusing on the end result.
- To separate the activity into easy steps.
- To make directions short and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity, because they may not begin the activity on their own.

**Activity modification:**
- Help resident in joining the activity
- Act out each exercise and ask resident to follow your movements. Ask another caregiver to help move the resident’s arms, if they are having difficulty.
- Tell resident they are doing well and ask them to move their body the most they can safely.

**Sensory:** The person may not finish the activity, but can be helped to finish small parts of the activity.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing parts of the activity, without focusing on the end product.
- To help the person do the activity one step at a time.
- To make directions simple and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity and interact with others.

**Activity modification:**
- Help resident in joining the activity.
- Seat resident next to other residents who can follow the exercises correctly.
- Act out each exercise and ask resident to follow your movements. Ask another caregiver to help move the resident’s arms, if they are having difficulty.
- Tell resident they are doing well and ask them to move their body the most they can safely, even if they are not following the exercises correctly.

**Reflex:** The person may not be aware of their surroundings or their own body, but may respond to touch, colors, smells, and sounds.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person be aware of their body.
- To help the person to be more aware of their environment.
- To help the person enjoy spending time with another person.
- To make sure the person’s environment is not too bright, too loud, or too textured.

**Activity modification:**
- Using a gentle voice, explain to resident what movement you are going to help them do before doing it. Example: “I am going to lift your right arm above your head to give it a stretch.”
- Play music while moving the residents arms and legs.

**Leaf Rubbing**

**Purpose of Activity:**
- To be social with other residents and enjoy colors and textures.
- To improve how eyes and hands work together (hand-eye coordination).
- To improve fingers, hands and arms movement (fine and gross motor skill).

**Materials/Supplies:**
- Different live leaves in various shapes and sizes
- Crayons
- Paper (on the thinner side is preferable)

**Space Needs:**
- Space with room for tables, chairs and wheelchairs.
- Good lighting for residents to see the activity.

**Directions:**
1. Let residents choose their seat.
2. Place pre-picked leafs on the table.
3. Choose leaves that are well defined; green leaves work best.
4. Place chosen leaves under the paper.
5. Turn your crayon on its long side and gently rub over the leaf.
6. Start at the top and work down the paper.
7. Turn the paper back over to see your leaf print, do as many leaves on a piece of paper as you want.
8. Ask residents to talk with other members during the activity.

**PALs Activity Levels Modifications: Leaf Rubbing**

**Planned:** The person can work toward finishing activities, but may not be able to solve problems.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- Let the person take control of the activity and successfully complete the steps.
- Help the person to begin talking with other people.
- Help the person solve problems as they happen.

**Activity modification:**
- Give an example of a finished rubbing.
- Let resident pick leaf and color crayon that they want to use.
- Ask resident if they know what type of plant the leaf came from.
- Ask resident to share a story about their drawing.
• Have resident help return items to correct place and wipe table when finished.

**Exploratory:** The person cannot finish the activity without help, but can be guided to finish the activity one step at a time.

**Caregiver's role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing the activity, without focusing on the end result.
- To separate the activity into easy steps.
- To make directions short and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity, because they may not begin the activity on their own.

**Activity modification:**
- Help resident join the activity.
- Give an example of a finished picture.
- Set 3 leaves in front of resident.
- Ask the resident to choose one crayon and then remove the others.
- Give resident simple one step instructions: “Try using the side of the crayon”
- Ask the resident to talk about their picture.
- Give resident one task to do during clean up, eg. collect leaves.

**Sensory:** The person may not finish the activity, but can be helped to finish small parts of the activity.

**Caregiver's role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing parts of the activity, without focusing on the end product.
- To help the person do the activity one step at a time.
- To make directions simple and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity and interact with others.

**Activity modification:**
- Give the resident one crayon, one leaf and blank paper.
- Place the leaf under the paper for the resident.
- Ask resident to use the crayon to color over the paper. They may need help holding the paper still.
- Ask resident to share what they like about their own picture and others’ pictures.
- Ask resident to talk about their favorite part of the activity.

**Reflex:** The person may not be aware of their surroundings or their own body, but may respond to touch, colors, smells, and sounds.

**Caregiver's role:**
- To help the person be aware of their body.
- To help the person to be more aware of their environment.
- To help the person enjoy spending time with another person.
- To make sure the person’s environment is not too bright, too loud, or too textured.
Activity modification:
- Ask resident to touch leaves and crayons with hands.
- Tell resident about other kinds of leaves and talk about what season it is.
- Ask resident to share stories about trees, if they can speak.

**Necklace Beading**

Purpose of Activity:
- To be social with other residents and enjoy a leisure activity.
- To improve how eyes and hands work together (hand-eye coordination).
- To improve fingers, hands and arms movement (fine and gross motor skill).

Materials/Supplies:
- Bag of multi-color large beads
- 1 roll of scotch or masking tape
- 1 ball of yarn
- 1 pair of scissors for each set of three residents
- Small bowls to hold beads, one per 2 residents
- Sample necklace

Space Needs:
- Large table with space for chairs and wheelchairs.
- Table top to spread out materials and have a small working space for each resident.
- Bright lighting.

Directions (sequence of activity):
1. Place different types of beads in multiple small bowls.
2. Place bowls between residents so every resident can reach them.
3. Give one resident the ball of yarn and scissors to cut length of yarn (about 60-90cm), then pass to next resident. Help as needed.
4. Show each resident example, then place example in center of table.
5. Wrap a piece of tape tightly around one end of yarn to use as a needle
6. Have each resident tie a knot around a bead at the other end. Leave 10 cm yarn on end to tie later.
7. Tape the end with the knot to the table.
8. Have each resident choose beads and place bead on the yarn one by one.
9. When resident has finished beading, help them tie a knot around the final bead.
10. Leave 10 cm of yarn at the end.
11. Tie the two ends together to make necklace.

**PALs Activity Levels Modifications: Necklace Beading**

**Planned**: The person can work toward finishing activities, but may not be able to solve problems.

Caregiver’s role:
- Let the person take control of the activity and successfully complete the steps.
- Help the person to begin talking with other people.
- Help the person solve problems as they happen.

Activity modification:
- Have resident help set up activity by filling bowls with beads, cut yarn and tie knots in the yarn for residents who can’t do it themselves.
- Put materials in order that they are used on table (i.e. yarn, tape, beads).
- Ask resident to share a story about a piece of jewelry or craft activity.
- Have resident help return items to correct place and wipe table when finished.

**Exploratory**: The person cannot finish the activity without help, but can be guided to finish the activity one step at a time.

**Caregiver's role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing the activity, without focusing on the end result.
- To separate the activity into easy steps.
- To make directions short and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity, because they may not begin the activity on their own.

Activity modification:
- Help resident join the activity and choose a seat.
- Do one step at a time.
- Give resident ball of yarn and ask them to cut a piece then remove ball.
- Ask them to tie a knot in the yarn.
- Have them pick out a few beads and then remove the bowl out of sight until they need more.
- Ask resident to share a story about a piece of jewelry or craft activity.
- Have resident help return one item to the correct place when finished.

**Sensory**: The person may not finish the activity, but can be helped to finish small parts of the activity.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing parts of the activity, without focusing on the end product.
- To help the person do the activity one step at a time.
- To make directions simple and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity and interact with others.

Activity modification:
- Make a work space for resident, organize materials, and help resident to their chair.
- Have resident feel the yarn and pick a color.
- Ask resident to describe what the beads feel like to them.
- The resident may not remember how to tie a knot or how to use scissors correctly and may need help to complete these steps.

**Reflex**: The person may not be aware of their surroundings or their own body, but may respond to touch, colors, smells, and sounds.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person be aware of their body.
- To help the person to be more aware of their environment.
- To help the person enjoy spending time with another person.
- To make sure the person’s environment is not too bright, too loud, or too textured.

Activity modification:
- Cut string and knot end before giving string to person.
- Ask resident to feel the different types of yarn and beads. If they are unable to follow directions place items in their hands.
- Talk to them about the different colors and tell them what the other residents are making.
Walker Bags

Purpose of Activity:
- To be social with other residents and to make a bag for resident to use while walking.
- To improve how hands and eyes work together (bilateral eye hand coordination).
- To improve ability to follow directions in order.
- To improve finger and hand movement (Fine motor skills).

Materials/Supplies (Per resident):
- 1 (30 cm x 60 cm) piece of fabric
- 1 Sewing needle with a big eye
- 1 ball of yarn
- 1 Spool of ribbon
- 1 Pair of scissors
- 1 piece of chalk
- 1 Bottle of fabric glue (To be shared)

Space Needs:
- Large table with space for chairs and wheelchairs.
- Table top to spread out materials and have a small working space for each resident.
- Bright lighting.

Directions (sequence of activity):
1. Fold 30 cm x 60 cm strip of fabric in half, place fold at bottom with open slats at sides and top.
2. Use chalk to place dots up left and right side of bag, 2.5 cm apart.
3. At top of bag, place two dots 2.5 cm below opening of bag, on left and right side.
4. Cut 45 cm of yarn, tie knot at end of yarn, and insert into needle.
5. Using fabric dots, begin at bottom of bag, push needle through dot and pull through other side, bring needle back around to front of bag and pushing into the next hole. Continue until you reach the top of bag. At top of bag, tie a knot to stop the string from unraveling. Repeat on other side.
6. Use scissors to make two holes at top of bag (an 2.5 cm from the top of the bag and side of the bag) - fold fabric at fabric marker, hold, and cut out hole with scissors.
7. Cut ribbon into two 20 cm pieces to use to tie the bag to the walker

PALs Activity Levels Modifications: Walker Bags

Planned: The person can work toward finishing activities, but may not be able to solve problems.

Caregiver’s role:
- Let the person take control of the activity and successfully complete the steps.
- Help the person to begin talking with other people.
- Help the person solve problems as they happen.

Activity modification:
- Ask person to pick where they sit and the color of their fabric.
- Ask the person to make dots, cut string, and thread needle and help only when needed.
- Ask resident to share a story about sewing projects or a bag they liked.
- Have resident help return items to correct place and wipe table when finished.

**Exploratory:** The person cannot finish the activity without help, but can be guided to finish the activity one step at a time.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing the activity, without focusing on the end result.
- To separate the activity into easy steps.
- To make directions short and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity, because they may not begin the activity on their own.

**Activity modification:**
- Help resident to join the activity and choose fabric.
- Put tools in front of resident and ask them to choose the right tool for each step.
- Ask resident to do each step one at a time before doing the next one. For example, draw 8 dots up the left side of the fabric, now draw 8 dots up the right side of the fabric.
- Ask resident to talk about what they will put in the bag.
- Give resident one task to complete for clean up, such as wiping off the table, or putting fabric away.

**Sensory:** The person may not finish the activity, but can be helped to finish small parts of the activity.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person enjoy doing parts of the activity, without focusing on the end product.
- To help the person do the activity one step at a time.
- To make directions simple and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity and interact with others.

**Activity modification:**
- Make a work space for resident, organize materials, and help resident to their chair.
- Ask resident to touch different textured fabrics, and choose one they like best.
- Ask resident to share a story that the fabric reminds them of.

**Reflex:** The person may not be aware of their surroundings or their own body, but may respond to touch, colors, smells, and sounds.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- To help the person be aware of their body.
- To help the person to be more aware of their environment.
- To help the person enjoy spending time with another person.
- To make sure the person’s environment is not too bright, too loud, or too textured.

**Activity modification:**
- Give different pieces of textured cloth for resident to touch with hands, arms, and face.
Tell them what the other residents are doing. Ask resident to share a story about what the fabric reminds them of.

**Yarn Ornament**

**Purpose of Activity:**
- To be social with other residents and enjoy colors and textures.
- To improve how eyes and hands work together (hand-eye coordination).
- To improve finger, hand and arm movement (fine and gross motor skill).

**Materials/Supplies (Per resident):**
- 1 Small balloon
- 5-6 Yarns of different colors and textures
- 1 Pair of scissors
- 1 Bottle of white/school glue
- Water
- flour
- 1 bowl to contain glue

**Space Needs:**
- Large table with space for chairs and wheelchairs.
- Table top to spread out materials and have a small working space for each resident.
- Bright lighting.

**Directions (sequence of activity):**
1. Blow up balloon.
2. Cut 5-6 different colors of yarn into 100 cm pieces.
3. Mix 3 parts white glue with 1 part water and 1 part flour in medium size bowl
4. Dip one piece of yarn into glue, covering fully, then squeeze off extra glue.
5. Wrap yarn around balloon, moving horizontally and vertically
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 with each piece of yarn until balloon is covered as desired. The balloon can be fully covered or have many spaces, as long as there is a yarn around the whole balloon shape.
7. Let balloon covered with yarn dry for approximately 2 hours.
8. Pop balloon and remove pieces.
9. Tie a piece of string at top of yarn structure to hang.

**PALs Activity Levels Modifications: String Ornament**

**Planned:** The person can work toward finishing activities, but may not be able to solve problems.

**Caregiver’s role:**
- Let the person take control of the activity and successfully complete the steps.
- Help the person to begin talking with other people.
- Help the person solve problems as they happen.

**Activity modification:**

Nicaragua Leisure Activities with PALs Levels. Pacific University Nicaragua Project
- Ask resident to select where they sit, the color of their yarn.
- Ask the resident to cut yarn, mix glue and water, and dip yarn into glue independently and help when needed.
- Ask resident to share stories about other ornaments they’ve made or had in the past.
- Have resident help return items to correct place and wipe table when finished.

**Exploratory:** The person cannot finish the activity without help, but can be guided to finish the activity one step at a time.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person enjoy doing the activity, without focusing on the end result.
- To separate the activity into easy steps.
- To make directions short and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity, because they may not begin the activity on their own.

Activity modification:
- Help resident join the activity and choose yarn.
- Put tools in front of resident and ask them to use the correct tool for each step.
- Prompt resident to perform each step one at a time, for example, cut string here, now dip it into the glue, squeeze the yarn so it doesn’t drip, now wrap it around your balloon.
- Ask resident to talk about ornaments they have made or had in the past.
- Give resident one task to complete for clean up, such as wiping off the table, or putting glue bottles away.

**Sensory:** The person may not finish the activity, but can be helped to finish small parts of the activity.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person enjoy doing parts of the activity, without focusing on the end product.
- To help the person do the activity one step at a time.
- To make directions simple and easy to understand.
- To help the person begin the activity and interact with others.

Activity modification:
- Make a work space for resident, organize materials, and help resident to their chair.
- Ask resident to touch different textured yarns, and choose some they like best.
- Help resident dip yarn and wrap around balloon.
- Ask resident to share a story the ornament reminds them of.

**Reflex:** The person may not be aware of their surroundings or their own body, but may respond to touch, colors, smells, and sounds.

Caregiver’s role:
- To help the person be aware of their body.
- To help the person to be more aware of their environment.
- To help the person enjoy spending time with another person.
- To make sure the person’s environment is not too bright, too loud, or too textured.

Activity modification:
- Give resident different pieces of textured yarn to touch with hands, arms, and face.
- Use different bright colors for balloon and yarn, use different textures of yarn.
- Tell the resident what colors of string the other residents are using and how big their balloons are.
- Ask resident to share a story about ornaments or holidays, if they can speak.
Caregiving Across Cultures: Teaching Activity Modification in Nicaraguan Hogars

Dana Erickson, Katie Schumacher, Megan Kelly, and Nicole Randt
Pacific University School of Occupational Therapy
Faculty Advisor: Tiffany Boggis, MBA, OTR/L
Community Partner: Jessie F. Richardson Foundation
Introduction

- Nicaragua Project 2012
- Jessie F. Richardson Foundation
  - Partnering with Pacific for 7 years
- Interdisciplinary team
  - Services we provide
    - 5 professions
  - Teams provide services in 2 locations for 10 days with Dr. Milton Lopez
- Population served
- Common conditions
- Interventions
Frames of Reference

- Community-Based Rehabilitation Model
- Person/Environment/Occupation
Daily life in a hogar

- 24 hogars in Nicaragua
- Daily life in a hogar
- Culture
- Caregivers
Identified Occupational Needs

- Leisure participation.
- Need for overall caregiver education and training.
  - Teach caregivers how to meet the specific needs of residents.
  - Train caregivers activity modification by addressing leisure activities and ADL’s.
What assessment tools do you use in a nursing home setting?
Pool Activity Level Instrument (PALs)

• Activity based questionnaire of abilities for caregivers.

• Emphasizes meeting person at their ability level and provides ways to engage in meaningful activities.

• Why PALs for this population?
Outcomes
Tool Kits
Occupational Relevance

- Increased mental, physical, and social well-being through meaningful activity.
- Ease of the activities through the use of PALs.
- OT’s role in utilizing the PALs with older adults in Nicaragua.
Opportunities for Continued Services

- The need is still great.
- Follow-up is needed to ensure that what has been put in place, including the PALs, is working.
- Creating sustainability is the goal, however, there are still many hogars who we have yet to collaborate with.
- Caregivers are receptive to learning new techniques in working with the residents.
Conclusion

- Nicaraguan elders currently lack opportunities to engage in leisure activities and require varying levels of assistance to participate.

- Caregivers are responsible for providing this assistance, but many are undereducated and do not have the skills to deliver activity modification.

- The PALs Level Activity Modification tool educates caregivers on how to meet elders at their ability level and allow them to modify specific activities.
References


References


References


Question and Answer

- Have you had challenges crossing cultures with other assessment tools? How have you overcome them?
- In what other settings, or populations, can you see this being a valuable tool?
- How do you think the PALS toolkit would fit into your setting?
- What other areas of occupation could this tool be adapted for?
- What tools and strategies do you use to teach caregivers?
THANK YOU!

For more information on the PALs Toolkit contact Nicole at rand9413@pacificu.edu