Occupational Therapy’s Impact: Occupational Exploration and Transitional Youth

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Description
This document contains a culmination of items that reflect a yearlong student led community-based practice project. As part of Pacific University School of Occupational Therapy’s doctoral curriculum, this service-learning course spans from an introductory organizational needs assessment to the final implementation and presentation of findings. The partnering organization, Outside In, is a social service agency located in Portland, Oregon that works to address the dynamic needs of homeless youth (Outside In, 2009). Outside In’s Employment and Education Resource Center (ERC) is a school based program that aides homeless and transitional adolescents to gain access to education and employment. Under the supervision of Pacific University’s occupational therapy program this project is a continuation of a 2013 student project A Developmental Approach to Work-Readiness (George & Brigden, 2013). This earlier project was developed to reflect a need for occupational therapy services within the ERC. Activity modules were produced to support the needs of youth participants who experienced challenges to graduation from the ERC program. From the foundational work of A Developmental Approach to Work-Readiness, the current project Occupational Therapy’s Impact: Occupational Exploration and Transitional Youth was created.

Contained within is a collection of chronological documents that highlight the research and implementation process of this student driven project:

- An organizational needs assessment created for Outside In to summarize the organization’s services as a whole, the demographics of the targeted population, and implications for practice.
- Two literature reviews developed by the student team members to explore current research in program delivery and skill acquisition in relation to at-risk youth.
- The overview of project implementation outlining the progression of each group piloted and adapted from the A Developmental Approach to Work-Readiness activity binder.
- A power point document used during the final presentation given to the ERC staff and Pacific University project advisor.

Reflected within these works is an innovative and evidence-based project that explores occupational therapy’s role in working with both community partner programs and at-risk adolescents as a whole. As presented, the impact of occupational therapy’s holistic view and client-centered service delivery holds the potential for long lasting positive change for youth during times of critical transition.

Disciplines
Occupational Therapy

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Occupational Therapy’s Impact:
Occupational Exploration and Transitional Youth

Mason Munson, OTS
Martha Wegner, OTS
Faculty Advisor: Sandra Rogers, PhD, OTR/L

Pacific University

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Section I: Introduction

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**Disciplines**
Occupational Therapy

**References**

Section II: Organizational Needs Assessment

Mason Munson, OTS
Martha Wegner, OTS
Development of the ERC Occupational Activities Program at Outside In:  
A Client-Centered Perspective

Martha Wegner, OTDS  
Mason Munson, OTDS

Advised by: Sandra Rogers, PhD, OTR/L  
OTD 630

Pacific University
Outside In is a community-based nonprofit organization dedicated to helping homeless youth and other marginalized people move towards health and self-sufficiency. They are located in Portland, Oregon and primarily serve youth from the Portland metropolitan area. Reported in Outside In’s 2011/12 Annual Report, they operated on a budget of $7,089,953 and served 1,131 youth through their medical care, housing, education, employment, skill building, recreation and art programs (see Appendix A). The youth that seek services from Outside In become homeless for a variety of reasons such as family poverty, violence, mental and physical illness in their families, sexual minority issues, unemployment, addiction, domestic violence, and sexual abuse (Outside In, 2013). In partnership with Pacific University (PU), the Education and Employment Resource Center (ERC) which is an Outside In program, will have PU students pilot new occupational activities that aim to further support ERC participants toward meaningful employment. The purpose of this paper is to reflect on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that Outside In faces, so that the project implementation will optimize the ERC’s ability to support youth to gain employment and transition out of homelessness (see Appendix B).

NEEDS IDENTIFIED

Outside In is a support service agency guided by the harm reduction program model. Harm reduction philosophy meets clients where they are at and provides education and services that they need in order to make healthy choices. In an article that describes the use of harm reduction theory within a similar homeless services program, Tiderington (2013) states, “By providing people with immediate access to independent housing that is not contingent on treatment adherence or sobriety, consumers make choices about their drug use that do not necessarily threaten their housing status or the availability of helping professionals.” Many of the youth participants utilize the health clinic and needle exchange program to manage their sexual and drug use choices. Outside In does not require abstinence on the part of participants, which allows the youth to be honest about their lives and seek help without fear of retribution.

In operation since 1968, Outside In is well established in the downtown Portland community (Outside In, 2013). Their centralized location allows ease of access through public transit and also places Outside In near other Homeless Youth Continuum service providers, including Janus Youth, New Avenues for Youth, and Native American Youth and Family Center (Multoc.us, 2013). Additional homeless community services in the nearby area include Sisters of the Road, P:ear, and Lighthouse Ministries. Partnership in this large net of reliable services is important to support this vulnerable population of youth. Outside In fosters a culture of protection and respect for the homeless youth in the Portland area. This respectful approach fulfills the need for trust in the lives of the youth. According to Spiro, Dekel, and Peled (2009), longevity of these relationships may reflect the great need of these young people for security and emotional support.

Specific to this needs assessment, a closer look at Outside In’s ERC was taken. The ERC runs the Job Readiness Training, Job Club programs, and specialty workshops. They also have drop-in hours for students to work towards their GEDs. In 2012, the ERC served over 200 youth and supported 17 (8.5%) youth to earn their GED, 47 (23.5%) to attend college, and 45 (22.5%) to gain employment (Outside In, 2013). These statistics show the success of ERC programs; however there is room for improvement. Despite the ERC’s aim to support all youth to be successful, some participants experience challenges that are not addressed with the current ERC
DEVELOPMENT OF THE ERC OCCUPATIONAL ACTIVITIES

programs. PU students will provide evidence-based activities in the ERC with the aim to increase youth’s abilities to seek, gain, and maintain meaningful employment.

Outside In’s environmental contexts can be evaluated within the structure of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory (1979), which evaluates the micro-, meso, exo-, and macro-system factors of an organization (see Appendix C). Outside In’s microsystem for this paper’s purpose is specific to the ERC. The ERC fully functions in a separate building located multiple city blocks away from Outside In’s other programs. The physical and psychological space helps to identify the ERC as a school with a culture of respect and professionalism. This is a key advantage for the program, as it attracts many youth that are in a transitional phase who have reported discomfort with the stronger drug use and street culture atmosphere more apparent in the other programs. Some youth prefer to keep a clear distance between the ERC and Outside In’s main campus, while other youth utilize services from both buildings. Four key staff members and a handful of volunteers work to support the youth, 18-24 years old, in ERC programs. Youth can obtain clothing and other resources through gift cards and donations from the ERC in order to seek and gain employment.

The mesosystem in Bronfenbrenner’s model provides a space for various microsystems to interact with each other, which is of key importance for the vulnerable population that Outside In serves. The youth receive a variety of services from Outside In’s other programs (i.e. housing, primary health care, food, and education). Failure in one area can disrupt participants’ access to the most fundamental activities of daily living and has the potential to unravel homeless youth’s lives (AOTA, 2008). Transportation to the organization’s buildings, coordination of service program schedules, and the provision of mesosystem supports (i.e. monthly bus passes), must be taken into consideration to support the youth’s ability to thrive in a variety of critical microsystems.

The exosystem in the ecological systems theory aims to capture the environment that is beyond Outside In’s direct day-to-day interactions. For Outside In, stakeholders in the organization are major factors of the exosystem. Over half of Outside In’s annual budget, roughly $4,000,000, relies on city, county, and federal funding (see Appendix A). These government entities influence Outside In programs significantly because of the need for the organization to follow guidelines attached to each contribution from government and private entities. Finally, the macrosystem of Outside In examines the larger cultural context that connects the population that they serve. Youth homelessness is a problem throughout the nation and around the world. Specific to the United States, the overarching culture dictates what describes a “successful” member of society. Mainstream culture also attaches stigma to members in society, such as homeless youth, that do not meet these expectations of success. This situation perpetuates the challenges of being homeless and snowballs into a situation where youth face occupational deprivation. When youth have the opportunity to explore occupational identity and personal definitions of what success might mean to them, they are able to navigate the effects of stigma in their lives. Since Outside In supports the homeless youth population, the organization deals with these exosystem and macrosystem factors. Moreover, Outside In must overcome the aforementioned financial hurdles by relying on outside funding sources, such as local and federal government grants, that may be influenced by these cultural stigmas. Governmental agencies do not utilize the same harm reduction philosophy as Outside In, and in fact actively prescribe
DEVELOPMENT OF THE ERC OCCUPATIONAL ACTIVITIES

punitive actions against individuals who live in the streets or engage in illegal drug use. This conflict in agendas provides an inherent conundrum to Outside In’s mission and creates vulnerability for the organization.

While Bronfenbrenner’s model provides a big picture of Outside In as an organization, the kawa river model guides program development and intervention. The kawa river model is a non-western occupational therapy model that describes a client’s life through the representation of a river (Iwama, 2006). This model views the client as the expert in the therapeutic interaction, with the therapist as the guided learner. Ideally the client themselves will design the river from their perspective, which is a potentially appropriate future activity to introduce to the youth participants.

The model is a solid fit not only for Outside In as a community service provider but also for the homeless youth population that they serve (see Appendix D). Many youth that receive their services live in marginalized communities and are unsupported by mainstream society. The reasons for this can be vast and unique to each individual. In an article that addresses street youth experiences with exiting homelessness, Karabanow (2008) remarks on this factor by stating, “Street youth exist within excluded realms: They are a traumatized population located outside of the formal market economy, describe experiences of marginalization and stigmatization within civil society…Everything about being young and homeless inspires critical and often demeaning responses from others in mainstream society.” This model, which does not have a stigma-based mentality, acknowledges homeless youth’s place in the broader community. In addition, it provides opportunities for growth and safe self-exploration.

CONCLUSIONS

Outside In programs need to focus on an approach that allows for youth voices to be heard as part of program structure, as well as, create an environment that fosters introspection for the youth. Moreover, Outside In must address the effects that occupational deprivation has on the homeless youth population in Portland, Oregon. This can be done in a variety of ways and will likely include an introduction to a variety of environments that allow youth to explore occupational roles. Well-planned and thoughtfully implemented services will encourage youth participants to examine their past and future roles as they look toward their occupational goals.

It is also important to assess and support development of youth’s executive functioning skills. Executive functioning skills are an area of critical importance to homeless youth and should be a primary focus of skill-based interventions. In the article, *Performance-based measure of executive function: Comparison of community and at-risk youth*, Toglia (2013) describes how many cumulative factors including impoverished environments, inadequate nutrition, heightened stress, and deprivation can contribute to poor executive functioning development in at-risk youth. She states that, “These impairments compromise the ability of at-risk youth to effectively use strategies needed to cope with challenges in daily life occupations such as school and work.” In order to promote growth, the occupational activities program must address executive functioning skills, such as problem solving, time management, and coping strategies. Furthermore, the program needs to positively challenge youth’s current skill levels and provide direct support and feedback. Many executive functioning skills directly relate to successful navigation of obtaining
work: interview, appearance, role-play, anxiety & coping skills, work exploration, and maintaining a job.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Gain youth perspectives on Outside In’s ERC program and culture in order to shape the content of the occupational activities program. Findings will integrate into other available data to guide the implementation of program.

2) Gather data from each session of the occupational activities program in order to further tailor each activity to fit the needs of both the ERC and the youth participants. Research supports the value of youth experiential data for planning; this is often an untapped resource for community service organizations. Spiro (2009) states that, “… clients have a wealth of information regarding the functioning of social service programs, and client satisfaction survey provides the client perspective on those aspects of the service that are important to them” (p.262).

3) Educate Outside In on the unique skills that occupational therapy services can offer in the ERC. The value of occupational therapy at Outside In can be presented through an ERC in-service training and/or organization-wide project.

ACTION PLAN FOR SPRING 2014 (see Appendix E)

1) Observe at ERC and build rapport with youth.

2) Refine program goals and objectives in accordance with information.

3) Utilize interviews and assessments to decide which group activities meet the needs and desires of the youth and the ERC.

4) Pilot chosen activities and gather data.
   a. Gather qualitative and quantitative data via feedback, observation and surveys.
   b. Answer guiding questions: Are activities appropriate? Do they address intended factors?
   c. Expand activities by grading and adapting to fit needs of youth.

5) Report results of the program and implications for ERC.

6) Develop presentation to Outside In about the results of pilot program.
GOALS AND OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

**Outcome:** Increase the percentage of youth participants that achieve long-term gainful employment by enhancing ERC curriculum.

**Goal #1:** Increase the percentage of youth participants that can identify three jobs that they would like to do.
1) Before implementing program activities, youth will provide data about satisfaction with ERC programs in order to develop a baseline.
2) Participants will explore three concepts, environments, and/or occupational roles during the span of the semester.

**Goal #2:** Youth participants will demonstrate improved social interactions with authorities during participation in these group activities.
1) During participation in activities, 90% of participants will meet specific activity goals.
2) With a target 10% increase of satisfaction on a Likert scale, 90% of youth will participate in pre- and post- activity surveys.
3) Participants will identify five positive social skills for an employment setting.

Outcomes will be recorded in a database and formally presented as described to Outside In ERC staff and executive board in May of 2014. Data will outline the value of occupational therapy services to support homeless youth toward meaningful employment.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

2011/12 Annual Report

Outside In
The point of return

Helping homeless youth and other marginalized people move towards improved health and self-sufficiency.

Director's Report
Kathy Oliva, M.D., Executive Director

The mission of Outside In is to help our clients attain health and self-sufficiency. To accomplish our work, support from the community helps us operate a medical clinic and homeless youth services.

Our clinic provides 21,000 medical visits each year to homeless youth and people who have neither money nor health insurance. The clinic is core to our mission, providing quality medical care to help people in poverty lead healthy lives.

Our youth services are core to our mission of helping youth exit street life. We provide a safe, dry place off the streets for Portland's homeless youth along with meals and the message that someone cares about them. Services have excellent outcomes; 89% of youth in housing did not return to the streets, and a remarkable 47 homeless youth attended college.

Thank you to our donors and volunteers. We couldn't meet the needs of the vulnerable people we serve without strong support from the community. We are so grateful for all your contributions.
APPENDIX A – cont.

At a Glance
Snapshot of a Year at Outside In

1,131 homeless youth served
45 youth employed
47 youth attended college
99% housing success rate
35,996 meals provided
7,800 pounds of vegetables served
21,887 medical visits
17 youth earned GEDs

“I volunteer at Virginia Woof, because I love dogs—and everyone else there does too. Being able to support an organization helping homeless youth gain job training is a plus as well. As a full time high school teacher, my time with the dogs and my coworkers at Virginia Woof is actually my time to relax.”

Heidi Bolcara, Virginia Woof Volunteer

Youth Services
Helping Homeless Youth Exit Street Life

We helped 22% more young people than last year, and 89% of youth who graduated from our Transitional Housing program did not return to the streets.

Every day homeless youth come to Outside In for help. The economic struggles of our country are reflected in the increasing volume of people seeking assistance. Outside In helps homeless young people with basic needs such as a place to stay, shower and do laundry, a warm meal, and someone to talk to. Outside In also helps young people move beyond survival to identify and pursue goals for a future. We hold the hope, even when people are hopeless.

We help young people complete their education, get a job, and build health and recovery. This year the youth services staff helped 1,131 homeless youth access resources, develop supportive relationships, and build skills that change lives and create futures.
APPENDIX A – cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONNECT</th>
<th>TRANSFORM</th>
<th>SUCCEED</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program (N of youth)</td>
<td>Program (N of youth)</td>
<td>Program (N of youth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Program (925)</td>
<td>Employment &amp; Education (262)</td>
<td>Transitional Housing (53)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Management (279)</td>
<td>HIV Prevention, Peer Education (166)</td>
<td>Permanent Supportive Housing (33)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol and Drug Treatment (252)</td>
<td>QueerZone, LGBTQ Support (96)</td>
<td>Enrolled in College (47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric (52)</td>
<td>Parenting Supports (54)</td>
<td>Employed in the Community (45)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Homeless youth are resilient. With a small amount of help, they are able to make big changes.

Youth have a great deal to offer our community. Through learning opportunities at Outside In and in the community, homeless youth are building their futures.

Youth make changes in their lives and manifest their hopes and dreams. This year, 262 youth worked on employment and education goals. 47 were enrolled in college, and 45 were employed in the community. 89% of youth who graduated from our Transitional Housing program did not return to the streets.

Suzanne Jones, at left, is working her way to veterinary school after receiving education and employment support and an internship from Virginia Woolf.

Virginia Woolf Dog Daycare
Creating Self-Sufficiency

Homeless youth have an even more challenging time finding employment than young people with family supports. They have likely not been taught the necessary skills to get a job and they don’t have the benefit of landing their first job in the way that many adolescents do — by getting an opportunity from a family friend, a neighbor, a teacher, or another adult advocate. Our Job Training at Virginia Woolf offers youth a foundation from which to build assets, gain experience, learn financial skills, and move into jobs in career tracks.

22 youth received job training.
Volunteers donated more than 3,000 hours to help youth in job training.

The connection between youth and dogs serves as a perfect springboard to teach invaluable employment skills like attendance, punctuality, reliability, and customer service.

Youth are supported by skilled and dedicated case managers who work with them on their housing, health, and education goals. In addition, they attend job readiness trainings covering such topics as searching for employment, resume writing, interviewing, and career planning.

Clinic & Health Services
Health Care for the Homeless, the Young and the Marginalized

For 4,732 people, Outside In is home, their medical home. Every patient has their own care team who understands their situation. Every patient has access to naturopathic care, acupuncture, massage, chiropractors, mental health, substance abuse treatment, and peer support groups to help them sustain their recovery, regain their strength, and manage their health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIMARY CARE and OUTREACH CARE</th>
<th># of visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Care</td>
<td>9,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Medical Care</td>
<td>2,020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>4,139</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative Medicine</td>
<td>3,402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tattoo Removal</td>
<td>1,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee HS Health and Wellness Center</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Visits</td>
<td>21,887</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outside In provides prevention and primary medical care to more than 100 people a day. We help patients manage chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, asthma, depression, and HIV. We help them quit smoking, prevent unwanted pregnancies, and nurture a healthy life.

We provided 21,887 medical visits; 58% of our clinic patients are homeless.
APPENDIX A – cont.

Our syringe exchange reaches people caught in addiction, helps them get into treatment, and prevents overdoses and the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C.

PREVENTION

- Clients Served: 2,670
- Syringes Returned: 402,704
- Syringes Issued: 472,734
- Syringe Return Rate: 103.2%  

Outside In opened a temporary clinic at Milwaukee High School in Clarke County. This center is a fully accredited school-based health center providing medical care, counseling, and dental care to 1,200 students helping them stay healthy, strong, and ready to learn.

Our tattoo removal program, Project Erase, expanded to serve people from all walks of life for whom tattoos are a reminder of past mistakes or a barrier to future goals.

Volunteer Appreciation

Extending Our Reach

Outside In relies on the extraordinary work of volunteers. We appreciate each of the volunteers who collectively contributed 26,416 hours this past fiscal year.

In our annual survey, 100% of volunteers said they would recommend Outside In to a friend who wanted to volunteer, and 97% of volunteers rated their experience in the highest rewarding category.

429 people contributed 26,416 hours, a value of $575,594.

"Volunteering at Outside In has been a mix of fun and meaningful involvement with the homeless youth community. I used to be a client here way back when and I always wanted to come back to volunteer. It's rewarding to get the type of appreciation that I used to give for the delicious free meals we serve."

Ryan Fausz, Food Program Volunteer
## APPENDIX A – cont.

### Financials

Year Ended June 30, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenues, gains, and other support</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions and grants</td>
<td>$8,462,261</td>
<td>Program services</td>
<td>$3,210,001</td>
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<td>Multnomah County</td>
<td>1,075,099</td>
<td>Clinic</td>
<td>2,508,876</td>
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<td>Wootsystems, Inc.</td>
<td>91,875</td>
<td>Youths</td>
<td>2,508,876</td>
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<td>City of Portland</td>
<td>268,530</td>
<td>Virginia Wood Dog Daycare</td>
<td>450,758</td>
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<td>Federal</td>
<td>2,625,257</td>
<td>Management and general</td>
<td>1,016,429</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gifts in-kind</td>
<td>222,136</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>63,897</td>
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<td>Interest and dividends</td>
<td>8,793</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7,242,656</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia Wood Dog Daycare salaries</td>
<td>490,947</td>
<td>Net assets</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>OTHER REVENUE</td>
<td>1,551,055</td>
<td>Decrease in net assets</td>
<td>(1,25,703)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$7,989,953</td>
<td>Net assets, beginning of year</td>
<td>6,084,260</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Net assets, end of year</td>
<td>$5,982,557</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Thank you. Your contributions matter.

Leadership Team

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Zared Ramada, Zared@Outsideln.org

Board of Directors

Beth Aronson, Celeste Muns, Craig Jackson, Dave Swindells
Gail Brown, John Brenderich, Nancy Guy, Peter Musick, Sally Walton,
Sara Reiss, Ralph Davis

[www.Outsideln.org](http://www.Outsideln.org)
### SWOT Analysis of Outside In

#### Strengths

**40 years of experience** → Outside In has been in operation since 1968; the Education Resource Center (ERC) has been in operation for 25+ years; longevity

**Well known in Metro area** → Outside In is part of Street Roots Rose City Resource book ([www.rosecityresource.org](http://www.rosecityresource.org)); Outside In is also part of the Homeless Youth Continuum; They are well known in the community with 200+ youth accessing ERC programming each year

**Dedicated staff** → Outside In has 3 main long term staff members: the education director has been at Outside In for 9 years

**Wide variety of services provided** → service themes include: housing, education, employment, skill building, medical care, healthy meals, counseling, recreation, and art

**Large physical space** → ERC has a conference room, 2 classrooms classroom, a computer lab, and administrative office space

**Understand youth and street culture** → consistency is important factor when establishing rapport with youth

**High management team staff retention rate**

**Community partnerships** →
- Homeless Youth Continuum (HYC) includes New Avenues for Youth, Outside In, Janus Youth Programs, & Native American Youth and Family Center; HYC goals are to “meet the basic safety and developmental needs of homeless youth in Multnomah County
- Project Metamorphosis is collaboration of Janus Youth Programs, New Avenues for Youth, Outside In, and De Paul Treatment Centers; Metamorphosis provides services that address alcohol, drug, and mental health challenges; [http://yellowbrickroadoutreach.blogspot.com/2006/10/project-metamorphosis_05.html](http://yellowbrickroadoutreach.blogspot.com/2006/10/project-metamorphosis_05.html)

**Occupational Activities Binder** → has activities specifically designed to complement the ERC’s work-readiness programming; activity themes include: habits, roles & routines, managing finances & budgeting, leisure exploration, social engagement, and a career spotlight)

#### Weaknesses

**Volunteer dependence** → volunteer screening does not require formal training for how to guide youth from homelessness to self-sufficiency; volunteers are not as consistently there vs. paid staff

**Trust harder to earn with population served**

**Limited hours on weekends** → few Outside In programs are open on the weekend; Healthy meals only serves 2 meals/day on weekends vs. 3/day on weekdays; ERC is closed on the weekends
### APPENDIX B – cont.

| Needs of homeless youth population larger than can be filled by Outside In → youth must self-advocate and individually seek multiple services to meet their diverse needs (i.e. housing) |
| No clear evidence on intervention techniques specific to homeless youth → a challenge to track long term progress of youth |
| Occupational Activities Binder → Does not have all materials and tools to facilitate each activity; binder/activities are not formally published (available to others, have copyright permission) |

| **Opportunities** |
| **Interconnect with other city services to create a wider net** → potential for collaboration with other youth employment programs, transitional employment program, and community mental health programs |
| **Large community interest in volunteering** → Outside In holds regular volunteer trainings; September 2013 training had approx. 10 interested community members; many Outside In programs have volunteer wait lists |
| **Relationships with local universities to develop more programming** → Pacific eye clinic, PsyD program, PCC horticultural program, etc. |
| **Affordable Care Act will allow health clinic to bill for services because more clients will have health insurance** → Outside In will be less reliant on private and government monetary donations |
| **Occupational Activities Binder** → can be edited and expanded upon over the 2013-2014 project term |

| **Threats** |
| **Cultural stigma around homelessness and substance abuse** → Youth may fear embarrassment or isolation from others that know they are homeless or seen utilizing services |
| **Outside funding dependence has potential for instability** → $4,000,000 of the $7,000,000 budget relies on government funding |
| **Controversial programming could create donor conflict and/or poor community image** |
| **Transient nature of youth can prevent thorough evaluation of Outside In programming** |
| **High potential for staff burnout** |
| **Outside In puts a lot of resources into volunteers who are under no obligation to stay with the organization** |
Outside In Through the Lens of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory
APPENDIX D

Outside In Through the Lens of the Kawa River Model

The kawa river model is a client-driven model with a community focus and non-individualistic lens (Iwama, 2006). It is difficult to piece apart Outside In from the youth as the client in this model view, so here they are integrated both ways as visuals. The overview river (on the left) has a Portland area theme with Outside In as a bridge for the lives (river) of youth passing through. The bridge spans from the stormy grey bank to the clearer side. Up river, closer to birth, begin the many environmental contexts that narrow the kawa no souk heki to kawa no zoku (river walls and floor). For example, family pressures and mental illness can often lead to youth being at-risk for homelessness. As the already narrowed river continues it becomes more disrupted; leading into substance abuse, occupational deprivation, and eventually homelessness. Once the boulder (Iwa) of homelessness is met, Outside In becomes a structure to help widen and soothe the river flow. Cognitive skills, placed beneath the bridge, are skills that both Outside In and Pacific University students will address. The goal for Outside In is that as the youth pass by their bridge, their river becomes wider and more full as youth transition into healthy adulthood.
The second kawa model visual (on the right) is a cross-section of the river. Here the focus is more on Outside In as the client, with the youth still an integral part. The cross-section is integrated into the larger overview piece to address how intertwined the two views can be. Pictured in this cross section are the kawa model’s four main components:

**Water (Mizu):** This element represents life and the will to live. In this image, imagine that the youth are the water itself, passing through and guided by the structures. Some of the driftwood (Ryuboku) and boulders (Iwa) might have been carried there by the youth, and some might be left behind as they graduate through. The youth as the client is integral not only to Outside In’s meaning but also what defines them, the “life” of the organization. The spaces seen in blue are the areas where flow is maintained; this model describes these spaces as occupational therapy.

**Driftwood (Ryuboku):** This element represents assets and liabilities. This part can be challenging to understand, as something that stands out about Ryuboku is the duality of their nature. Each piece of driftwood carries benefits and harms, and the model’s focus is more on balance than “curing” them. An example here is Outside In’s harm reduction philosophy (Outside In, 2013). Outside In’s Needle Exchange program meets individuals where they are at without giving them an ultimatum to quit using before they can receive support services. This model can also be unpopular in the medical community. Outside In might experience some stigma for not aligning with other abstinence-based approaches to addiction.

**Boulders (Iwa):** Iwa represents problems, often within one’s own body or experience. Here the boulders represent a lot of the struggles youth and Outside In are trying to navigate. External contexts, for example homophobia and the displacement of LGBTQ youth into homelessness, can compound a boulder problem and result in lack of support or occupational deprivation. In the image, the ‘occupational deprivation’ boulder is actively being broken down. Kawa describes this as a direct intervention approach. The occupational activities program aims to expand youth’s access and ability to expand their occupations.

**Environment (Torimaki):** The environments that shape and guide the river are depicted as the riverbanks and bed. Much like occupational therapy’s guiding framework, the OTPF, the kawa model addresses many environmental contexts (AOTA, 2008). The torimaki encompasses the physical environment (i.e. Outside In’s building), social environment (i.e. Medicaid), and cultural environment (i.e. stigma). The riverbed here is large, exemplifying that the environment is important to Outside In. They provide crucial structure that enables their participants to then address issues such as job training, counseling, and education.

References:


APPENDIX E

PROPOSED ACTION PLAN TIMELINE FOR SPRING 2014

- **Jan.** Observe at ERC and build rapport with youth
- **Jan.-Feb.** Refine program goals and objectives in accordance with information as collected
- **Feb.** Utilize interviews and assessments to decide which group activities meet the needs and desires of the youth and the ERC
- **Mar.-Apr.** Pilot chosen activities and gather data
- **Apr.** Report back how the program went and implications for ERC
- **Apr.-May** Develop presentation to Outside In about the results of pilot
Section III: Literature Review #1

Mason Munson, OTS
Skill Acquisition and Adolescent Transitions from Homelessness

Mason Munson, OTDS

OTD 680

Pacific University
Adolescent homelessness is a worldwide sociological problem, defined as youth lacking adequate nighttime residence or taking shelter in structures not intended for human occupation (Slesnick, Dashora, Letcher, Erdem, & Serovich, 2009). Literature connecting the multi-faceted nature of the homeless adolescents’ needs was utilized in this review to gather a broader view of identified programs. Intervention services and designs addressing at-risk youth, alternative education programs that frequently serve homeless adolescents, and street youth specific programming were included in the criteria; as each of these areas relate to the demographics of the population in question. In light of the wide scope of this review, it is important to remember that homeless youth are a diverse population. As with any client group, these youth require tailored interventions as they differ in values, interests, and experiences (Slesnick et al., 2009).

Adolescents experiencing homelessness represent an especially vulnerable group, often escaping “from conflict-laden, violent, and dysfunctional families” into the chaos of life on the streets (Cauce & Charles, 1994, p.219). The situation these youth face is highlighted in a paper exploring youth experiences, stating: “[t]he majority of street youth spoke of street life as a safer space than their previous environments, suggesting the traumatic or horrific experiences that lead young people to the street” (Karabanow, 2008, p.786). Further complicating these troubled beginnings is the overwhelming lack of support and cultural stigma homeless youth face in their communities. Marginalization and deprivation are themes that are found in the literature regularly, as these “youth exist within excluded realms: They are a traumatized population … Everything about being young and homeless inspires critical and often demeaning responses from others in mainstream society” (Karabanow, 2008, p.786).
Emerging Adulthood

This paper looks at what research literature identifies as the most critical skills needed by these adolescents to move into healthy adulthood, and what implications to practice these findings support. The developmental age of transitioning into adult roles and responsibilities is what Arnett (2000) describes as “emerging adulthood.” This stage, which is often unique to industrialized communities, is a critical time for exploration and autonomous skill development (D’Amico, Barnes, Gilbert, Ryan, & Wenzel, 2009). Arnett (2000) states, “the years from the late teens through the twenties are years of profound change and importance. During this time, many young people obtain the level of education and training that will provide the foundation for their incomes and occupational achievements for the remainder of their adult work lives” (p.469).

The potential long ranging impact of decisions made during emerging adulthood in combination with the occupational deprivation and substance abuse trends experienced by many homeless youth makes effective services at this time especially important (Hester & Yucel, 2009). These life experiences are alarming especially in light of what research shows about neurological growth and functioning. Exposure to psychologically and physically damaging environments, poor nutrition, and extensive resource deprivation during times of critical development, such as adolescence, may further entrap homeless youth into lifelong patterns (Arnett, 2000; Cauce et al., 1994; D’Amico et al., 2009; Densley & Joss, 2000; Hester et al., 2009; Karabanow, 2008; Pharo, Sim, Graham, Gross & Hayne, 2011; Slesnick et al., 2009). A paper exploring innovative treatments with street youth remarks on these long term effects, stating “the child may develop the problem-solving skills, ingenuity and informal skills necessary to survive on the streets, he is clearly limited… the longer they spend on the street the
greater the likelihood that they will show signs of cognitive and emotional dysfunction” (Densley et al., 2000, p.221).

While the potential risks during this time are clear, this transitional period can also be used to the benefit of youth participants. Youth interviewed about their experiences in transitioning away from homelessness describe an internal shift in thinking was part of how they finally moved off the streets (Karabanow, 2008). Interventions targeted at this naturally shifting developmental stage have the potential to tip this exploratory time into an opportunity for healthy guided discovery.

**Interventions Identified**

Exiting homelessness is a complex task that requires not only tangible life skills but also “emotional and spiritual shifts within the individual” (Karabanow, 2008, p.784). Literature reveals program trends that correlate with both higher success rates and positives reports from youth participants. The hallmarks of these interventions are that they incorporate caring relationships, include strategies to increase occupational exposure, and focus on executive functioning skills. These factors when utilized thoughtfully have potential to guide these youth during this transitional time by supporting their social, emotional, and cognitive growth.

Learning more about this population, and especially the highly correlated need for long-term caring service relationships, is critical to providing interventions that are both sensitive and evidence based (Arnold & Rotheram-Borus, 2008; Cauce et al., 1994; D’Amico et al., 2009; Densley et al., 2000; Karabanow, 2008; Milburn et al., 2012; Slesnick et al., 2009). The profound impact of services that are “flexible and forgiving, allowing youths to ‘try and fail and try again,’ just as they would be allowed to do within a family context” aids in breaking the
cyclical patterns of criticism and punishment these youth receive about their homeless status, the very factor that might be keeping them on the streets (Slesnick et al., 2009, p.741).

Homeless youth often have minimal opportunities to explore occupational routines and roles (AOTA, 2008). Without being introduced to the concepts of healthy leisure and fulfilling vocations, or having experienced past failures in these areas, youth are often unable to meaningfully engage with these activities (Dirette & Kolak, 2004). Presenting these experiences alone will often not be sufficient to overcome this barrier, as youth need strategies on how to replace old “entrapping niches” with new supportive routines (Arnold et al., 2008). Occupational therapy can actively introduce different experiences, and create groups that encourage reflection on those events to shape personal goals and meanings (Cramm, Krupa, Missiuna, Lysaught, & Parker, 2013; Toglia & Berg, 2013).

The development and practice of executive function skills is a natural match for an occupational therapists’ role in working with this client population. This paper looks further into defining executive functioning, and what research suggests about how this skill base correlates with long term benefits.

**Executive Functioning**

Research has identified executive functioning as both a consistent area of deficit and key skill area needed for successful transition to healthy adulthood for homeless adolescents. Executive functioning, described as “the cognitive processes associated with an individual’s ability to carry out goal directed behavior including judgment, impulse control, self-monitoring, and planning,” are higher level cognitive processes (Pharo et al., 2011, p.971). The diffuse neurological nature of executive control makes these skills especially vulnerable to the effects of
trauma and substance abuse; two major challenges homeless adolescents often face (Arnett, 2000; Hester et al., 2009; Karabanow, 2008; Toglia et al., 2013; Pharo et al., 2011).

These factors support an executive functioning focus within services. Identified skills include: time management, following multi-step process, higher level thinking, attention, self-reflection, problem solving skills, evaluating situations, negotiating solutions and implementing them, identifying goals and interests, learning from experiences, budgeting, and long term planning, (Cauce et al., 1994; Dirette et al., 2004; Karabanow, 2008; Milburn, Iribarren, Rice, Lightfoot, Solorio, Rotheram-Borus, & Duan, 2012). Prioritizing these abilities will improve participants’ ability to seek out occupations in the present, as well as provide them skills to move forward in the future independently.

Executive functions such as these not only have concrete applications to work and education, they also play a critical part of a youth’s ability to self-reflect and shift thinking patterns (Arnold et al., 2009; Cramm et al., 2013; Dirette et al., 2004; Karabanow, 2008; Toglia et al., 2013). These “interrelated dimensions” of successfully transitioning to adulthood include contemplation and motivation as impetus for positive change in the adolescents’ environments, sense of self, and routines (AOTA, 2008; Karabanow, 2008).

Research

Research in this area presents a broad picture of the mechanisms at work that lead to adolescent homelessness. Abundant data on the detrimental effects of homelessness on these youth is available, as is the identified need for them to learn skills. Research is needed to provide further details into what skills are specifically beneficial, what delivery system is found to be most effective, and longitudinal data to support these parameters. A “surprising neglect on the part of the academic community to complete the analysis of street youth career patterns”
leaves the question of what is best practice in relationship to the details of homeless adolescent service programming incompletely answered (Karabanow, 2008, p. 772).

Further externally valid qualitative research is additionally needed to learn more about the actual impact of programs designed to serve homeless youth. In an article reviewing services and interventions, Slesnick et al. (2009) suggests the need for action based research. This research style integrates actual members of the population being studied into the process, as these individuals have an understanding of the subject that no outside observer could fully understand. Including youth in the research process not only creates clinically sound evidence but also creates an opportunity for the youth to practice advocacy and reflection skills (Karabanow, 2008).

**Implications for Practice**

The broad needs of these youth make the holistic services of an occupational therapist an ideal intervention. A review of innovative treatments for street children summarized the population as at “risk for physical, emotional, social, and cognitive violation[s], these children are in need of interventions that appropriately address their needs in the context of their environment” (Densley et al., 2000). The scope of occupational therapy addresses these needs as it focuses on both environmental contexts and also clients’ unique factors (AOTA, 2008; Dirette et al., 2004). Interventions should include the introduction of healthier leisure options and promote occupational exploration. Research supports that guiding youth into new behaviors instead of trying to directly extinguish old habits gains better results and promotes a more therapeutic service relationship (Cramm et al., 2013; Dirette et al., 2004; Karabanow, 2008; Toglia et al., 2013). Most critical in practice is the need for cognitive skill focused services that can address an adolescent’s unique barriers and strengths while fostering trust and respect.
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Section IV: Literature Review #2

Martha Wegner, OTS
Efficacy of Group Therapy for At-Risk Youth: A Literature Review

Martha Wegner, OTDS

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Effective interventions for at-risk youth are an ongoing debate in academic literature. There are endless approaches, including group therapy, which can be used to meet the unique needs of the at-risk youth population. At-risk youth is an umbrella term that describes vulnerable youth. It includes youth characterized by low economic status, youth who are homeless, adolescents who have mental health issues and/or are disabled, individuals from ethnic minorities, and youth who are vulnerable to abuse and/or delinquency. Homeless youth are at risk for engagement in substance use, illegal or delinquent activities, and risky sexual behaviors (Xiang, 2013). Children who have been sexually abused are at risk of psychological, behavioral, and relationship problems, as well as various psychiatric disorders (Cotgrove & Kolvin, 1993).

This population is in need of intervention, and the best interest of a child “is a very delicate question, that seems difficult to answer globally. How to be the best child is at the end something that is experienced and answered by an individual child in her/his everyday practice of friendship, family, religious life. Notwithstanding, this answer is not fully trusted upon by adults” (Berckmans, Velasco, Tapia, & Loots, 2012). In an effort to understand the efficacy of group therapy for at-risk youth, this paper will specifically evaluate empirical evidence of group versus individual therapy formats, as well as, include information on implications of group dynamics in a group therapy format.

**Literature Search**

Articles were selected through a computerized literature search via Medline-Ovid, Cinahl, and PSYCHinfo. Studies in English language were included and there were no restrictions on year of publication. Abstracts and titles were retrieved by cross-referencing the following terms: at-risk, youth, adolescent(s), homeless youth, group intervention, individual
intervention, intervention, peer-based intervention, group psychotherapy, and individual psychotherapy. Additional articles were identified from the reference lists of retrieved articles. Articles included in the review process needed to contain data on at-risk youth as a whole and/or a specific adolescent population that is at-risk. In the process 500+ titles, 50+ abstracts, 40+ articles were considered for inclusion in the literature review. In the end, 17 articles have been cited in the reference list.

**Group vs. Individual Therapy**

Research has given little attention to the evaluation of group versus individual therapy formats for at-risk youth, partly due to the fact that at-risk youth can be a challenge to study. In a systematic review by Altena, Brilleslijper-Kater, and Wolf (2010), seven out of eleven studies included in the review received a poor quality rating due to small sample sizes ($n < 50$), nonrandomized procedures, and low retention rates ($< 80\%$). These are common limitations for studies of at-risk youth. Moreover, many studies with at-risk youth are not designed to isolate group versus individual measures. Best evidence for evaluating the efficacy of group versus individual therapy formats involves researchers running uniform intervention protocols with two groups of at-risk youth; one group receives group therapy and the other receives individual therapy (Flannery-Schroeder and Kendall, 2000; Nolan et al., 2002; Rosselló, Bernal, and River-Medina, 2008; Trowell et al., 2002). Out of the research conducted for this literature review, four articles met the above-mentioned criteria.

Rosselló, Bernal, and River-Medina (2008) used a randomized control trial to study the effectiveness of group and individual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with adolescents that had depressive symptoms. Both treatment modalities proved to be effective with no statistically
significant differences in outcome measures when the two groups were compared. However, calculation of the effect size measured .18 for individual versus group formats, inferring that the average participant in individual CBT benefitted by 54% more compared to those that received group treatment. Flannery-Schroeder and Kendall (2000) conducted a study with a comparable design that investigated group and individual CBT for youth with anxiety disorders; similarly both interventions demonstrated improved measures for the youth. Study participants in the individual CBT group self-reported an improved state of anxiety compared to the group CBT participants that did not echo this testimonial.

Other research has evaluated group versus individual therapy formats for adolescents that have been abused. In a randomized control trial, Trowell et al. (2002) compared individual psychotherapy and psychoeducational group therapy outcomes for sexually abused children. The study measured global impairment, three dimensions of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and psychiatric disorder(s). While both groups generated substantial improvements, analysis of covariance at the two-year follow-up revealed three statistically significant measures specific to PTSD in favor of individual therapy. Hetzel-Riggin, Brausch, & Montgomery’s (2007) took a closer look at the efficacy of interventions for adolescents and children that had been impacted by child abuse in a meta-analytic study. They concluded through an evaluation of twenty-eight studies, that individual therapy had the largest effect size on psychological distress, while group therapy was most effective for behavior outcomes. This data is valuable to consider when making the decision between implementing group and/or individual therapy; however, more research is needed on this topic. Research does not yet encompass a broad range of treatment modalities and/or types of at-risk youth populations. In order to more thoroughly evaluate the efficacy of group versus individual therapy modalities, researchers must broaden the scope of
their studies and include more treatment modalities (i.e. life skill acquisition) and more at-risk populations (i.e. homeless youth, adjudicated youth, etc.) in the pool of available research. Moreover, incentives for at-risk youth can be considered in order to complete studies with larger sample sizes and higher retention rates. Until more research is done, it is not possible to conclude the efficacy of group versus individual treatment formats.

**Dynamics of Group Therapy Interventions**

A group atmosphere has a unique and dynamic way to support youth development. Peers that share similar experiences can validate another’s reality; self-esteem can increase as youth feel value within the group; honest confrontation in a safe atmosphere provides an opportunity to adapt behavioral responses; and a sense of closeness and acceptance overtime can develop among group members (Hritz & Gabow, 1997). Moreover, establishment of identity, self-esteem, and self-image, as well as, development of intimacy and independence from family are factors that tend to be enhanced in a group atmosphere (Aronson, 2004). Peer therapy groups may result in beneficial effects, particularly when the group involves prosocial adolescents (Hudley & Graham, 1993). This opportunity for prosocial feedback and discussion are unique to group therapy and valuable for youth (Leary et al, 2002).

While the positive implications of group therapy are of value, there are also elements of the group format that present challenges during the therapeutic process. Individuals in early adolescent years can be influenced by deviant peers and inadvertently reinforce problem behaviors (Dishion, McCord, & Poulin, 1999). In a study by Zakriski, Wright, and Cardoos (2011), they correlated peer-influenced deviant talk with behavioral treatment outcomes. Furthermore, resistance to group therapy can occur due to feeling a lack of privacy, trepidation
of losing control, diminished sense of individualism, feeling exposed in front of others, lack of safety, fear of being criticized, and stigma expressed as humiliation (Piper, 2008; Shechtman, Vogel, and Maman, 2010). Rosselló, Bernal, and River-Medina’s (2008) echo this point with clinical observations in their study of adolescents. They stated “many adolescents were somewhat reluctant to enter the group format due to issues in confidentiality, particularly if there were students from their own high school in the group” (p. 242). These feelings of trepidation and resistance are not eliminated in an individual therapy format; however, they tend to play a more significant role in a group environment. Challenges and opportunities of group therapy are important to understand. Research would benefit from further studies on this topic, as well as, examination of the role, experience, and performance of the group facilitator in overseeing the group process.

**Conclusion**

In order to establish a better-rounded conclusion for the efficacy of group therapy for at-risk youth, more research is needed. More studies need to be conducted that isolate group versus individual therapy factors. Studies can prioritize follow-up measurements with youth participants in order to better understand the long-term effects of group therapy. The articles included in this literature review are heavily focused on psychotherapy interventions. More professions, such as occupational therapy, need to study this topic with their unique group treatment modalities for youth. Until then, it will remain unclear which modalities of group therapy intervention are effective with specific populations of at-risk youth.
References


Section V: Overview of Project Implementation

Mason Munson, OTS
Martha Wegner, OTS
Overview of Project Implementation

A core element of this project implementation involved weekly groups held on site at the Employment and Education Resource Center (ERC). Occupational therapy students met with a varying group of volunteer youth participants to provide group interventions tailored to their needs and current progression through the ERC curriculum. A wide variety of topics and activities were implemented and ranged from time management skills to community outings. In accordance with current evidence and the findings of the project's predecessors a focus on executive functioning, resiliency, and healthy routines were woven throughout the process. Activity descriptions and a sample activity plan are listed below:

**ACTIVITY 1 – Occupational Collage**

This activity was adapted from the *Newspaper Collage* activity module in George and Brigden’s (2013) *A Developmental Approach to Work Readiness*. The purpose was for each youth to brainstorm different occupations they currently perform and/or would like to perform in the future, and include images and symbols of those activities in a personal collage. After creation of individual collages, the youth had an opportunity to present their collage to the group and engage in a conversation about occupations that interest them. Simultaneously, this introductory activity served as a valuable tool to present the vast occupational concepts that encompass the occupational therapy framework.

**ACTIVITY 2 – Getting Out the Door**

This activity was adapted from the *Getting Out the Door* activity module in George and Brigden’s *A Developmental Approach to Work Readiness*. The purpose of this activity was for youth to identify the organizational skills necessary for arriving to an event on time. Youth categorized all relevant tasks they needed to perform in order to “get out the door” on time, as well as, problem-solved strategies to implement in the future in order to increase their occupational performance. Connections to the youths’ current ERC curriculum focus on arriving the appointments and interviews on time were reinforced through reflection.

**ACTIVITY 3 – My Personal River**

The goal of the “My Personal River” activity was to guide participants in outlining their personal strengths, challenges, supports, and future goals in a visual review format. Using the Kawa River Model’s life river activity (2006) as a guiding principle, participants created their own life rivers that highlight their experiences in a way that creates a picture of who they are and where they are going. Conversations included the changing and forward nature of a river, how to learn from past challenges and frame them as strengths, and how to use self-reflective skills to learn more about themselves as individuals.
**ACTIVITY 4 – How I Spend My Time**
This activity was adapted from the *How I Spend My Time* activity module in George and Brigden’s (2013) *A Developmental Approach to Work Readiness*. The purpose of this activity was for youth to create a visual schedule of how they spend their time and energy so that youth can reflect upon occupations that: create stress, bring them stress relief, make them happy, whether or not their week feels balanced, and what would help their week feel more balanced. At the close of the activity, each youth was invited to make a life balance goal to adjust their week and report back at next week’s group.

**ACTIVITY 5 – Prepare a Healthy Group Meal: Brainstorm**
The purpose of this activity was to implement the first stage of a three-part activity where youth aim to identify and implement all necessary steps to preparing a healthy meal as a group. Youth participates identified the steps to plan the healthy meal project, sequenced the steps, and defined the details of each step. Additionally, youth shared thoughts on meals and health, described personal beliefs about nutrition, and taste tested a variety of foods while discussing food preferences.

**ACTIVITY 6 – Prepare a Healthy Group Meal: Budgeting**
The purpose of this activity was to implement the second stage of a three-part activity where youth aim to identify and apply all necessary steps to preparing a healthy meal as a group. Youth agreed on a healthy meal to prepare as a group, identified needed ingredients and tools for the meal, and developed a shopping list with an itemized budget. Executive functioning skills such as planning, categorization, and peer collaboration were highlighted within the tasks. This activity offered an opportunity for group members to share opinions on healthy meal options and individual ingredients, and ultimately come to a group consensus.

**ACTIVITY 7 – Prepare a Healthy Group Meal: Community Outing & Group Preparation**
The purpose of this activity was to implement the final stage of a three-part activity where youth identified and implemented all the necessary steps to preparing a healthy meal as a group. Youth planned and participated in a functional outing to the grocery store, prepared a tuna salad sandwich and fruit salad meal, and joined in on a shared lunch experience. Youth were educated on proper hand washing techniques, food hygiene procedures, and safe knife handling skills. Youth reviewed healthy meal planning, nutrition, and food budgeting while sharing a social meal.

**ACTIVITY 8 – Group Wrap Up/Positive Regard**
The purpose of this activity was to bring closure to the Occupational Exploration group while introducing principles of resiliency and positive regard. Youth were provided with personal notebooks in which group members wrote positive messages and observations about each other. Messages were prompted by some optional questions in relation to resiliency and addressed strengths, trust, and growth.
SAMPLE ACTIVITY PLAN

**Group Title:**
Personal Reflection

**Activity:**
My Personal River

**Purpose:**
The goal of the “My Personal River” activity is to guide participants in outlining their personal strengths, challenges, supports, and future goals in a visual review format. Using the Kawa River Model’s life river activity as a guiding principle, participants will create their own life rivers that highlight their experiences in a way that creates a picture of who they are and where they are going. Conversations will include the changing and forward nature of a river, how to learn from past challenges and frame them as strengths, and how to use self-reflective skills to learn more about themselves as individuals.

**Supplies:**
Paper
Colored pencils, paints, or crayons
Construction paper
Scissors
Glue
Pens, paints or pencils

**Steps:**
1. Introduce concepts of the Kawa river model to participants and provide examples as needed (See worksheet and guiding concepts).
2. Explain group goal to participants to create their own personal rivers. Emphasize to group that sharing is voluntary and respect for privacy will be maintained.
3. Provide papers to each participant and have them choose from a wide variety of mark making supplies.
4. Allow a minimum of 30 minutes for participants to explore their images or writings as they choose.
5. When applicable group leaders should create rivers as well or be available to help with guiding questions and problem solving.
6. Once completed interested participants can present their rivers and describe their process to others.
6. Use reflection time to allow participants and leaders both to provide positive feedback and foster connections between past challenges and current strengths.

**Space Requirements:**
A quiet room or space with a table and enough chairs for each participant to have a surface to draw on. Privacy in the form of a door or separate room will support the sharing of personal stories that might be sensitive in nature.
**Kawa Model Worksheet**

**River – Kawa**
The Kawa Model gives you a metaphor for looking at the barriers in your life and identifying your strengths for navigating around challenges and problems that may interact with your environment. The river is a symbol for life course. It begins in the highest elevations (birth) and can transform into streams, brooks, creeks, with flowing into the ocean as its final destination (end of life).

![Kawa Model Diagram](http://kawamodel.com/concept-and-structure)

**Water – Mizu (life energy)**
As the water in the review, your life is connected to everything: family, friends, work, and the environment. In an ideal state of wellbeing, the river will be seen strong, deep, and uninterrupted.

**River Bottom – Torimaki (environment)**
The river bottom and wall represent your social and physical environments. Social environment is people who share a direct relationship with you, including pets, friends, family, workmates, deceased persons/pets whose memory influences your life, etc. These influences can effect the overall flow (volume and rate) of the river.

**Rocks – Iwa (problems)**
Iwa represents challenges that are problematic to one’s life flow. They are various sizes, shapes, and numbers and are usually difficult to remove. Some rocks are new and some may have been in your river since birth. Rocks can get jammed and slow the river flow.

**Driftwood – Ryuboku (personal attributes and resources)**
These river elements can positively and/or negatively affect circumstances of the life flow; driftwood can flow with the current of the river and it can get caught up in rocky areas. Sometimes they can collide with other structures to nudge obstructions out of the way.

Below are examples of types of Ryuboku:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Positive Effect</th>
<th>Negative effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future expectations</td>
<td>Goals; something to look forward to</td>
<td>A source of frustration, stress, and worry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>Resourceful</td>
<td>Stress, not enough resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stubbornness</td>
<td>Determined to succeed</td>
<td>Source of frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance abuse</td>
<td>Social connections</td>
<td>Decreased motivation, illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health challenges</td>
<td>Sense of wellbeing, confident</td>
<td>Despair, decreased energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to the city</td>
<td>Convenient, access to programs</td>
<td>Lack of support, stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Self-advocate, true to beliefs</td>
<td>Hard to admit mistakes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guiding Concepts based on the Kawa Model (Iwama, 2006)

- Discuss the Kawa’s focus. Instead of the drive to control and change our circumstance, one alternative is to find ways to live in harmony with them.

- Wellness and challenge affect us as a whole and we are all parts of a whole, we cannot separate ourselves from our environments and we cannot separate the environment from ourselves. Just as a river changes and flows to accept the banks and boulders, our lives change and flow in response to what is around us. We do not stop being who we are, just as the river remains a river. What you have flowed through in the beginning of your river shapes your journey but does not always define who you are in the moment. Who you will be in the future might also change; banks deepen, boulders appear, lakes are formed, and your river moves forward.

- With youth focus on concept of “me IN the world” and not “me AGAINST the world”. This shift in view can address the marginalization of the youth and bring them back to the inherent truth that they cannot be removed from the world, and the world cannot be taken from them. What they can focus on is their ability to flow and direct their responses.
  - What sort of river would you like to be?
  - What elements would create that flow for them?
  - How can the river (you) flow and change to accommodate what cannot be changed?

- It is important for the client to identify parts of their lives as a rock, driftwood, or bank and not the leader. This process highlights their personal experience of the elements and can guide future approaches taken.

References

Section VI: Summary of Results

Mason Munson, OTS
Martha Wegner, OTS
Occupational Therapy’s Impact

Occupational Exploration and Transitional Youth

Who we are

- Doctor of occupational therapy students at Pacific University
- Holistic service approach to address youth’s current and future needs
- Continuation of a multi-year community partnership with Outside In
What we did

- Organization and population review
  - Evaluated evidence based literature
  - Developed pilot program

- Occupational Exploration group
  - Tailored weekly group to youth needs
  - Implemented 9 groups over 3 months
  - Maintained average 3-4 youth participants

- 1-on-1 sessions with youth
  - Facilitated personal goal setting
  - Administered individualized assessments
  - Promoted practical skill development

- Occupational Role Collage
- Getting Out the Door
- My Personal River
- How I Spend My Time
- Make a Healthy Lunch
  - Brainstorm group
  - Budgeting group
  - Community outing
- Resiliency- Final group
What we found

- Population we engaged
  Youth quote: “being an adult means knowing how to do all the stuff that our parents never taught us.”

- Transitional emerging adults
  - About to age out with uncertainty of next step
  - Lack of adult skills

- Occupational therapy addresses the broad needs of youth
  - Executive functioning
  - Mental health
  - Environmental modifications
  - Engagement in meaningful occupations

Needs Identified

- One-on-One therapeutic support
  - Cognitive, physical, and educational assessments
  - Goal attainment
  - Facilitation of transition

- Occupational balance

- Address occupational deprivation
**Opportunities**

- Provide occupational therapy services
- Mentorship Program (ASPIRE)
- Connection to IDEA transition services
- Further partnerships with Universities

**Occupational Therapy as an Option**

- Natural fit – impacted youth in need of unique supports, occupational therapy can compliment Outside In services
- Gentle approach – increase therapeutic services to foster healthy relationships
- Healthcare reform – youth access to health insurance and billable services
Reimbursement for Occupational Therapy services in the ERC (CMS, 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPT Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Reimbursement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97530</td>
<td>Therapeutic Activities</td>
<td>$39 each 15 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97532</td>
<td>Development of cognitive skills to improve attention, memory, and problem solving</td>
<td>$30 each 15 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97535</td>
<td>Self-care/home management training</td>
<td>$39 each 15 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>97510</td>
<td>Group therapy</td>
<td>Dependent on #</td>
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<tr>
<td>97003</td>
<td>Occupational therapy evaluation</td>
<td>$95 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96125</td>
<td>Standardized cognitive performance testing</td>
<td>$127 each</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A fulltime occupational therapist at the ERC working at 70% productivity (direct intervention 28 hrs/wk) could bring $3,800/week.
At first look-
- Art
- Self-expression
- Sharing of stories

Kawa River Model

Behind our lens-
- Clinical observations
- Self-reflection
- Goal setting
- Identification of resources and barriers
- Problem solving
- Recognizing challenges as strengths (connection to resumes and scholarships)
- Rapport building
- Therapeutic positive regard
- Metacognition

Codes- 97350, 97532, 97510
Thank You

These are some big ideas, what do you think?

REFERENCES
