

ENHANCING MIDDLE SCHOOLERS' SELF-DETERMINATION THROUGH INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION

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OBJECTIVES

1. To describe contextual-based interventions and interprofessional collaboration (IPC) as occupational therapy best practices for promoting self-determination in middle school students with severe developmental disabilities from a sample project implemented at a middle school special day class
2. To describe the benefits and challenges of a collaborative model of service delivery in facilitating participation and engagement in occupations among students with severe developmental disabilities and promoting professional development among school-based practitioners and classroom staff.

SCHOOL-BASED OT IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS

- Focus on occupation-based and top-down intervention
- Goal: to improve independence in critical skills, especially in students with severe disabilities
- Academics, play and leisure, social participation, self-care skills, ADLs, and transition/work skills
- Best practices: interprofessional collaboration and context-based interventions for the development of functional skills, including self-determination
- Remedial to compensatory approaches



CONTEXTUAL-BASED INTERVENTIONS (CBIS)

Interventions are provided according to an individual's CONTEXT

OTPF-4: *environmental* and *personal* factors specific to each client (person, group, population)

- **function + engage comfortably** within a distinct combination of contexts (AOTA, 2020)

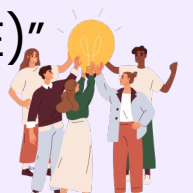


relevant and meaningful participation in occupations



INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION

- crucial component of CBIS, as it requires planning and intentionality
- An **alliance** between individuals of different professions in solving problems to achieve **shared goals** of increasing successful individual **outcomes**
- Mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) in many areas including evaluating, implementing, and developing individualized education programs (IEPs), and providing education in the least restrictive environment (LRE)" (Orentlicher et al., 2014)



SELF-DETERMINATION



- Wehmeyer (1997): “**volitional** actions that enable one to act as the primary **causal agent in one’s life** and to maintain or improve one’s quality of life
- Ryan and Deci’s (2000): a child’s **curiosity and interests** drive their **intrinsic motivation**
- Standard online self-determination assessments for youth with disabilities: do not measure the outcomes of classroom-related self-determination skills (American Institute for Research, 1994; Dunn & Thrall, 2012)
- OTs have addressed self-determination skills differently **based on contextual factors**, including age and life circumstances (Guzaldo et al., 2021).

METHOD/APPROACH: “FUN FRIDAY”

- **OT intern project**: weekly themed (fall festival, cooking and dining etiquette, and holidays), collaborative activities participated in by the special education teacher, speech therapist, occupational therapist, and adapted physical education (APE) teacher



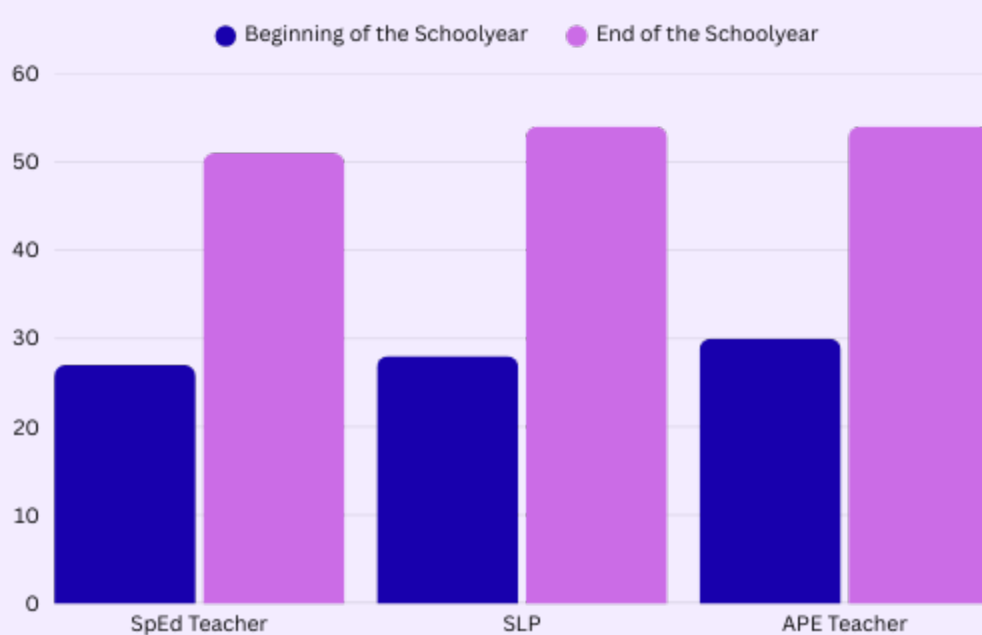
METHOD/APPROACH: “CASE STUDY OF AIMEE”

Modified AIR self-determination scale: Aimee’s self-determination skills

- Self-awareness
- Goals & expectations
- Choices & decision-making
- Taking action
- Self-expression
- Problem-solving
- Self-evaluation
- Self-confidence



RESULTS OF MODIFIED AIR SELF-DETERMINATION SCALE



The following values were assigned to survey responses to get a numerical progress score for the student at the beginning and end of the school year:

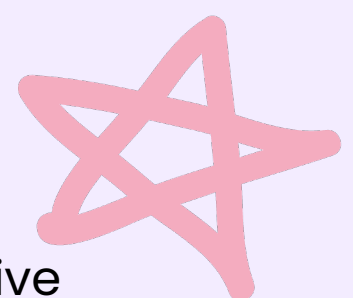
Always = 3

Sometimes = 2

Never = 1



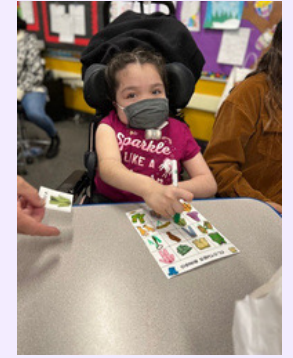
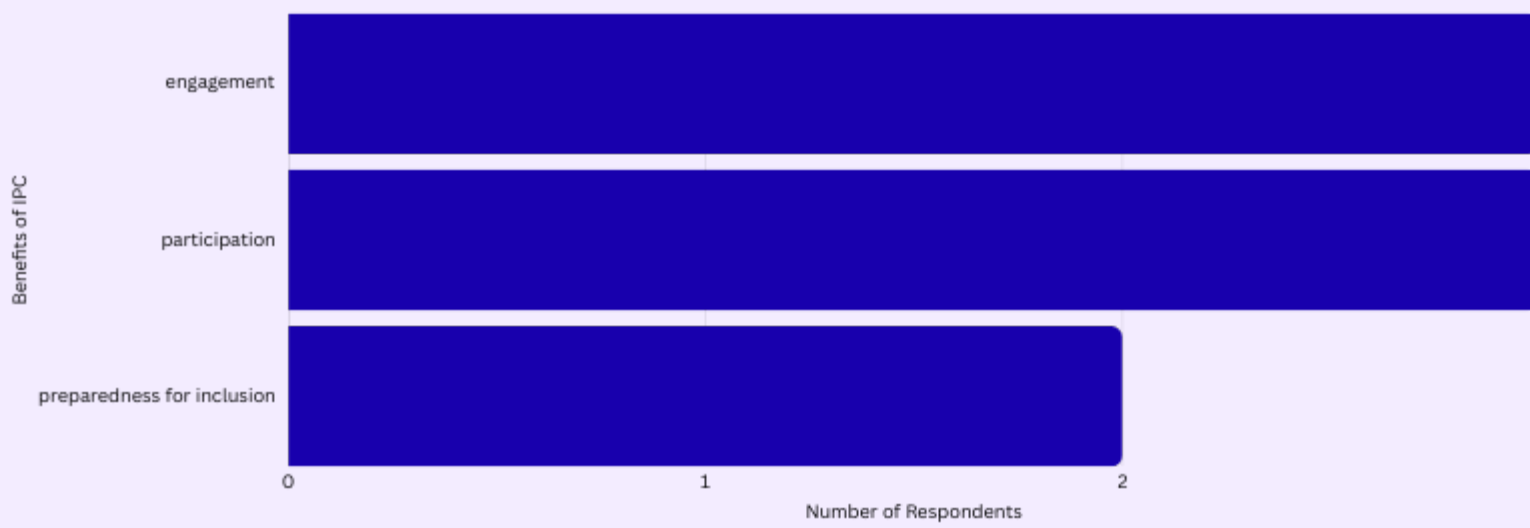
MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN AIMEE’S SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS NOTED BY AT LEAST 2 RESPONDENTS:



- evaluating the results of actions to determine what was effective
- gathering information on the results of actions
- changing one's own actions or plans to satisfy expectations and goals
- confident about using feedback to evaluate results of own work

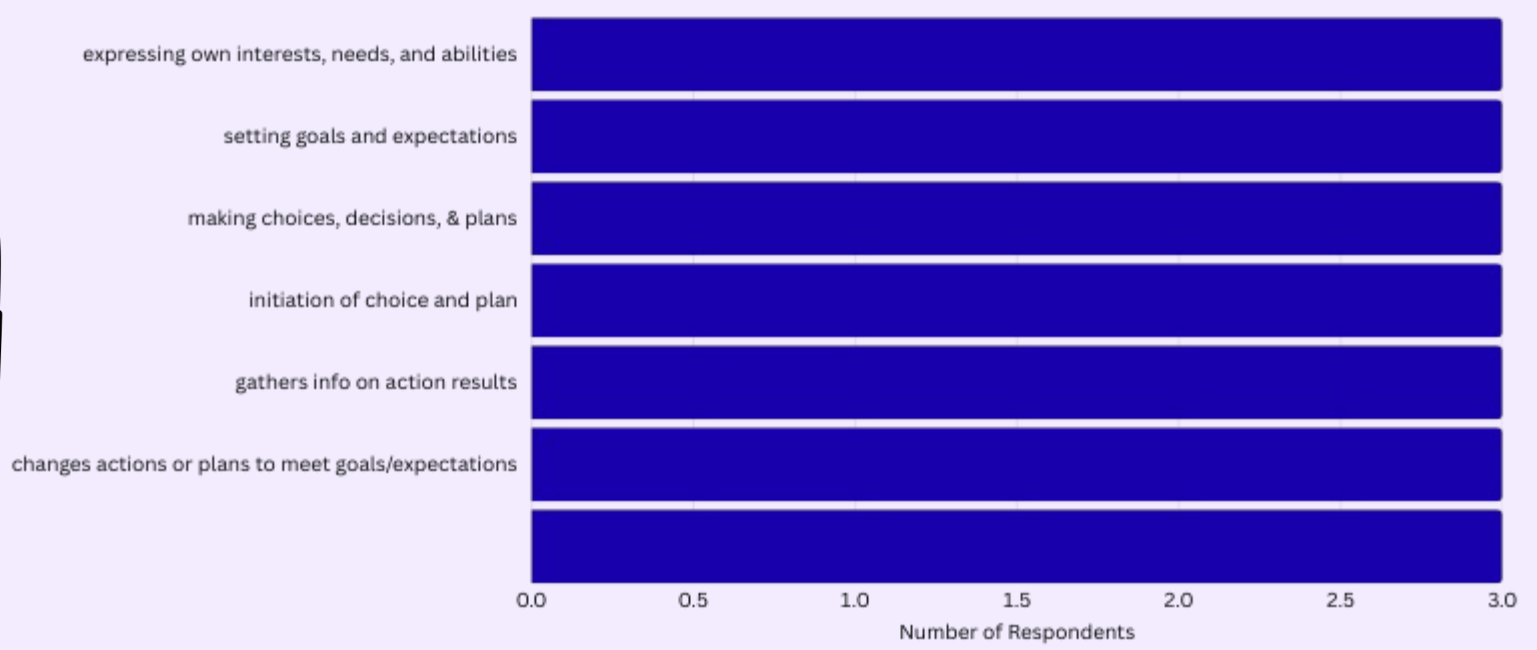
BENEFITS OF IPC TO STUDENTS

Benefits Developed Among Students Who Engaged in IPC Activities



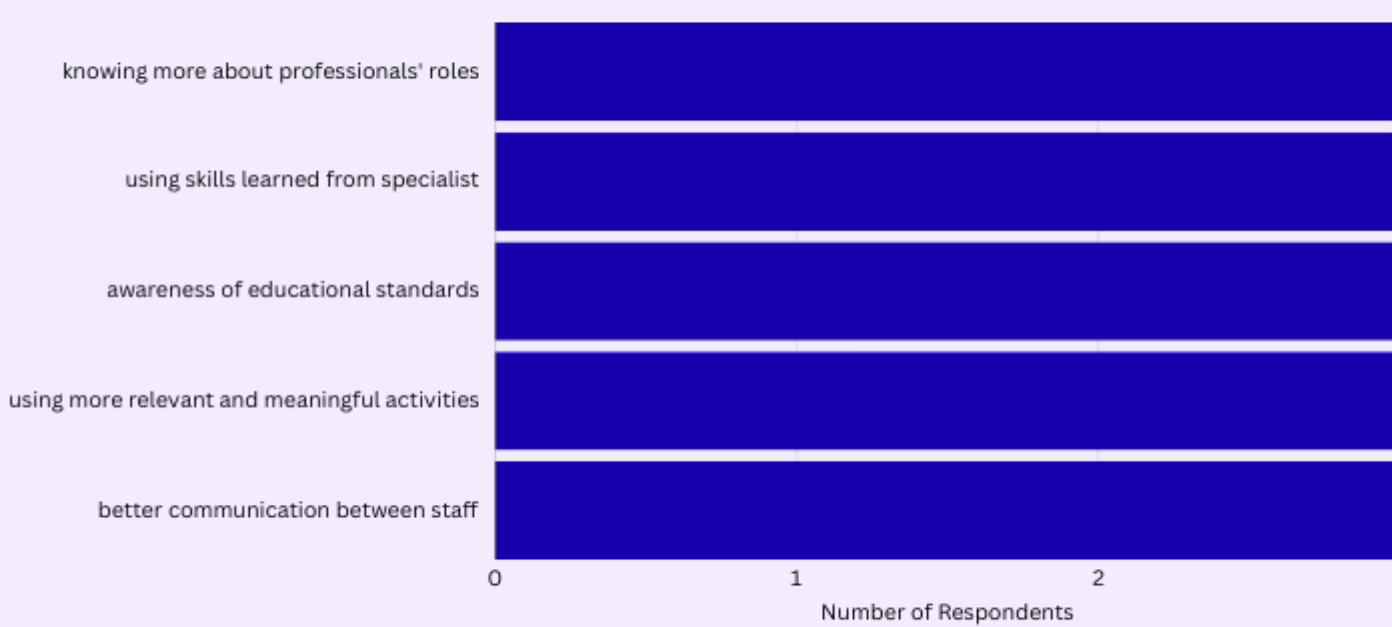
SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS DEVELOPED AMONG STUDENTS WHO ENGAGED IN ACTIVITIES WITH IPC

Self-Determination Skills Developed with IPC Activities



BENEFITS OF IPC TO CLASSROOM STAFF

Benefits of IPC to the Classroom Staff



CHALLENGES OF IPC

- students: skill limitations, behavioral issues, varied skill levels
- classroom staff: varying levels of understanding of the specialists' role and expectations on implementation
- specialists: time constraints, sustaining consistency of staff participation and support, limited funding and resources
- parents: limited understanding of IPC benefits to students, limited support or interest



CONTEXTUAL-BASED INTERVENTIONS



INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION



SELF-DETERMINATION



Reference