



PAEDIATRIC  
OCCUPATIONAL  
THERAPY



## *Implementing the F-words for Child Development with an occupational therapy organization in Aotearoa New Zealand: What is the impact for children?*

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# Introduction

**F-words for Child  
Development**  
Functioning, Family, Fitness,  
Fun, Friends, Future

F-words for Child Development (Rosenbaum & Gorter, 2012)

- ▶ Derived from the World Health Organization's ICF framework (World Health Organization, 2000)
- ▶ Collaborative and strengths-based
- ▶ Support service delivery with families and children
- ▶ Widely adopted internationally
- ▶ Little is known about children's perceptions of the impact of the F-words.

# Study Aims

- ▶ Examine and track the tailored strategies being used to implement the F-words at an organizational level and determine the effectiveness of these strategies
  - ▶ Explore the perceived impact of the F-words for children and youth.
  - ▶ Qualitative study
  - ▶ Children's knowledge of, attitude towards, and use of the F-words

# Study Methods

**Participants:** Four children and their parents attending the organization for therapy after F-words implementation

**Recruitment:** Posters, flyers

**Data Gathering:** Semi-structured interviews

**Data Analysis:** Conventional Content Analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005)  
NVivo software, collaborative process

**Ethics Approval:** NZ Health and Disability Ethics Committee 2021

# Study Participants

## Participant Demographic Details:

Child Age (y)	Gender	Parent:	Time in therapy with organization
9	M	Mother	4y
10	M	Mother	7y
13	F	Mother	7m
9	F	Mother	1y

A young girl with dark hair is swimming in a bright blue pool. She is holding a pink inflatable ring. The water is splashing around her. The background is a solid blue color.

# Study Findings

## 1. Children readily remembered the F-words and had a lived understanding of them

*What about Fitness? (Interviewer)*

*“Yeah, I do swimming every Wednesday... And I did a golf holiday program... That was really Fun. I learnt how to use a driver, chip and stuff down at the driving range.”*

*What about Future? (Interviewer)*

*“I sometimes think about what I might be doing on the weekend. Or... I want to be an archeologist. I like digging. I like fossils. And I like dinosaur bones. And I like finding out what happened in the past.”*

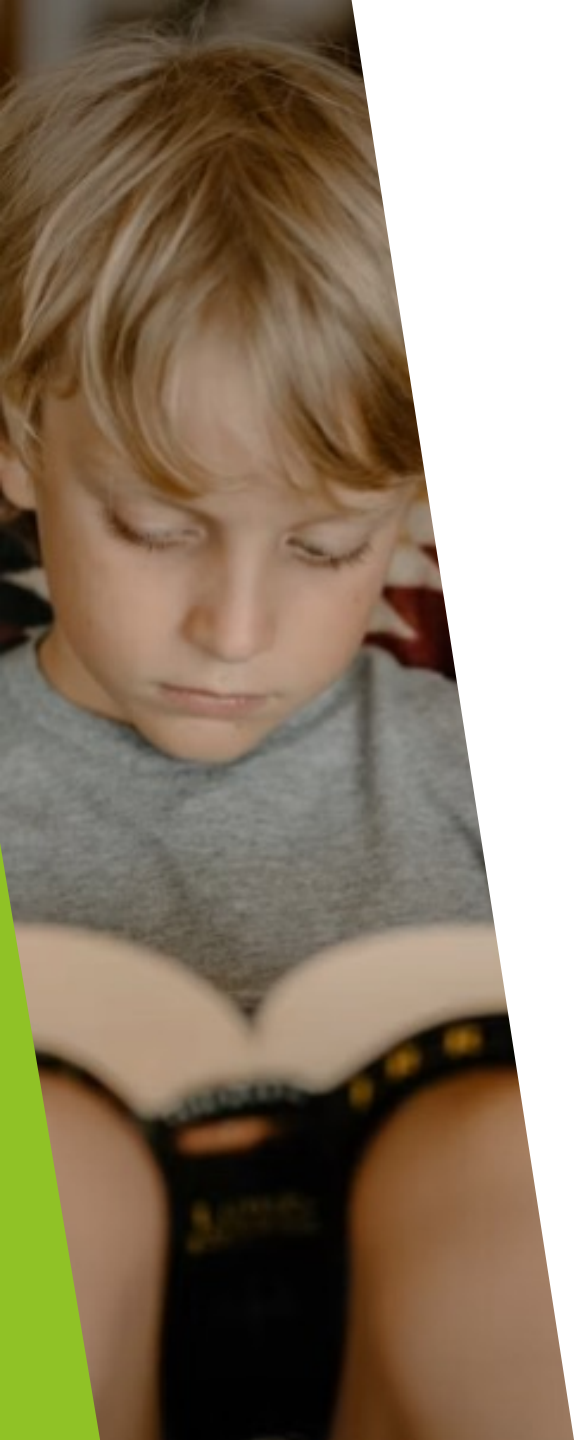
A young boy in a blue and white striped shirt is climbing a green rope. The image is partially obscured by a green geometric graphic on the right side of the slide.

## 2. Children related to the F-words

*What sort of things do you like doing for Fun? (Interviewer)*

*“Art... Jumping on the trampoline... And going for walks in the bush [forest].”*

*“It's a little bit light-hearted, and off centre, ... Like a little interruption in the endless forms and doctors.” (Parent)*



### 3. The F-words were affirming for children

*“It's a good way of explaining things... For instance, sometimes my fun is, it, could be a little different to other people some ways. Like, I'm not completely sure that reading a periodic table book would be interesting for a lot of other people”*



**4. The F-words supported thinking and actions to address the bigger picture of children’s lives.**

*“These are good umbrella categories. It really helped me cover everything”*

*“It kind of gives us the framework of what we're trying to help support (our child) with. Following his lead, but just kind of having that big, bigger framework there for us... So we're not just focussed on Function because it's very easy to just get focussed on Function” (Parent)*

**5. Flexible use of the F-words supported children to communicate their perspectives effectively and safely**

*“Someone who likes learning in a different way, ... with pictures or something... might not be able to express themselves in the same way. You don't need to write a whole lot to get your point across”*

*“Pokemon Go walks, that probably counts for under Fun as well as Family”*

*”I find skipping very tricky. Cause, yeah, I get, I only can do a few skips and then ... the skipping rope hits my legs... I struggle getting my, the words from my head down on the paper ..... Also I like looking at the clouds and see what different shapes I can see and the, and if it makes like an animal or something”*



**6. The F-words become an implicit language and way of thinking that underpinned conversations across settings.**

*“Well, we always do the F-words [at home] without saying we're doing the F words...Like we always have Fun, we often do some Fitness. And we hang out with Family. And the Function in the community is actually pretty nice...And school is Fun”*

*“The F-words are quite useful to describe things that are happening in life. And also, you can use it like in like family meetings or something to see how you can improve. I think that, overall, the F-words are a good therapy tool... and they can also be, they could also be used by teachers”*



## 7. The F-words empowered children to set goals and engage in conversations about change

*“The F-Words Life wheel let me to think about what was happening in my life and what was important to me. I had never had the chance to think about it before”*

*“If a kid’s worried about something, and [an adult] could ask which F-word category it's in and then figure it out from there. Yeah, [they] could work out the problem, narrow it down... And then change, and then changes could be made”*

# Conclusion

- ▶ Children enjoyed and remembered the F-words, and used them to describe their lives
- ▶ The F-words supported children's occupational engagement, participation and goal-setting.
- ▶ Implementing the F-words within occupational therapy and other services represents an evidence-based approach to fostering positive changes in the lives of children and their families in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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