



Learn the Signs. Act Early.

Ambassadors

# PLAY IT FORWARD FULL CIRCLE: GROWING *HEALTH* THROUGH THERAPEUTIC PLAYGROUPS

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# Play as a Lifelong Occupation



## Play

Fosters health, well-being



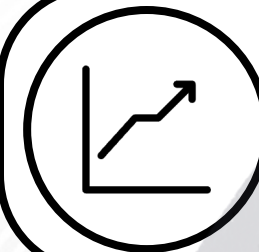
## Challenges

Decline in play, limited access



## Solution

Culturally responsive, therapeutic playgroups



## Evidence

Improves social participation

# Therapeutic Playgroups for Health

Play supports the neurobiological foundations of health



Enhances resilience in illness and developmental outcomes



In low resource settings, playgroups can close gaps



Play it forward full circle for sustainable health



# Therapeutic Playgroups

## Definition:

Therapeutic playgroups are designed for children with multiple vulnerabilities or risk factors and their families

## Goal:

Provide developmental information and strategies to support caregiver confidence while enjoying play; build social capital

## Value:

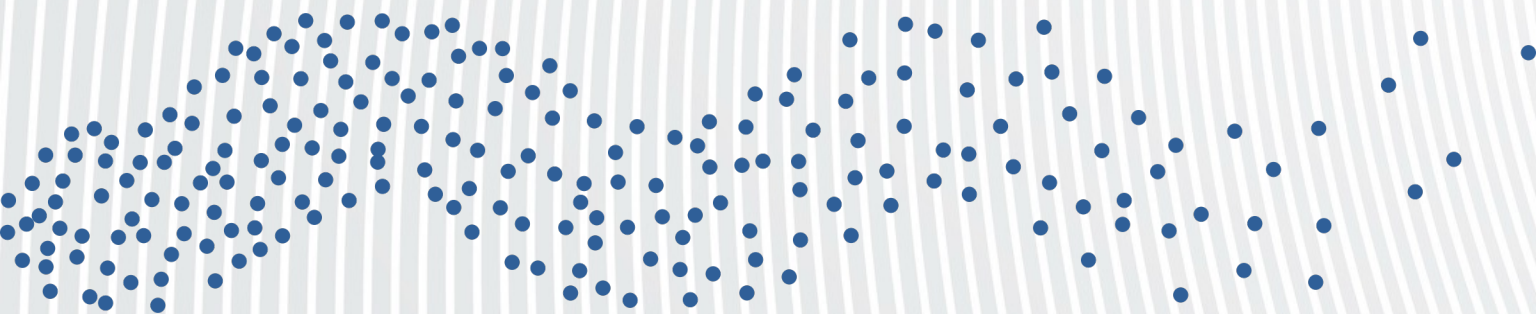
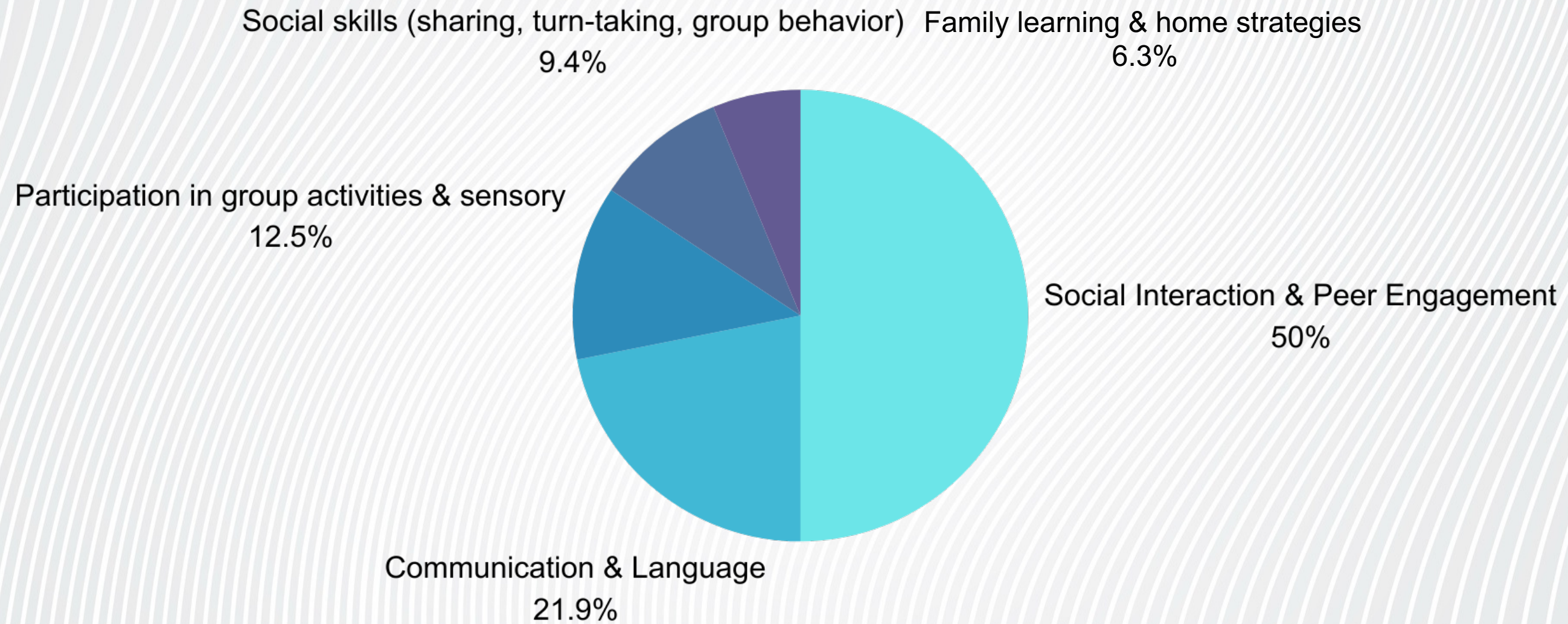
A “soft entry” point for vulnerable and at-risk families accessing early intervention services



# Translational Research

	<b>Occupational Therapy-Led Playgroup</b>	<b>Teaming for Therapeutic Playgroups in Early Intervention</b>	<b>Positive Caregiving Strategies and Play Activities</b>	<b>Act. Early. PLAY</b>
<b>Child Outcome</b>	Playfulness	Peer Interaction, Social Skills, Communication, Play	Play participation with the caregiver	Play opportunities
<b>Caregiver Outcome</b>	Responsiveness	Family and Community Support	Affection, Responsiveness, Encouragement, Teaching	Developmental knowledge highlighted in play activities
	Feasibility: Exploring in Pilot Studies	Efficacy: Value of TPG in Early Intervention	Translation to Practice: Active Ingredients and Guidelines	Translation to Community and Population Health

# Parents Priorities from Playgroup



# *Act Early.* PLAY

## Parents Learning Activities for Young Children: Early Development & Health

Social	Cognitive	Movement	Language
Parent-Child Play	Playtime	Exploring the Environment	Communication
Friendship	Mealtime	Outdoor Play	Storytelling
Sharing	Bedtime	Aquatics	Music
Self-Regulation & Behavior	STEEaM	Clean-up & Chores	Words & Things



# Therapeutic Playgroup Session

<p>Play Activities</p>	<p>Developmental Topic: Friendship</p>	
<p>Milestone Moment - Watch your child play next to other children, and sometimes with them</p>		
<p>Shared Reading</p>	<p>Little Blue Truck</p>	
<p>Sensory Play</p>	<p>Cleaning animals with water, soap, dirt</p>	
<p>Constructive Play</p>	<p>Car races</p>	
<p>Pretend Play</p>	<p>Car wash</p>	
<p>Songs &amp; Games</p>	<p>Old MacDonald, Animal Sounds</p>	

# Therapeutic Playgroups




**Caregiver competence**  
Monitoring development,  
providing play activities



**Positive Parenting**  
Amplify social participation



**Early identification**  
Bridge to support and services



**Cultural Adaptability**  
Across groups



**Embedded Play Everyday**  
OTs role in fostering resilience,  
health, and family empowerment

“It’s the things we play with and the people who help us play that make a great difference in our lives.”

-Fred Rodgers

# Thank You



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