

# Increasing children's engagement: In therapeutic interventions

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## Overview

- Engagement in therapeutic interventions – why do we want it?
- What do we know about engagement in therapy?
- What might the conditions for high engagement be?



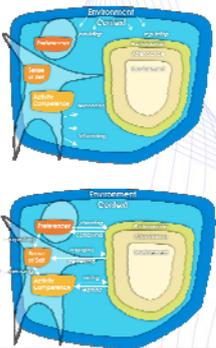
## Therapeutic interventions

- The act of intervening, interfering or interceding with the intent of modifying the outcome\*
  - Neutral stance
- An effort made by individuals or groups to improve the wellbeing of someone
- Medicine or surgery to treat or cure a condition
  - Positive stance

Online definitions

## The fPRC

- Framework is neutral about the activity or setting in which participation is considered
- Life situations of children
  - Home
  - Pre-school / school
  - Community
- Therapy?



Imms et al 2017

## Therapy as a life situation

- Unavoidable (if available)
- Avoidable (given a choice)
- Why engage?
  - Business: better productivity, efficiency, effectiveness
  - School: better learning (deeper, faster), increased academic success, better personal development
  - Community recreation: builds stronger, healthier, happier, safer communities
  - Citizenship engagement: increased tax revenue, better allocation of resources, increased trust
  - Therapy: wellness, wellbeing, participation, quality of life

Google search

## Participation attendance

- Frequency
- Time spent
- Diversity or range of activities

*How much is enough?*

- Patterns of attendance in home, school, community activities across the life course

*What is a desirable pattern?*

## Participation attendance

- Frequency
- Time spent
- Diversity or range of activities

**How much is enough?**

- Patterns of attendance in therapeutic activities across the life course

**What is a desirable pattern?**



## Participation 'attendance'

In therapy has often been equated with a client and/or family's response to

- Following regimes
- Adhering to recommendations/advise
- Complying with instructions
- Doing as they are told
- Doing as expected
  - ...with the goal of achieving a therapeutic dose/effect



## Participation involvement

- **Experience while attending**
  - ...engagement, persistence, affect, perhaps social connection...
- In health care literature, the term engagement is used more commonly than involvement
  - Although the word involvement is sometimes used to define engagement

*Imms et al 2017*



## Review of health care engagement

*(Bright et al 2015)*

- Engagement in: a 'patient' state – the internal experience expressed by observable behaviours
  - Being with what you are doing, participating beyond talk
  - Participation, contribution, persistence
  - Deliberate, intentional, effortful participation
- Engagement with: a process of connection between client and practitioner or service
  - Is relational
  - Can start before the service,
  - Collaboration, client-centred approach to care, co-established priorities,
  - Appointment keeping, compliance, collaboration with treatment



## Conditions for engagement

Practitioner	Client
• Persistence	• Persistence
• Caring attitude	• Positive stance to intervention
• Active listening	• Collaborative stance
• Client-centred approach	• Appointment keeping
• Making information & activities meaningful	• Perceived usefulness of intervention
• Understanding the client's perspective	• Being open to communication
• Co-established priorities	• Initiation of activity
• Ability to create a climate of engagement	• Respect & appreciation
• Empathy	• Commitment
• Trust	• Effort
	• Willingness
	• Trust

*Bright et al 2015*



## Proposed definition

- Engagement is a **co-constructed process** and **state**. It incorporates a process of **gradually connecting with** each other and/or a therapeutic program, which enables the individual to become an **active, committed and invested collaborator** in healthcare

*Bright et al 2015*



## What about in paediatrics



- Engagement requires the child and family /caregiver
- Both, one or neither may be engaged...
- Importance of the quality of engagement in the health care interaction to the quality of the outcomes has long been acknowledged
- ...but rarely measured

## Engaging with

(D'Arrigo et al 2017)



Facilitating *engaging with* through application of self-determination theory

- Supporting autonomy
  - Collaborative goal setting, opportunities for choice
- Supporting relatedness
  - Quality of therapeutic relationship – building rapport and a therapeutic alliance
- Supporting competence
  - Observing changes, providing opportunity for challenge and mastery

## Engaging in

(D'Arrigo et al 2017)



A multifaceted state of affective, behavioural and cognitive commitment or investment in therapy (p. 342)

- Affective:
  - emotional connection, positive affect, excitement, enthusiasm, joy, interest, energy, alertness
- Behavioural:
  - asking questions, sharing thoughts, positive body language, uptake of recommendations
- Cognitive:
  - effort, readiness for change, perceived need for intervention

## Development of a measure

(King et al. 2017)



- Conceptualised engagement as a process and optimal client state

• See page 2 of paper for diagram of conceptualisation

## Pediatric Rehabilitation Intervention Measure of Engagement - Observation



- PRIME-O: King, et al. (2015, research version)
- Client items – extent of
  - Client interest and enthusiasm
  - Client use of strengths based language
  - Client openness to what is being said and done
  - Client overall comfort and confidence in engaging with service provider
- Practitioner items – extent of
  - Provider interest and enthusiasm
  - Provider use of strengths based language
  - Provider overall comfort and confidence in engaging the client
  - Provider listening /communication behaviours
- Client-provider interaction items – extent of
  - Overall warmth of the interaction
  - Collaborative nature of the interaction

This is not 'time'

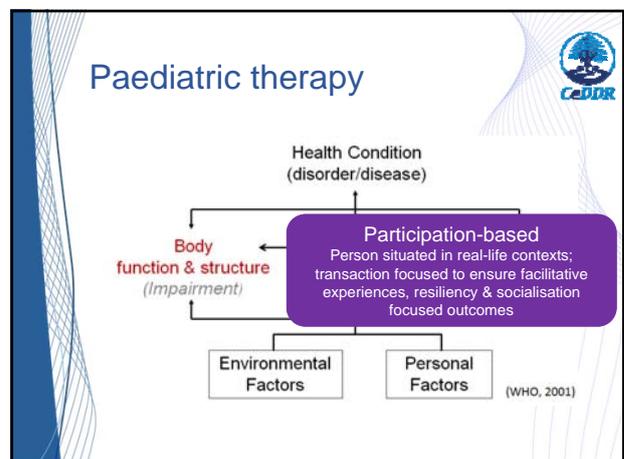
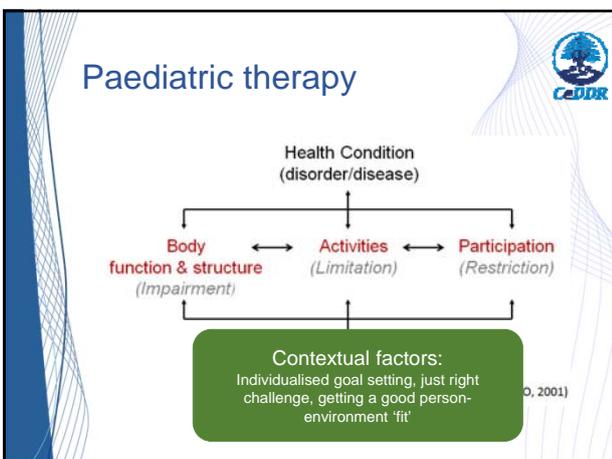
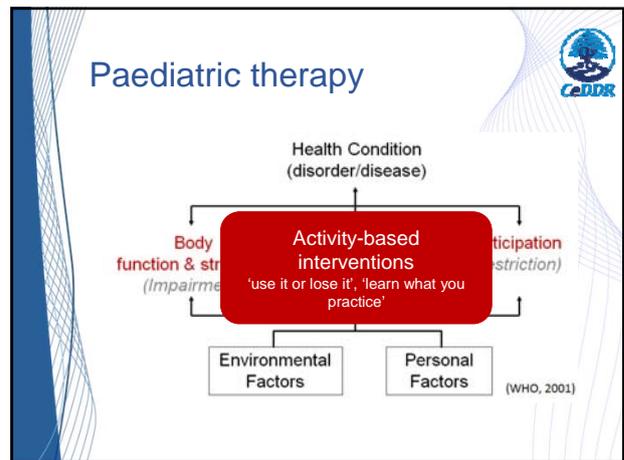
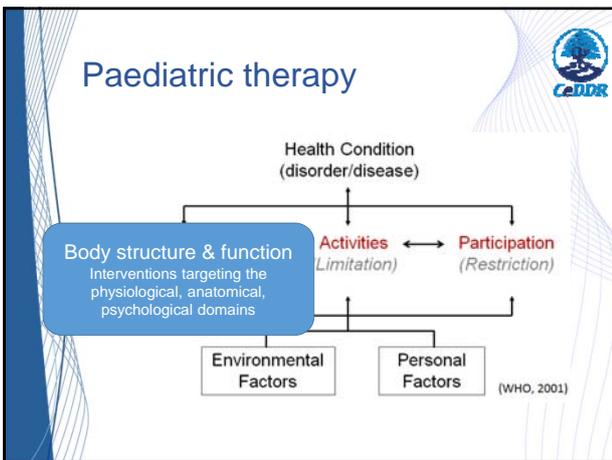
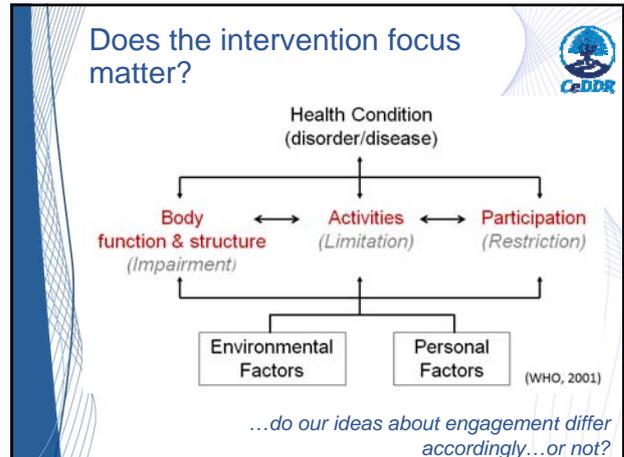
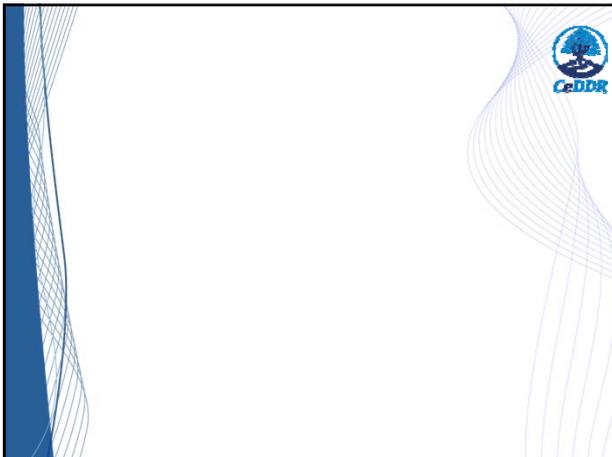
## Strategies to support engagement



- Study with youth with physical disabilities (Smart et al. 2016)
- Qualitative design, repeated semi-structured interviews

### Strategies

- Affective
  - Building a relationship on familiarity and reciprocity
  - Guiding the program using youth preferences & strengths
- Cognitive
  - Assisting youth to envisage meaningful change
  - Using youth learning styles
  - Promoting awareness of goal progress
- Behavioural
  - Ensuring youth access to resources
  - Provide youth with multiple decision opportunities
  - Enable youth to showcase capabilities



## A transactional framework for rehabilitation

- Focuses on the shift in rehabilitation research/practice to 'real world' contexts
  - Where **participation and environment** are in focus more than body function and activity
- Requires a broader/deeper awareness of the lives of children and families and of the transactional processes of change over the life course

King, Imms, Stewart, Freeman, Nguyen, (2017) *Disabil & Rehab*

## Why should we change

- Living with a lifelong impairment requires multiple ongoing adjustments and adaptations across the life span, as contexts, activities, processes and people change
- There can be a focus on socialising children and families to rehabilitation/therapy rather than to their situations and contexts

## Engagement in therapy

- Engagement should be given special consideration in therapeutic interventions
- It will shape how the child and family and practitioner experience the intervention
- Which may contribute to differential effects of interventions
  - Provided in differing contexts
  - Provided to different children / families
  - Provided at different developmental stages

## Engagement in therapy

- If therapy is situated in real life contexts, then engagement will be in other life situations, not 'therapy'
- 'Therapy' will be
  - About seeking opportunity structures and experiences to support participation attendance and involvement
  - Focused on naturally occurring transactions and supporting in-context experiences and capacity development in situ
- Practitioner's roles will be as
  - Advocates, knowledge brokers, collaborators, facilitators, educators, coaches
  - ...not experts doing to

## Engagement in therapy

- If therapy is a special life situation, then maximising outcomes in the minimum time period might be imperative
  - If involvement is defined as engagement, persistence, affect and perhaps social connection, then current literature suggests that
    - **Engagement** can be supported as both as a process and a state, and the state of engagement includes
    - **Persistence** and **Affect** (which can be further described as affective, cognitive, behavioural engagement) and
    - **Social connection** is a critical component of the therapeutic relationship

# Thank you

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