

A Behavioral OT Approach: Step-by-Step Strategies to Address Work Refusal and Increase Participation in Pediatric Therapy
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Course Description and Learning Outcomes

“What do you do when Johnny refuses to do any handwriting” or “When Sam starts complaining before she even gets to therapy”? Often our expectations of seemingly simple tasks like handwriting or shoe tying can be the antecedents for various types of inappropriate behavior for students. They may start engaging in problem behaviors or may simply refuse to participate in a session thus rendering OTs unable to address therapeutic goals. This course delves into theories of motivation and behavioral psychology to address the underlying issues of resistance or refusal in the therapy setting. Practical, specific strategies developed from research-based principles of positive reinforcement, opportunities to respond, choice making, Premack’s principle, behavioral momentum, and therapeutic use of self to increase student engagement and participation in the therapeutic setting.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify key elements of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and its role in pediatric motivation.
2. Highlight different types of reinforcement principles in Behavior Psychology.
3. List five strategies to address work refusal and increase participation in sessions.