

Research Resources

A monthly newsletter of the

AOTF Institute for the Study of Occupation and Health

November 2010

Dear Colleagues,

This month's *Research Resources* is devoted to participation. As a profession, occupational therapy strives to enable participation by the people it serves. What is participation? Some would argue that it implies more than simply active engagement. Because people are social beings, this suggests that participation has a social component--that is, to live fully, people must participate as members of groups.

Groups are essentially social networks. Lately, there is a great deal of outstanding health-related research being done in the area of social networks. For example, the scientist [Nicholas Christakis](#), an internist and medical sociologist at Harvard Medical School, has done some very provocative work on how social networks influence health. For a taste, take a moment to view his [TED lecture](#) or visit his [web page](#). Christakis' findings have implications for population-based occupational therapy intervention, that is, the role of the profession in influencing public health.

Finally, since I am on the topic of social networking, forgive me for mentioning that AOTF now has a Facebook page. If you are part of that network, we'd be honored if you would stop by our page and give us a show of support. As always, we appreciate your support and welcome your comments and your participation in Foundation activities!

Cordially,



Charles Christiansen
Executive Director
Interim Director, Institute for the Study of Occupation and Health

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Wilma L. West Library Resource Notes

The Relationship between Social Support or a Social Network and Participation

In this month's letter, Dr. Christiansen cites [Nicholas Christakis](#), MD, PhD, MPH and his work on how social networks influence our lives (Christakis & Fowler, 2009). Occupational therapy practitioners, too, are aware of the importance of a client's social relationships to his or her activities and participation. They have conducted studies with populations of different ages and diagnoses to

uncover the impact of the presence of a social network on participation in activities of daily living and in social engagements (Price, Stephensen, Krants, Ward, In Press; Cosbey, Johnston & Dunn, 2010; Krupa, Woodside & Pocock, 2010; Eklund, 2006).

Benefits from this connection between social networking or engagement and participation in activities go both ways. Bertera suggests in a 2003 study that social networks might encourage older adults to participate in physical activities. Gunilla, Lexell and Skär (2007) identified social support as a motivator and enabler for thirteen women with spinal cord injuries to participate in occupations.

For individuals with a disability, particularly children or adolescents, finding friends within their larger social network can be a challenge (Morrison & Burgman, 2009). Richardson (2002) investigated how the school environment supported or inhibited children's socialization. For teens with physical disabilities, the successful development of friendships is complex and influenced by personal, environmental, interactional, and relationship factors (Jamieson, et al., 2009, p. 368). A successful bonding experience for adolescents with chronic rheumatic disease through a short residential program, called 'Independence Break.' is described in a 2005 article by Hackett, et al.

The references cited here are just a small sampling of the literature on this topic that can be found through OT SEARCH.

Bertera, EM. (2003). [Physical activity and social network contacts in community dwelling older adults](#). *Activities, Adaptations and Aging*, 27(3/4), 19-27.

Christakis, NA & Fowler, JH. (2009). *Connected: The surprising power of our social networks and how they shape our lives*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

Cosbey, J, Johnston, SS & Dunn, ML. (2010). [Sensory processing disorders and social participation](#). *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 64, 462-473.

Eklund, M. (2006). [Occupational factors and characteristics of the social network in people with persistent mental illness](#). *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 60, 587-594.

Gunilla, I, Lexell, J & Skär, L. (2007). [Social support provides motivation and ability to participate in occupation](#). *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*, 27, 23-30.

Hackett, J, Johnson, B, Shaw, KL & McDonagh, JE. (2005). [Friends united: an evaluation of an innovative residential self-management programme in adolescent rheumatology](#). *The British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 68, 567-573,

Jamieson, Hutchinson, NL, M, Taylor, J, Westlake, KP, Berg, D & Boyce, W. (2009). [Friendships of adolescents with physical disabilities attending inclusive high schools](#). *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 76, 368-375.

Krupa, T, Woodside, H & Pocock, K. (2010). [Activity and social participation in the period following a first episode of psychosis and implications for occupational therapy](#). *The British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 73, 13-20.

Morrison, R & Burgman, I. (2009). [Friendship experiences among children with disabilities who attend mainstream Australian schools](#). *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 76, 145-152.

Price, P, Stephensen, S, Krants, L & Ward, K. (In Press). [Beyond my front door: the occupational and social participation of adults with spinal cord injury](#). *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*.

Richardson, PK. (2002). [The school as social context: social interaction patterns of children with](#)

[physical disabilities.](#) *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 56, 297-304.

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**OTJR:
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OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health, published quarterly by the American Occupational Therapy Foundation, Inc., offers original research articles of professional interest to the practicing occupational therapist with a focus on occupation and fostering interdisciplinary research.

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Notice of Public Hearings on ADA

Department of Justice Announces Public Hearings on Proposed Revisions to ADA Regulations

The Department of Justice has scheduled three public hearings on its regulatory proposals concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These proposals, or Advance Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRMs), seek public comment on the possibility of revising the ADA regulations to address accessible web information and services, movie captioning and video description, accessibility of Next Generation 9-1-1, and accessible equipment and furniture. The public hearings are scheduled for the following dates: Nov. 18, 2010, Dec. 16, 2010, and Jan. 10, 2011. Additional information is available on the [ADA Home Page](#) and the [ANPRMs](#) are also available electronically in accessible formats online.

Conference Announcements

[Festival of International Conferences on Caregiving, Disability, Aging and Technology - FICCDAT 2011 \(June 5-8, 2011, Toronto, Ontario\)](#)

FICCDAT 2011 is six conferences in one: Growing Older With A Disability; RESNA/ICTA (the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America and the International Conference on Technology and Aging) Advancing Rehabilitation Technologies for an Aging Society Conference; Advances in Neurorehabilitation; Caregiving in the 21st Century; the 34th Canadian Medical and Biological Engineering Conference; and the International Conference on Best Practices in Universal Design. Submission deadline for RESNA/ICTA is **November 15, 2010**, the deadline for all other submissions is **December 1, 2010**.

[The 22nd Annual CHADD International Conference: Pathways to Wellness, Healthy Minds and Resilience \(November 11-13, 2010, Atlanta, Georgia\)](#)

This year's CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, a partner of the CDC) conference sessions will focus on bullying, prevention of co-occurring conditions, academic interventions, executive functions, and ADHD.

[Best Practices Day 2011: Infusing the principles of rehabilitation across the care continuum \(March 2, 2011, Toronto, Ontario\)](#)

The Greater Toronto Area Rehab Network's annual Best Practices Day provides a forum to discuss and integrate rehab knowledge and information across the traditional boundary between practice and research, thereby promoting best practices. [Submission deadline](#) is **November 22, 2010**.

Web Resources

Advanced Release" section have been peer-reviewed and accepted for publication.

Occupational Adaptation in People With Multiple Sclerosis -- Eva Månsson Lexell, PhD, Reg OT; Susanne Iwarsson, PhD, Reg OT; Maria Larsson Lund, PhD, Reg OT

Participation Profile of Adults With Class III Obesity -- Mary Forhan, OT Reg(Ont), PhD; Mary Law, OT Reg(Ont), PhD; Brenda H. Vrkljan, OT Reg(Ont), PhD; Valerie H. Taylor, MD, FRCP(C), PhD

Grants, Fellowships, and Education Opportunities

[Pearson Assessments](#)

, a leader in the assessment test field, is developing a test to assess the motor skills of senior adults. They are looking for occupational therapists to give the test to adults 40-89.11 years old with generalized motor impairment in a rehabilitation or an assisted living or skilled nursing facility. They will pay both the OT and the examinee for their help. Contact [Dave Howe](#) Field

[Toolkit for Assessing Cultural Competence in Peer-Run Mental Health Organizations](#)

Working collaboratively with the NAMI Support Technical Assistance and Resource (STAR) Center, the UIC National Research and Training Center on Psychiatric Disability has developed a cultural competency guidebook and assessment tool for use by mental health peer-run programs and self-help groups as well as traditional mental health and rehabilitation programs.

[KaiserEDU.org Provides Access to Information on Health Policy](#)

This redesigned site summarizes developments in health reform and other key issues and can be easily used by [faculty](#) teaching courses, [students](#) conducting research, or anyone seeking a better understanding of health policy. The site includes a [database](#) of student fellowships and internships.

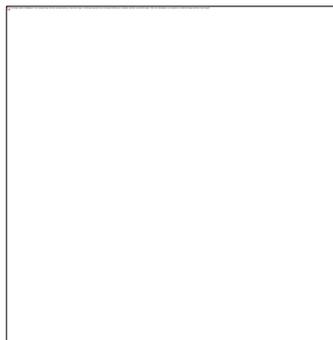
Publications

[A Data-Based Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States](#)

This document covers such characteristics as faculty publications, grants, and awards; student GRE scores, financial support, and employment outcomes; and program size, time to degree, and faculty composition. Measures of faculty and student diversity are also included. In addition to the data, the report contains illustrative ranges of rankings for each program, as well as ranges of rankings for three dimensions of program quality: research activity, student support and outcomes, and diversity of the academic environment. The Assessment, the Revised Guide to the Methodology and the Data Table in Excel can all be accessed online. Ostriker, J.P., Kuh, C.V., Voytuk, J.A. (eds.) (2010) A Data-Based Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

AOTF Institute Image of the Month

From the [Archives of the AOTA](#), housed in the AOTF Wilma L. West Library.



A patient learns to walk in the small cottage on the grounds of the Columbia Hospital in Milwaukee, 1919 in a program which eventually became the Curative Workshop of Milwaukee. Today, Curative serves several thousand children, adults and senior citizens annually at community-based sites in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties, Wisconsin.

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The AOTF Institute makes this image, as well as the [Guide to the Archives of the AOTA](#), available publicly as part of its mission to honor the past and be the best possible steward of the unique body of knowledge that is occupational therapy. To this end, the AOTF Institute warmly welcomes individuals from within and beyond occupational therapy to explore the guide and use the archives for purposes of research, education, and leadership.

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