Purpose

To gain knowledge and experience in program development in order to provide increased availability and accessibility of adapted sport and leisure opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Background Literature

- Adults without disabilities experience an obesity rate of 26.4%, while 38.9% of adults with disabilities are considered obese (Kraus, Lauer, Coleman, & Routtenville, 2018).
- Children with disabilities have an obesity rate 38% higher than children without disabilities (CDC, 2017).
- The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) physical activity recommendations:
  - Numerous opportunities throughout the day for young children
  - 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity per day for ages 6-17
  - 150-300 minutes of moderate physical activity in a week for adults (CDC, 2019).
- Participation in physical activity programs decreased risk of obesity, improved object manipulation, locomotion, and functional capacities, and improved health behaviors for individuals with disabilities (Jrang et al., 2016; Arbour-Natapolski et al., 2018).
- Individuals who participated in adapted sports or similar programs reported higher quality of life, self-concept, and self-esteem when compared to individuals with disabilities who did not participate (Guthin & Lowell, 2015; Te Valde et al., 2018).
- Students reported greater emotional regulation, psychological well-being, and reduced stress after participation in a physical activity program for children with and without disabilities (Chen & Chang, 2016).
- Common facilitators and barriers to adapted sport and leisure participation include accessible facilities, experienced instructors, location, and cost (Irwin & Kerfield, 2016; Whetle et al., 2015).

Theoretical Concepts

The Ecology of Human Performance (EHP)

- Examines the interaction between the person and his or her context to describe task performance.
- Intervention strategies include alter, adapt, establish/restore, prevent, and create.
- Intervention strategies guided session planning so that the activity was adapted to fit the needs of participants rather than changing the individual to fit the activity. (Dunn, Brown, & McGuigan, 1996)

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory

- States that learning occurs through attention, retention, reproduction, and imitation of a model.
- This model promoted increased member participation and learning through observation and imitation of peers during sessions. (Bandura, 1971)

Program Methods

Four different organizations contributed to the capstone project, and provided experience from each level of program development: The Miracle League of Sioux City and Sport Ability of Iowa provided insight and knowledge about successful program development by allowing the program creator to observe and assist with program activities. The physical education instructor at Sergeant-Bluff Luton schools provided experience and insight with general and adapted physical education. The majority of the project occurred at Mid-Step Services. A program, which included individual and group sessions was introduced and implemented to promote participation and motivation for physical activity and sports.

Program Outcomes

- The program creator gained experience from many different levels and perspectives of program development from each participating organization.
- The program creator planned and led a pre-season baseball camp for the Miracle League of Sioux City.
- The program creator took the lead for initial planning and creation of a wheelchair softball team with Sport Ability of Iowa.
- For the program implemented at Mid-Step Services:
  - Individual daily exercise sessions were conducted.
  - Group sessions occurred twice per week before midterm, then increased to three times per week after midterm.
  - Session planning and reflection templates were completed for 8 different activities.
  - Participant numbers increased slightly from the beginning to the end of the program.
  - Staff and clients provided positive feedback on surveys.

Implications for OT

Adapted sports and leisure are rooted in the occupational therapy practice framework through social and leisure participation, performance skills and patterns, health management, and much more. Research demonstrates that sport and leisure participation improves emotional regulation, social interaction, functional skills, self-esteem, school performance, and overall well-being. Many of these skills are addressed every day in occupational therapy practice. OT practitioners should be encouraged and motivated to provide adapted sport and leisure in their practice to promote these kinds of skills. Such opportunities may include individual or group sessions, programs, and even businesses.

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