



# **Utilizing Structured Activities to Enhance Learning: A Review of Recreational Therapy Services from a Global Perspective**

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# Presentation Outline

- ♦ Introduction
- ♦ Recreational Therapy Defined
- ♦ Recreational Therapy and U.S. Schools
- ♦ Recreational Therapy and Education Internationally
- ♦ Conclusion



# **World Health Organization (WHO)**

## **◦ International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)**

♦WHO – Global view of health from a holistic approach

♦ICF – “to provide to provide a unified and standardized language and framework for the description of health and health-related states”

Goal of using an integrative model – both medical and social models



# **Inclusion and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)**

- ◆ **Despite progress in the area of *inclusion*, individuals with disabilities continue to be excluded from recreation activities in all settings in the U.S. and internationally**
- ◆ **A model for how to combine the education and recreation services can be found in a law specific to the U.S. -- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**





## **Purpose of this paper...**

- ♦ **Present an argument for the provision of structured and adapted recreational activities within education settings that serve as a mechanism for transcending culture and geography.**
- ♦ **These activities are offered through the profession of recreational therapy (RT) in combination with education services as a mechanism for improving, and advocating for, the lives of individuals with disabilities across international education settings.**



# Recreational Therapy (RT)



**“...utilizes a wide range of activity and community based interventions and techniques to improve the physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and leisure needs of their clients”**

- Help clients to develop life-skills needed for successfully participating fully in the community**
- Specific activity interests and resources are incorporated into RT to help clients improve or achieve functional outcomes that assist them when confronted with real life situations**



# Recreational Therapy (RT)



- ♦23,000 and growing
- ♦Employed in settings ranging from rehabilitation/hospitals – schools
- ♦CTRS National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification™ (NCTRC®)
- ♦Employment is projected to increase 15% from 2008-2018, which is considered faster than average for employment growth within the U.S



# Recreational Therapy in Education Settings



- Although many RTs work in hospital, nursing, and rehabilitation settings, the number working in education-based settings in which special education services are provided is increasing steadily
- The basis for providing RT in educational settings is found in Public Law 108-446, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)



# Related Services

♦ **Services provided for a child with a disability so he/she benefits from special education services, and are needed to aide students in:**

- (a) advancing appropriately toward attaining Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals;**
- (b) progressing in general education curricula;**
- (c) participating in extracurricular and other non-academic activities, and**
- (d) participation of children with and with out disabilities in general and extracurricular activities**

♦ **Examples: psychology, PT, OT, and recreation, RT**

♦ **As a related service, recreation can help students develop functional, recreation, and academic skills necessary for development in the cognitive, physical, behavioral, social, and affective domains**

♦ **Transitioning to the community**

# IDEA and Recreation

- ♦ **Recreation is a term that encompasses 4 services:**
  - (a) **assessment of leisure functioning,**
  - (b) **leisure education,**
  - (c) **RT services, and**
  - (d) **recreation programs in schools and communities**
- ♦ **Intent must be directed at helping students achieve their educational goals**
- **“Qualified personnel” provide recreation as a related service.**
- **Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists™ (CTRS®)**



# Recreational Therapy Process

Direct services:

- Assessment & Planning
- Direct Service Interventions
- Evaluation



# Assessment & Planning

- Gathering and analyzing information related to a student's level of education and recreation participation and using results for placement into programs
  - Assessment tools – evaluate behavioral, physical, and affective functioning
  - Review of educational records, interviews, observations, standardized tests

# Direct Service Interventions

- Under IDEA:
  - RT – goal-oriented activities
  - Transition-planning activities
  - School and community recreation participation



# Evaluation

- Document outcomes specific to students' IEP goals related to recreation throughout and immediately following RT service provision

# RT & Education Internationally

- Found primarily in Canada & South Korea
- Related disciplines – Australia, Finland, Japan, New Zealand, and Switzerland
- Australia – “Diversional Therapy” – recreation to promote self-esteem and facilitate decision making and activity participation
- Great Britain, France, and Germany – “Psychomotricity” – treating the body as a whole through techniques such as games, relaxation, and physical activities

# Conclusion

- **RT remains one of the most underutilized of all related services, yet--**
- **Research demonstrates that students are better prepared for academic tasks as a result of participating in RT as a related service**
- **IDEA provides an example of how to develop related legislation that assists in the development of program development outside of the U.S.**
- **Further substantiated by a recent call for RTs to learn more about the potential for RT services internationally - increased collaborative efforts with professionals in similarly disability centered professions in combination with the use of the ICF**