Going over the wall: Volunteering with children with life limiting conditions

By

Corrine Keating
Chloe Bateeman
Vicky Nolan
Gabriella Laki
Ann-Marie Concannon
Plan for Today

• Introduce Over The Wall
• Links to Occupational Therapy
• Benefits of volunteering to OTs/OT students
• Experience a camp activity!
What is Over The Wall?

- A national children’s charity
- Their purpose is to provide life-changing experiences to children (8-17) who are affected by serious/life-limiting illnesses e.g. cancer
Part of Hole in the Wall

- Over The Wall is part of The Association of Hole in the Wall Camps
- Which has camps for seriously ill children in over 50 countries including:
- Africa, Asia, Europe, South America and USA
Doing something new
Being part of a team
Having fun!
Video

A video from Over the Wall summer Camps!

Over the Wall - Kids version - YouTube
Occupational Therapy and Children

“OT enables people to achieve health, well being & life satisfaction through participation in occupation”

(College of Occupational Therapists, 2004a)
Play

• Play is:
  “an important lifelong occupation and a powerful tool for intervention with children with disabilities, whether they be physical, psychiatric or both”
(Bundy, 1996: cited in Louger, 2001:68)
“Since 1999 many of the UK’s most seriously ill children have been able to go swimming, catch their first fish, dance in the sunshine, perform centre stage and create the memories of a lifetime” Over The Wall
Play

• Traumatised children unable to verbalise distress, fears & hopes
• Children can explore their feelings & emotions through creative expressive play
• Build relationships with the other children
• Join in more: unable to do this as much in school due to lost time

(Lougher, 2001)
• Children have freedom to choose their own activities
• Play aids development of child and performance skills
• Increases interaction with other children
  (Duncan, 2011)
Client centred practice

• OTs are holistic practitioners
• Client centred practice at core
• Children encouraged to talk about their life experiences, around illness or disability if they wish to
• Help to develop meaningful life stories (Duncan, 2011)
Doing, Being, Becoming

- Children express their individuality when playing
- Taking part in childhood occupations is essential for healthy development
- Learn new skills/new experiences
- Helps build self esteem
- Gives sense of belonging

(Rodger & Ziviani. 2006)
Doing, Being, Becoming

• Doing – Being. Child can experience inner sense of peace & contentment
• Becoming – occupations define what we are, what we will become
• Not being able to do – Some children with disability/illness do not have the same opportunities to engage in meaningful play
• Can lead to reduced sense of self/affect who they will become

(Rodger & Ziviani, 2006)
Environments?

• Natural Environment

‘It is a beautiful place filled with all different flowers...... There is a secret garden which I find peaceful’ (Girl Aged 9, Kiernan & Maclachlan 2002)

• Structure, timetabled activities

• Change from Home environment
  Opportunities to be with peers who are unwell like them.

• Opportunity for time away from family and usual environment
Therapeutic aspects of Leisure

- Social support and social acceptance
- Self efficacy and Competency
Therapeutic aspects of leisure continued...

- Cope and deal with stress
- Provide continuity in life after experiencing disability.
Importance of Volunteering

In the UK, 22 million people volunteer each year for an average of four hours per week, providing services worth £40 billion per year (Institute for Volunteering Research, 1997).
Benefits of Volunteering: From an OT Student Perspective

- Communication skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Teamwork
- Opportunities to gain more skills
- Adaptability
- Influence future interventions
- Feel part of the community
- Improve self-esteem
- Increase awareness of O.T
- Strengthen awareness of a particular client group

Benefits to OT’s/OT students
Reflection!

Importance of reflecting upon the camping experience.

The process of reflection is vital in professional education and practice.

Reflection as an aspect of learning from an experience.

(Creek & Porter, 2007)
After Eight Challenge!
References


• College of Occupational Therapists. (2004a). Definitions & Core Skills for Occupational Therapy. COT: London

References


References