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Theme MDG 2 Achieve universal primary education
Title The use of sensory modulation to achieve functionality in autistic spectrum disorders.

Introduction

Children with autistic spectrum disorders have difficulty fitting into the fast, noisy, bright and over stimulating environment within the schooling environment. Ayres sensory integration is the basis of sensory modulation which assists the child to cope with the environmental demands.

Rationale

The theoretical constructs of sensory modulation and sensory thresholds will be explained. The behavioural responses of self-regulation (Dunn 2002) and developmental pathways to anxiety (Greenspan 2004) together with the anxiety feedback loop (White 2002) will be explained with the use of a case study of an autistic child.

Method

Theoretical concepts are listed and diagrammatically depicted. The photo illustrated treatment session shows sensory modulation and sensory integrative techniques to assist the child to self-modulate.

Results

The functional outcomes of the child with autism are described over the 18 month period of treatment.

Implications

Occupational therapists have a focus on the functional ability of the child within the school situation, the home environment within the family and the effects on the community at large. Treatment involves the child, the family and the interaction within the community. This is particularly relevant to the autistic spectrum disorders.