

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

PSYCHOLOGY

SPEECH THERAPY

BASED AT THERApeace

What to consider when choosing a therapist?

(information from STAR academy – Lucie Millar)- Marilize Botha

WHEN AND WHO?

If you suspect that you (or your child) need help or if you (or your child) have been referred – you now have to search for the “right” therapist. Occupational therapists, speech therapists, psychologists and play therapists might all be part of the team involved in the therapy plan. The team may include others like physiotherapists or doctors. Where do you start? Here are a few guidelines to consider:

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A THERAPIST?

Finding and selecting a therapist to help your child, yourself, and/or your family is an important decision. Like all professionals, there are different trainings, philosophies, and personalities. The best choice is a therapist who is a good “fit” for your child and yourself – someone you and/or your child likes and with whom you feel connected

You will also want to look for a therapist who follows methods known to be associated with effective treatment. These include:

- **Qualifications** that ensure the therapist is trained and stays up to date with the latest research, techniques and theories. A degree is not always enough.
- **Uses a combination of modalities** with traditional therapy that can impact the success and carryover of therapy. This may include modalities such as DIR/ Floortime, Sandplay, Forebrain, Tomatis listening therapy, interactive metronome as well as therapeutic listening.
- **Provides direct 1-to-1 treatment** to ensure individualised goals, and to ensure these goals are met.
- **Includes a diagnostic evaluation** before you begin treatment and delivers it in easily understandable, written form. (If there are sections with jargon that you don't understand, ask for an explanation before agreeing to treatment.)
- **Makes parent education an integral part of the treatment program**, and we don't mean five minutes at the end of a treatment session! Parents need and deserve much more than that! Several dedicated hours for

parent feedback and education should be built into the treatment plan.

- **Provides goals for treatment before** you begin treatment to assure that everyone is “on the same page” about priorities
- **Provides intensive treatment options** (at least twice a week, but up to daily therapy) over a shorter time duration rather than once-a-week treatment. Weekly treatment can produce behavior changes, but research suggests that intensive treatment produces lasting neurological changes as well as changes in behavior.
- **Uses play and success** to produce change and foster self-esteem. In good therapy, children think they are playing. If a child continues crying during treatment sessions, the therapist may not be skilled in providing security and challenges *with* success, which is a key-stone to treatment effectiveness.
- **Asks questions** that will lead to effective understanding of you, your child, and your family. Don't be afraid to ask questions yourself either! If you don't understand what your therapist is doing, it is crucial to confirm that his or her methods and activities are grounded in sound therapeutic concepts and part of a well-defined strategy. If the therapist cannot clearly answer your questions, it may be a red flag that he or she lacks the training or understanding to provide effective intervention.
- **Listens to you**, believes you, and fully believes in the potential of your child to change. The outcomes of therapy are functional changes – differences that you, your child's teacher, and others can see. Finally, but not least important, it is important to look at the therapy facility. The facilities should provide a calm therapeutic environment, with enough equipment to give a variety of opportunities to contribute to effective treatment.

Find out about our team and facilities at www.therapeace.co.za

Blooming parenting

A morning workshop with
International speaker and Author
Lizanne du Plessis

3 September 2016, 09:00—13:00

R250pp

Fountainebleau Community Church

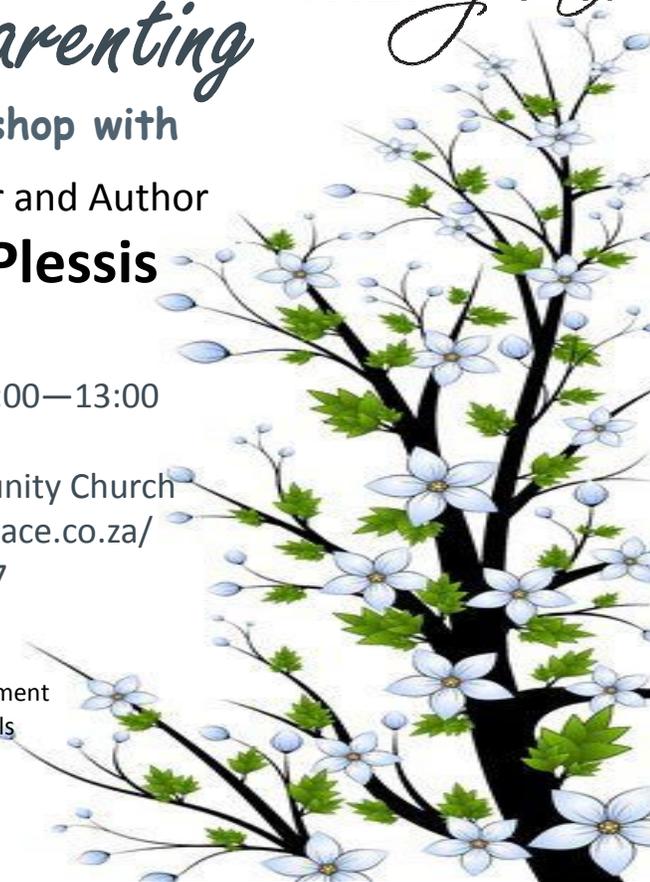
Tickets: info@therapeace.co.za/

072 3719737

Workshop topics include:

- My child's Brain Development
- Intentional parenting tools
- Boundaries
- Facing challenging times

THERA*peace*



Challenge at home...

Providing your child with Sensory Rich Experiences

Part two of two by Millicent Roux

Tactile:

The tactile sense detects light touch, deep pressure, texture, temperature, vibration, and pain. This includes both the skin covering your body and the skin lining the inside of your mouth. Our tactile system tell us where we end and where the outside world begins. It lays the foundation for bonding and for fine motor skills.

Toddlers and Pre-schoolers:

- Food and drink. Let your child drink plain water or carbonated mineral water to experience bubbles in their mouth (you can flavour it with a little juice or with lemon, lime, etc.). eat food with a variety of textures like crunchy cereals and soft fruits.
- Messy play with textures. Have your

child play with foamy soap or shaving cream, and add sand for extra texture. Have your child fingerpaint, play with glitter glue, mix cookie dough and cake batter, and so on. Let your child use the playground sandbox or create your own at home, filling a bin with dry beans and rice or other materials and small toys. Cover and store

the bin for future use.

- Use child-friendly modelling material such as Play-Doh (the classic Play-Doh Fun Factory provides excellent proprioceptive input as well). Never force a child who is unwilling to touch "yucky" substances. Let him use a paintbrush, stick, or even a toy for cautious exploration.

- Dress up. Dress up in fun costumes to get used to the feel of unfamiliar clothing
- Soap crayons and bath paints make for fun bath time and water play

School-age kids:

- Food and drink. Provide your child with frozen foods (popsicles, frozen fruit or vegetables) and mixed temperature foods (hot fudge sundae, hot potato with cold toppings, etc.).
- Get in touch with nature. Encourage him to walk barefoot in the grass), sand, or dirt. Have him garden and re-pot indoor plants.
- Play dress-ups. Encourage play with make-up, face painting, and costumes, putting on a play or making a mini movie with a video camera.

Auditory

Auditory input refers to both what we hear and how we listen, and is physiologically connected with the vestibular sense. In addition to various types of recorded and live music. Here are some ways kids can get calming and organising auditory input.

- Get outside and listen. Go to the park

or sit still and listen to the rain, thunder, and so on. If you hear birds singing, try to identify what direction a given bird is calling from.

- Listen to natural sound recordings. There are many recordings of rain falling, ocean waves, bird songs, and so on. Sometimes natural sound recordings also feature light instrumentation with flutes, keyboards, etc. Some children and adults find they sleep better if they play such music.
- Play a listening game. You and your child sit very quietly and try to identify the sounds you hear (traffic, the hum of the refrigerator, a door shutting, etc.) and where it's coming from.
- Find calming, focusing music. Listen to music specially engineered to promote calm, focus, energy, or creativity. Keep in mind, of course, that musical preference is highly idiosyncratic, so this will take some experimentation. The music you love may distress your child, while the music he finds so soothing may drive you up the wall.

- Encourage musician-ship. Provide your child with a musical instrument and encourage him to play and even take lessons.
- Use household objects as different musical instruments and explore the different sound that they make.
- Give him some control. For a child with auditory sensitivity, predicting and controlling sounds can be very helpful. Encourage him to turn on the vacuum cleaner, help him pop the balloons after a birthday party, anticipating the noise.

Visual

Most of what we learn and do comes through our visual system.

- Encourage seek and find games
- Identify and match properties of objects
- Build puzzles
- Play with lego
- Do mazes and dot to dot activities

Sample Sensory Diet

In the Morning

- Massage feet and back to help wake up
- Use vibrating toothbrush and/or vibrating hairbrush
- Eat crunchy cereal with fruit and some protein

- Jump on mini-trampoline as directed

After school

- Play outside or go to a playground for at least 30 minutes
- Push grocery cart or stroller, or monkey bar activity
- Spinning as directed
- Mini-trampoline. Add variety: have him play catch or toss toys into a basket while jumping.
- Massage feet to "reorganise," use therapy putty, make "body sandwiches," wheelbarrow walk
- Do ball exercises as directed
- Oral work — suck thick liquids through a straw, eat crunchy and chewy snacks, or chew gum before and/or during table-top activities

At dinnertime

- Help with cooking, mixing, chopping, etc.
- Help set table, using two hands to carry and balance a tray
- Provide crunchy and chewy foods

At night

- Family time: clay projects, painting projects, etc.
- Warm bath with bubbles and calming essential oil
- Massage during reading time