



Program Narrative

Behavioral and Psycho-Social Challenges in the Classroom and at Home: Strategies and Solutions for Therapists, Educators and Program Administrative Personnel

Presented by Miriam Manela, OTR

Developer of the Thrive Method

Description of Program - Overview:

This is a one day, 2-module workshop that is specifically designed to help therapists and educators. Participants will gain key tenets where if implemented correctly will enrich their educational career experience.

Module 1 - Provides proven strategies and interventions that therapists and educators will be able to use in order to predict, prevent and manage problematic behaviors and attitudes that are faced daily in their classrooms.

Module 2 - Provides proven enhancements towards the development of a constructive relationship with each client in their care.

MODULE ONE

Inside Sensory Processing Challenges in Students: Strategies and Solutions for Therapists and Educators

In Sensory Processing Challenges in Students, therapists and educators will attain a unique in depth understanding of the underlying sensory issues that affect children in the classroom, therapy and beyond. A wide variety of practical tools and sensory processing strategies to develop adaptive responses will be taught and role played, as described in depth below. These can be used to effect immediate changes in behaviors and learning outcomes by predicting, preventing and managing problematic behaviors and attitudes that are faced daily in their classrooms and in therapy. This will benefit not only the problematic child but also their peers by minimizing classroom disruption and freeing up time and energy to focus on the prepared curriculum in school and in the therapy setting.

The learning objectives will be infused with real-life case studies in an effort to further the practicality of the course.

MODULE TWO
**Relationship as a Foundation for
 Behavioral, and Social-Emotional Challenges in Students:
 Strategies and Solutions for Therapists and Educators**

In Behavioral and Social-Emotional Challenges, attendants will learn an insightful understanding of Attachment Theory (which is based on years of experience and successes) which will result in a constructive relationship between therapists, educators and their students. This will be used to effect changes in students’ behavior (the dream of every parent, therapist and educator). A variety of practical tools and strategies will be thoroughly reviewed and practiced together in order to incorporate “Proactive Methodology” and develop adaptive responses in the school and therapy setting.

Upon completing the workshop, participants will take with them effective, practical tools and sensory strategies to incorporate into the daily setting, so they can do what they do best—Treat!

Summary of the Daily Schedule
Module 1

Stage	Time	Learning Objective	Description	Duration
1 -	8:00-9:00	Understanding the Sensory systems	Relating specific behavioral and social-emotional challenges to specific sensory processing disorders	1 Hour
2 -	9:00-10:30	Techniques for Sensory Application in the Classroom	Develop a repertoire of techniques and sensory strategies to cultivate adaptive responses in the school setting and beyond	1.5 Hours
3 -	10:30-11:00	Role playing	Self regulation tools and techniques to help students and teachers obtain an optimal calm state	.5 Hours
Total				3 Hours

Module Two

Stage	Time	Topic	Learning Objective	Duration
1 -	12:00- 12:30	Understanding Attachment	Relate specific behavioral and social-emotional challenges to anxious attachment and avoidant attachment strategies	.5 Hours
2 -	12:30- 2:30	Techniques for Student Development	Understand how to use the teacher-student relationship to effect changes in behavior	2 Hours
3 -	2:30- 3:00	Role Play	Develop a repertoire of techniques and strategies to help children develop adaptive responses in the school setting and beyond	.5 Hours
Total				3

Description of Program - Detail:

Coping with students who exhibit challenging behaviors and attitudes can be frustrating and difficult. It also may prevent an optimal teaching or therapy environment, and typically, negatively affect the progression of the school curriculum and therapy. Students feel misunderstood, shamed, blamed, and controlled. The Thrive Method will help students feel understood and proud enough to cooperate, yet firmly guided so that they will no longer have the need to exhibit disruptive or negative behavior. In addition, this will increase the impact the school has on their academic performance by enabling each student to reach their maximum potential. The results will positively affect their personal lives and also the well-being and education of the other students to progress academically, as there is less disruption and disturbance.

Both modules will provide a unique and in depth understanding of the critical facets of sensory and social-emotional challenges that will provide participants with the appropriate tools for understanding the reasons behind specific behaviors and attitudes. After participants understand the source of the problem, they will then be taught how to tailor their approach towards the specific issue they are encountering. These unique approaches will positively affect changes

in attitude, behavior, and academic performance of the students. The result will not only provide for a smooth running classroom but also will mitigate and often eliminate the problem. Participants will learn the relationship between *Anxious Attachment and *Avoidant Attachment and strategies to overcome behavioral and social-emotional challenges.

*Please check glossary of terms below

Specifically, this course will study the sensory challenges of the “Heat Seeking Missile”, “The Squeaky Wheel”, “Child-On-the-Edge” and “The Princess and the Pea” from the book The Parent-Child Dance. The common behavioral disruptions that will be addressed include:

- Anxiety, rigidity, and controlling behavior
- Distractibility, difficulty paying attention and focusing
- Lack of motivation or being withdrawn
- Lack of respect for others’ and own property
- Bullying, taunting, shaming, and intimidation
- Tantrums
- Class-clown and attention-seeking
- Risk-taking behaviors
- Physical aggression (shoving, kicking, hitting, and spitting)
- And other behaviors that prevent educators from effectively educating the children in their care.

Therapists and teachers need effective methods to transform challenging behaviors into positive attitudes and abilities so they can spend more time helping their students’ progress academically and less time dealing with disruptive behaviors.

Methods to accomplish the services proposed:

The methods used to accomplish the objectives proposed, will be through following the detailed steps below. These steps also identify what the educators will learn from the training:

1. **Overview:** An insightful understanding of the reasons for student’s social-emotional and sensory challenges from a pediatric behavior expert, occupational therapist Miriam Manela OTR.
2. **Evidence based prevention:** How to predict, prevent, and manage challenging behavior using proven strategies from the Thrive Method.

3. **Underlying Causes of Challenging Behavior and Performance:** Gain a richer understanding of sensory-integration; cognitive and inner-core strategies; unique techniques of mouth-based regulation; regulating the student; self-regulation; effective psychological strategies; touch and/or non-invasive touch responses; understanding the reason behind the behavior; and more.
4. **Empowerment Strategies:** Dozens of effective interventions they can use to shape behavior and improve academic learning. Driving the behavior of the student appropriately will generate motivation and promote personal positive performance.
5. **Mind posture:** Interventions to help therapists and educators regulate themselves, and achieve calmness and mindfulness during disruptions, so that they are able to quickly regulate the student, without personal enmeshment and emotional reactivity.
6. **Family support:** An introduction to creating effective whole-family outreach strategies which support student's positive behavior at school and at home.
7. **Interactive demonstrations:**
 - a. **Coaching to resolve real-time and current issues:** Join in on a Dynamic Case Study Analysis where participants will present current examples from their programs and together we will generate an effective approach to addressing the student's therapy and classroom issues. This will enable partakers to receive performance coaching in a group setting that will allow themselves and their peers to develop solutions to challenging case scenarios based on the methods learned throughout the course.
 - b. **Role play** - Demonstrate and synthesize course materials in a Mock Classroom setting.
8. **Practical Takeaways - "The Thrive Guide":** Participants will have the opportunity to create their own personalized Before-and-After Guide, which they will be able to use as a reference and guide in their own personal sessions and classrooms. This guide will be based on the methods and approaches being taught throughout the day that has been created by Thrive and tailored to the participants of this training.

Length of Workshop:

This is a 6 hour workshop consisting of 2 modules. Each module extends for 3 hours of which the time will be bifurcated into teaching, role playing, mock classroom sessions and documenting results and takeaways of the training.

Glossary of Terms:

Attachment theory: Created by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth, this theory is based on the important bond created between a caregiver and infant and the idea that it sets a precedent for future relationships with adults, including the type of attachment that the child will have with other adults throughout their lives. There are 4 attachment types: secure, avoidant, anxious (resistant/ambivalent), and disorganized/ disoriented.¹ The teacher will be able to learn how to pick up on the type of attachment a child has and be able to apply the strategies taught to reshape the attachment between the teacher-child relationships in the classroom. Reshaping the attachment pattern from a negative one to a positive one will be used to improve the child's' occupational performance in the school setting and allow them to engage in school activities as their peers are.

Anxious attachment: A child with this type of attachment may demand a lot of attention from their teacher, need constant reassurance, and may also present as distrusting and with a constant fear of being rejected.² These are many needs that a teacher would need to attend to when trying to run a classroom. The teacher will be able to utilize the strategies from the workshop to reshape this negative attachment to a positive one in order to allow both the student and the teacher to expend their energy on the roles they have at school.

Avoidant Attachment: A child with this type of attachment are very independent from the adult figures in their lives. They have come to cope with their needs on their own without seeking the guidance or comfort from an adult when distressed. In the classroom, this may present as the child who does not communicate their troubles or negative emotions to the teacher and may avoid socializing altogether.³ They are the child who will suppress their feelings until they reach a breaking point; presenting itself as an outburst of anger or as a tantrum.

¹ Case-Smith & O'Brien, 2010.

² Catlett, 2016.

³ Bergin & Bergin, 2009.

Regulation

The ability to control one's activity level and state of alertness, as well as one's emotional, mental or physical responses to senses; self-organization.⁴

Sensory Integration

The brain's ability to absorb information from our senses, organize it, and respond appropriately. In essence, it is the organization of the senses that provide each of us with an understanding of ourselves and the world.⁵

Sensory Processing

This is the process that occurs whenever sensory information is received by the body. The nervous system interprets the sensory information and organizes it in order to create an appropriate motor or behavioral response.⁶ When the sensory information cannot reach or be interpreted in the central nervous system, the child will have difficulty formulating appropriate and modulated responses to the input they received from their environment. This will result in either over-reacting to stimuli or under-reacting. In the classroom, this may be the student that seems to have difficulty transitioning from one activity to the next, the child that is easily distracted, overly stimulated at the playground, overreacts to touch, noise or smell, slow to learn new activities, clumsy, or uses an inappropriate amount of force when handling objects. This would require a greater effort by the teacher to ensure that the child does not get left behind in class material because they have sensory needs that other children in the class may not have. Understanding what it means to have issues with sensory processing will allow the teacher to have a different perspective on the behaviors of the child with a compassionate approach.

Contact Information:

Miriam Manela, OTR at Thrive Occupational Therapy LLC

Phone: 917-573-5540

Email: Miriam@otthrive.com

Website: OTthrive.com

⁴ Manela, 2016.

⁵ Manela, 2016.

⁶ STAR Institute, 2017.

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