

EXAMINING THE WILBARGER'S DEEP PRESSURE AND PROPRIOCEPTIVE TECHNIQUE FOR TREATING CHILDREN WITH SENSORY DEFENSIVENESS USING A MULTIPLE SINGLE CASE STUDY APPROACH

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Background: The need for occupational therapy services has risen exponentially and the sensory integration framework is used commonly when working with children. The Wilbargers' technique/ approach is known to be used by occupational therapists, however, lack of sufficient research in this area leads to a need for examining this approach.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine the Wilbargers' approach in children presenting with sensory defensiveness and to investigate parent/carer perspectives on the effectiveness of this technique.

Method: A prospective multiple single case design was used with convenient sampling. Five children eligible for early childhood intervention services were recruited for this study and three tools were used to collect data, the *Sensory Profile* (Dunn, 1999), sensory interviews and a parent questionnaire. Goals were drawn with the parent/carer, and *Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS)*, (Kiresuk & Sherman, 1968) was used as an outcome measure.

Results: The *Statistical Package of Social Sciences Version 17* was used for data entry, storage, retrieval and generation of descriptive statistics and paired samples tests.

The results indicated a significant statistical difference in scores on *Sensory Profile* scores and *GAS* scores with a large effect size.

Conclusion: The results from the *Sensory Profile* scores and *GAS* scores seem to support the use of the DPPT in children presenting with sensory defensiveness. The results from parent questionnaires and interviews support the use of The Wilbargers' technique and most parents found it conducive to family centred practice principles as well as increased participation of their children in everyday routines.