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Supporting UOP TRiO Success Students from the Occupational Therapy Perspective

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Supporting UOP TRiO Success Students from the Occupational Therapy Perspective

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Site Mentor: Rosie Montes
UOP Mentor: Shawna Townsend OTR



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Background

OT's role in higher education (TRiO) for the adult learner

- **Promoting occupational balance, health and wellness**
- **Optimizing academic performance**
- **Support for first generation students**
- **Examining areas of occupations impacted by school**
 - **Health management**
 - **Rest and sleep**
 - **Play, leisure and social participation**

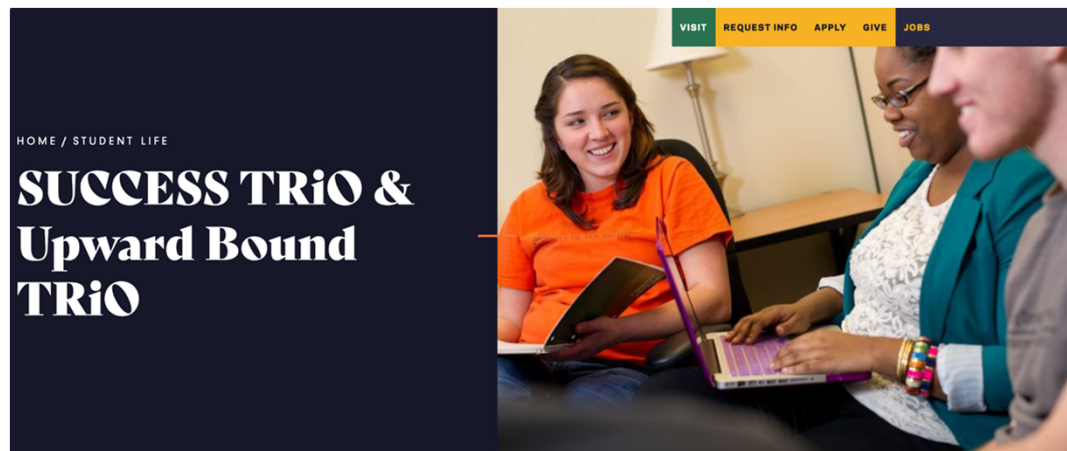
OT's role in sensory regulation in an academic setting

- **Sensory strategies: calming, alerting, and organizational tools.**
- **Improve focus, and promote emotional regulation**
- **Creating sensory diets: incorporating activities, strategies or tools to address the sensory needs of students**
- **Education and training academic staff and personnel**



TRiO Success Program Purpose

- TRiO Success Program: supports first-generation low income students
 - Services provided: Tutoring, financial assistance, academic, personal and career counseling.
 - TRiO Success Goals:
 - Promote and empower first generation students in personal, social development and academic endeavors.



Literature Review

Meetings with staff members, interviewed students week 1-2, environmental scans

Literature review findings:

- Transitioning into higher education is very stressful to students and impacts areas of occupations including sleep, mental health and wellness.
 - More prone to experience emotional dysregulation
- First-generation students experience higher levels of academic stress compared to their peers.
- Cultural barriers and roles significantly impact first-generation students.
- There is a lack of evidence supporting emotional and sensory regulation interventions for adult students in higher education.
 - Emotional and sensory regulation/strategies heavily associated with pediatric care

(House, Neal, & Kolb, 2019), Teixeira, R. J., Brandão, T., & Dores, A. R. (2021).



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Needs Assessment

Needs of TRiO

- Promote health, wellness, and interconnectedness among TRiO Success students
- Address academic stress proactively and intervene before students reach a mental health crisis
- ~~Develop strategies to support students early and de-escalate critical stress levels.~~
- Establish a program to strengthen connections among TRiO Success students and empower them.

Findings

- Contextual factors that impacts students
- Client factors: values, beliefs, spirituality
 - Social and cultural barriers made it challenging for students to seek assistance or open up to the TRiO Success department.
- Main occupations affected due to academic stress/load + time management
 - Leisure and social participation
 - Rest and sleep
 - Health management
- Other
 - Creating a simple program or guide to promote student engagement and carry over
 - Lack of knowledge in positive coping skills and emotional and sensory regulation techniques



Capstone Program Purpose

Emotional + sensory regulation wellness program for TRiO Success

- Goals:
- Promote social connectedness between TRiO Success students
 - Promote occupational balance for TRiO Success students
 - Education, work, play, leisure and social participation
 - Encourage social participation, play and leisure
 - Developing healthy performance patterns
 - Time management, engaging in leisure, and social participation.
 - Promote emotional and sensory regulation for TRiO Success students
 - Provide students different techniques to cope - engage in routines and other daily activities meaningfully
 - Increase knowledge of emotional and sensory regulation for TRiO Success Department



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Guiding Theory

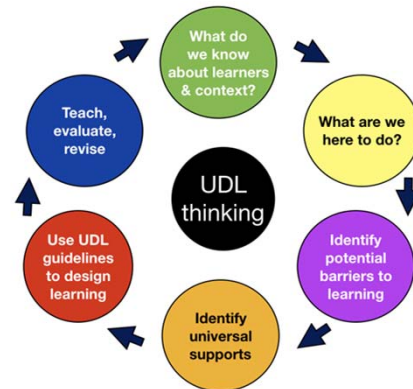
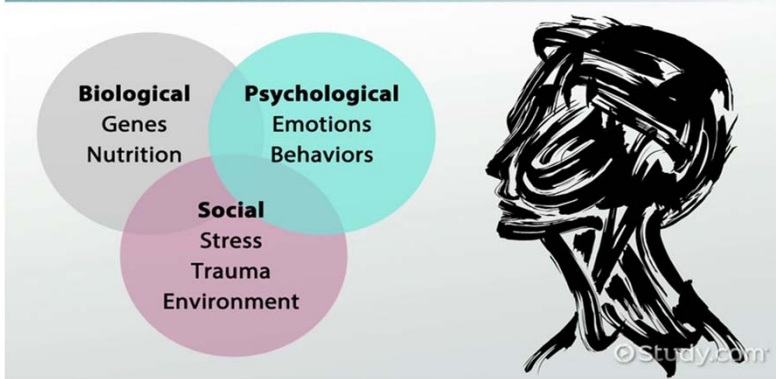
Biopsychosocial model: Holistic perspective and client centered approach

- **Considers biological, psychological and social factors that may impact students occupations as a student**
 - Psychosomatic symptoms of stress
 - Sociocultural factors

Universal Learning Design: Different means of engagement, representation, action and expression

- **Create accessible and inclusive educational environment**
- **Address the diverse needs of students and department staff**
- **Improve student engagement in TRiO**

WHAT IS THE BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL MODEL?



Roley, S. S., Mailloux, Z., Miller-Kuhaneck, H., & Glennon, T. (2007).



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Deliverables: Change the World from Within Sensory Activity Program

Collaboration with humanities department: “Change the World from Within” workshop presentation series

Created a sensory activity program in conjunction with each workshop that was hosted

- Workshop 1 - Speak Life: Power of Words
 - Gustatory activity: Ice cream social
- Workshop 2 - Be Unstoppable: Persistence
 - Tactile activity: Slime mindfulness activity
- Workshop 3 - Power of creativity
 - Gustatory activity: DIY Snack kit
- Workshop 4 - Power of connection
 - Auditory activity: Outdoor walk mindfulness activity
- Workshop 5 - Power of vision
 - Vision activity: Vision board making
- Workshop 6 - Whats your super power
 - Interoception activity : Body mapping/coloring mindfulness activity
- Workshop 7 - Power of attitude
 - Vestibular & proprioceptive activity: exercise program
- Workshop 8 - Power of being you
 - Olfactory activity : Smelling jars

Created guide on how to do activity and rationale.

Provides opportunity for students to get emotionally regulated, self reflect, and promote social connectedness between TRiO members.



Deliverables: Sensory Decompression Kit + Sensory Activities Incorporated

Sensory bin + sensory activities written down as well:

- Items:

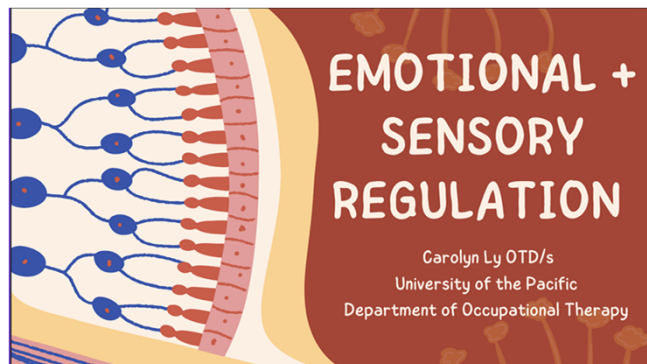
- Bubble set + Bubble mindfulness/sensory activity
- Wobble cushions + How to use wobble cushion
- Weighted plushie + How to use weighted plushie
- Slinky + Slinky mindfulness activity
- Essential oils + Essential oil mindfulness/sensory activity
- Scavenger hunt bottle + Scavenger hunt bottle activity
- Etch a sketch doodle board
- Fidget cube
- Squishy ball toy (3)
- Spiral art toy



Deliverables: Workshop Training Program for TRiO + Student Life

Workshop training program for TRiO & Student Life Division:

- Topics discussed:
 - Emotional regulation, sensory processing and academic stress
 - How to recognize when a student is emotionally dysregulated
 - Incorporating multisensory design for emotional regulation
 - Time management and sensory diet activity
 - Sensory bin, how to use sensory bin and how to create a sensory bin



Since most of my classes started @ 8: I can do activities to regulate myself BEFORE CLASS i.e. morning writing, working out or sensory activity of choice.

Go to: [calendar link]

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00 AM: [Sensory break]	8:00 AM: [Sensory break]	8:00 AM: [Sensory break]	8:00 AM: study + sensory break	8:00 AM: [Sensory break]	8:00 AM: [Sensory break]	8:00 AM: [Sensory break]
10:00 AM: [Sensory break]	10:00 AM: [Sensory break + study]	10:00 AM: [Sensory break]	10:00 AM: [Sensory break]	10:00 AM: [Sensory break]	10:00 AM: [Sensory break]	10:00 AM: [Sensory break]
11:00 AM: [Sensory break]	11:00 AM: [Sensory break]	11:00 AM: [Sensory break]	11:00 AM: [Sensory break]	11:00 AM: [Sensory break]	11:00 AM: [Sensory break]	11:00 AM: [Sensory break]
1:00 PM: [Sensory break]	1:00 PM: [Sensory break]	1:00 PM: [Sensory break]	1:00 PM: [Sensory break]	1:00 PM: [Sensory break]	1:00 PM: [Sensory break]	1:00 PM: [Sensory break]
3:00 PM: [Sensory break]	3:00 PM: [Sensory break]	3:00 PM: [Sensory break]	3:00 PM: [Sensory break]	3:00 PM: [Sensory break]	3:00 PM: [Sensory break]	3:00 PM: [Sensory break]
5:00 PM: [Sensory break]	5:00 PM: [Sensory break]	5:00 PM: [Sensory break]	5:00 PM: [Sensory break]	5:00 PM: [Sensory break]	5:00 PM: [Sensory break]	5:00 PM: [Sensory break]

Try to reevaluate yourself between classes. Is one you over/under stimulation? Is what sensory activity you will benefit from?

For smaller time gaps like 15 min. Is pull outidget Is breathing exercise Is quick workout jumping to p. aliveness Is listen to a quick song Is have a mindful snack Is quick massage to promote calmness

Even though the students are studying alot... SLEEP HYGIENE IS ALSO CRUCIAL NO all nighters & 8-10 hours of sleep!

SCHEDULE OTD IS CAPATIONS.



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Deliverables: Resource Guide for TRiO

- Wobble + sensory chair recommendations
- Resources to consider:
 - Locations: Local stores within a 5 mi radius near UOP Stockton campus
 - Sensory items that targeted each sensory system
 - With links + price points
- Sensory system handouts + explanations
- Guide on how to create sensory regulation bin
- Emotional/sensory regulation presentation video to refer back to



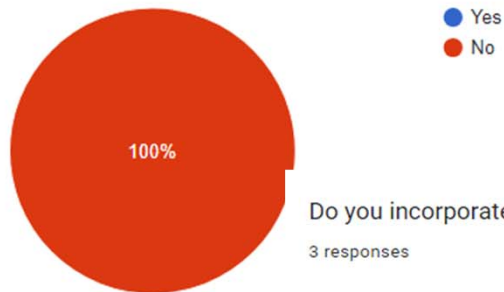
Outcomes: Pre Workshop Survey

TRiO Pre Workshop survey

- Not really familiar with sensory/emotional regulation techniques
- Do not use sensory/emotional regulation techniques/strategies to guide activities
- 66% incorporate mental health/wellness activities
- 33.3% do not incorporate mental health/wellness activities

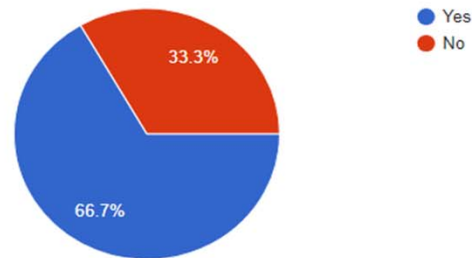
Do you use any sensory/emotional regulation techniques or strategies to guide activities you host for TRiO?

3 responses



Do you incorporate any mental health and wellness activities?

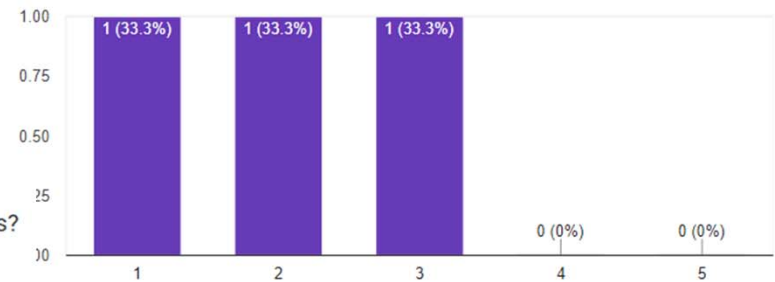
3 responses



How familiar are you with the topic sensory/emotional regulation techniques?

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3 responses



- 1 - not familiar
- 2 - not really familiar
- 3 - somewhat familiar



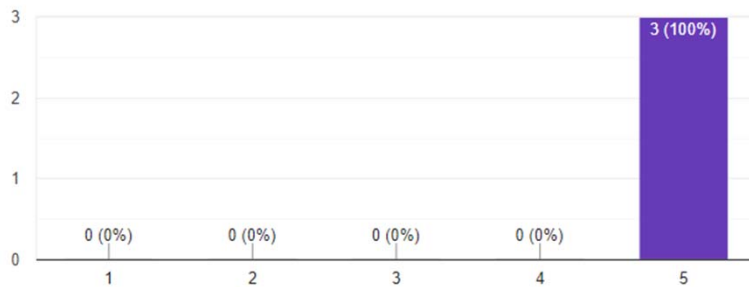
Outcomes: Post-workshop survey

TRiO Postworkshop Survey

- Feel more confident in recognizing emotionally dysregulated students and how to intervene
- Very likely to use sensory/emotional regulation techniques in future TRiO activities
- Feel very familiar with sensory/emotional regulation after workshop presentation

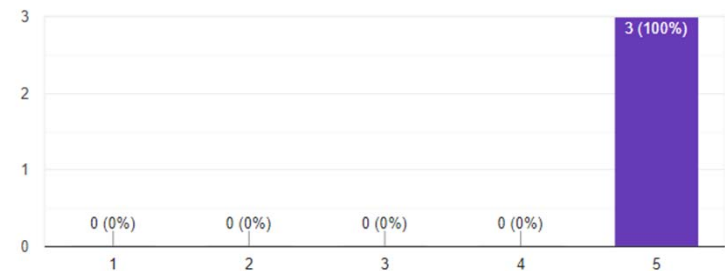
How likely are you to use sensory/emotional regulation techniques in future TRiO activities [Copy](#)

3 responses



Do you feel more familiar with sensory and emotional regulation after the workshop presentation? [Copy](#)

3 responses



Impact

Impact on TRiO Success & UOP OT Department :

- Activity workshop program available for upcoming fall semester
- First, provided TRiO Success on emotional and sensory regulation
 - Then, did an inservice to the Student Life Division
- Educated UOP TRiO Success, Humanities Department and Student Life Division about OT.
- Incorporated sensory items throughout TRiO Success Department
 - TRiO bought additional weighted plushies after presentation and demonstrated it to UOP High School Summer Institute event, and placed it office.
 - Student Life Division is now encouraged to incorporate sensory items throughout office



Discussion/Future implications

Sensory diet/regulation is a term typically used for the neurodivergent community but...

- Everyone has their own sensory needs and preferences
- Promoting students to help understand their sensory needs to promote emotional regulation
 - For students to engage in their occupations in a healthy and meaningful way

Sensory balance: A lot of us do it without realizing it!

- Routines activities to “wake up” or “calm down”
 - Coffee, showers, working out?
- Shaking our legs, fidgeting with hair, hands, items.

Future implications:

- Future OTD student - Emphasis on trauma informed care (TIC)
- Expand role of school based OT beyond grade level students and into adult population and higher education
- Incorporating sensory/emotional regulation tools campus wide!



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