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Perceptions of individuals participating in B.E.A.R. P.A.W. Center Life Skills Program: persons with IADL goals

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Perceptions of Individuals Participating in B.E.A.R. P.A.W. Center

Life Skills Program: Persons with IADL Goals

A Doctoral Experiential Capstone Project Final Report

Presented to the Faculty of Western New England University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Entry-Level Doctorate

in

Occupational Therapy

by

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July 2023

Perceptions of Individuals Participating in B.E.A.R. P.A.W. Center

Life Skills Program: Persons with IADL Goals

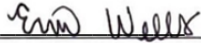
A Doctoral Experiential Capstone Project Final Report

By

Alisha Bailey, OT/s

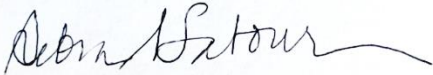
July 2023

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Abstract

Individuals with disabilities often face challenges in occupational engagement, particularly with instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), which significantly impact their independence and quality of life. The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) defines occupational engagement as a person's ability to engage in occupation based on choice, motivation and meaning in a supportive context both environmental and personal factors (AOTA, 2020). For instance, a study conducted by Raina et al. (2020) demonstrated that 43.9% to 61.7% of individuals with these chronic conditions developed an IADL disability over a span of five years. While life skills programs for individuals with disabilities exist across the United States, they often come at a high cost through various universities and community programs. The additional expenses incurred by households that include an adult with a disability are not adequately considered, leading to a disparity in accessing beneficial life skills services. On average, households with a disability require an additional 29% more income or an extra \$18,322 per year compared to households without a member with a disability to maintain the same standard of living (Morris et al., 2021).

Occupational engagement includes objective and subjective aspects of an individual's experience, and the use of occupation-based groups can serve to improve and promote occupational engagement for individuals in various populations. This pilot study aims to investigate how Life Skills groups addressing instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) provided at a student run pro bono occupational therapy clinic impacts clients' perceptions of occupational engagement. Participants were surveyed regarding the benefits of participating in the life skills groups and its impact on their self-efficacy when performing IADL tasks. A manual was created including group session activities deemed beneficial by participants and

researchers. By evaluating the impact on instrumental activities of daily living, the student researcher hoped to contribute valuable insights into the effectiveness of these services.

Introduction/Background

The Americans with Disabilities Act defines disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that affects one or more “major life activities,” which includes IADLs (ADA National Network, 2023). IADLs include activities, such as meal preparation, house cleaning, laundry, money management, phone use, and transportation. Performing IADLs often requires more cognitive skills such, as executive functioning, fine motor skills, and/or visual skills (Foster et al., 2021). IADLs can also reflect an individual’s values and culture and are meaningful and purposeful activities affected by environmental and contextual factors.

Occupational engagement in IADLs can directly affect an individual’s level of independence, access to their community, and overall quality of life. Many IADLs occur in a person’s home, work, or other outside environment, and are often affected by social and environmental factors. In a sample of 377 Dutch people aged ≥ 75 years, IADL disability items were found to be more prevalent indicators in the physical and mental areas related to quality of life. Additionally, IADL disability typically occurs earlier than activities of daily living (ADL) disability and directly affects quality of life outcomes (Gobbens, 2018). Individuals living with a disability have an increased likelihood of experiencing deficits in activities categorized as IADL, which affects their performance in meaningful occupations and overall independence.

In 2021, 13% of the population in the United States were living with a disability; of these, 35.6% of people living with a disability had an independent living disability and 18.4% had a self-care disability (Paul et al., 2023). An independent living disability was defined as a

disability affecting a person's performance in IADL tasks, and self-care disability was defined as a disability affecting a person's performance in ADL tasks.

Occupational engagement includes objective and subjective aspects of an individual's experience, and the use of occupation-based groups can serve to improve and promote occupational engagement for individuals in various populations. Through the development of a survey, this research project aimed to evaluate the impact on occupational engagement among clients receiving services related to instrumental activities of daily living. This pilot study aimed to investigate how Life Skills groups provided at a student run pro bono occupational therapy clinic impacts clients' perceptions of occupational engagement. Participants were surveyed regarding the benefits of participating in the life skills groups and its impact on their self-efficacy when performing IADL tasks. By partnering with the Bear Paw Center, this project intends to provide vital life skill services addressing IADLs for free in order to address the financial barrier that many clients seeking these services may face. By creating a life skills groups catalog and manual (Appendix D) this project can continue through the Bear Paw Center after the completion of the doctoral experiential capstone project and promote sustainability and service to community members.

Theoretical Framework

The Precede-Proceed model was utilized to plan and evaluate the project. This model highlights the social condition or diagnosis of the environment in which was especially relevant for this project (Binkley & Johnson, 2013). The first four phases of this model make up the precede portion and includes, the social diagnosis, epidemiological diagnosis, including behavioral and environmental diagnosis, educational and organizational diagnosis, and administrative and policy diagnosis. During the precede portion, a needs assessment was

completed to identify the specific gaps in care and needs for individuals with disabilities in the community seeking free life skills services focused on individual activities of daily living (IADLs) in order to drive the objective of our intervention. This needs assessment helped identify environmental, organizational, and behavioral factors affecting the process of obtaining these life skill services for individuals with disabilities and influencing their occupational engagement in IADLs. Administrative and policy diagnosis was also evaluated during the needs assessment. Further discussion with the site to learn about their administrative policies, and the necessary steps to take in order to get the project implemented within the Bear Paw Center occurred during the preced portion of the model.

Following the preceding portion, the proceed portion of the model began consisting of, implementation, process evaluation, impact evaluation, and outcome evaluation. After meeting with the site, evaluating needs and understanding supports in the environment and administrative policy, the creation of life skills groups addressing IADLs was implemented within the Bear Paw Center for individuals with a goal in increasing occupational engagement in the area of IADLs. Once the program was implemented, the process was continuously evaluated to ensure that project objectives were being met and if the intended impact was occurring. Group participants were asked to identify their personal goals in increasing IADL performance at intake and asked to provide feedback on the activities and interventions provided throughout the programming. The desired impact of this project was to increase perceptions of occupational engagement in areas of instrumental activities of daily living for Bear Paw Center clients; this was measured by a post-survey at the completion of the program. The post-evaluation also evaluated whether the program outcomes align with the desired outcomes at the creation of this program.

Doctoral Experiential Project Overview

The Doctoral Experiential (DEx) Capstone project was conducted over a span of 14 weeks at the B.E.A.R. P.A.W. Center (BPC), a pro bono, student run occupational therapy center located in the doctor of occupational therapy program at Western New England University. The purpose of this research project was to provide free Life Skills services through the Bear Paw Center to help individuals develop skills and improve perceptions of occupational engagement in areas of health management, social participation, instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), and work/education that can be carried over into everyday life. The OTD student worked with other OTD students on the DEx team to create life skills programming and was responsible for the creation and implementation of group interventions focused on IADLs. The OTD student worked collaboratively with the DEx team to create scholarly materials, including a post survey and other research materials to evaluate program outcomes. Through research and the results of the survey and other scholarly materials, a life skills group manual was created with products including group protocols, handouts and presentations for future use at the BPC.

Scholarly

For the scholarly portion of the DEx project, this OTD student sought to investigate the following research question as it pertained to life skills programming focused on IADLs, “How Does Providing Life Skills Services Impact Perceptions of Occupational Engagement for Individuals Treated at the Bear Paw Center?”. An online survey titled “Client Perceptions of Occupational Engagement Provided Through Life Skills Services at the Bear Paw Center” (Appendix B) was created along with an online consent form (Appendix A) and submitted to the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) along with the IRB application and approved for distribution to BPC clients at the conclusion of the life skills programming (Appendix C). The data gathered and analyzed was used to create a research poster outlining the overall project and

results. This poster was submitted to the 2024 American Occupational Therapy Association Inspire Conference, further expanding on the scholarly component of the project. Results from the scholarly component was also used to develop and organize a life skills group manual (Appendix D), including group sessions and activities noted by participants to be most beneficial, for the BPC to use when running future life skills groups.

Problem/Purpose

Currently there is a wide gap in care for adult individuals with disabilities. Many life skills programs occur at the high school level, leaving individuals post-graduation at a loss to further their life skills education. Staggered throughout the United States, there are life skills programs for individuals with disabilities, however they are at a high cost through various universities and community programs. The federal Poverty Level assumes that households with a disability can acquire the same standard of living as households without a disability while on the same income, however, this does not account for expenses that only households of individuals with a disability incur (Morris et al., 2021). As a result, learning beneficial life skills services through profitable programs have become less attainable for adults with disabilities. In the Springfield area specifically, there are a limited number of free-of-cost life skills programs for adults. Oftentimes, insurance does not cover non-medical related services. To mitigate this gap, the purpose of this project is to implement life skills services addressing instrumental activities of daily living (IADLS) in conjunction with three other areas of occupation addressed by other OTD student DEx team members, through a student run pro bono occupational therapy center called the B.E.A.R. P.A.W. Center (BPC). By implementing these life skill services the researchers aim to provide free services for individuals in the community to promote occupational engagement and independence and improve quality of life. Through the scholarly

component, this project sought to examine the impact these life skills groups would have on participant perceptions of occupational engagement, and whether life skills services at the BPC helped participants towards their goals in IADLs.

Methodology

A mixed methods survey with quantitative and qualitative data was used during this pilot study. This was an online confidential survey using google forms (Appendix B). This OTD student was responsible for the creation and analysis of the IADL portion of the survey. This portion consisted of 7 multiple choice questions and one open ended question. The pilot study included Bear Paw Center clients with any admitting diagnosis or condition, had a therapeutic goal in health management, social participation, IADLs or work/education, and participated in at least one life skills group. A total of 14 participants completed the post survey at the conclusion of the life skills programming. Multiple choice questions pertaining to the IADL groups generated frequency data using excel by this OTD student. This OTD student also thematically coded the open ended question to generate all relevant themes.

Results

After all data pertaining to the IADL groups portion of the survey were analyzed and thematically coded, results showed that overall, Life skills services addressing IADLs at the BPC positively impacted participants' perceptions of occupational engagement. 72% of participants stated that the BPC helped them towards their goals in IADLs. 21% of participants said that the BPC was somewhat helpful towards their goals in IADLs and 7% stated that the BPC was not helpful towards their goals. Multiple choice questions asked participants to rate their self-perceptions of occupational engagement in six IADL tasks: personal shopping, light housekeeping, laundry, meal preparation, money management, medication management, and

community access. Results showed varying data across participant responses. Overall, a higher number of participants reported the ability to successfully perform light housekeeping and meal preparation tasks. Themes from the qualitative data were also analyzed and the following themes emerged:

1. Participants rated meal preparation, money management and medication management as the most helpful IADL activities.
2. IADL group sessions also promoted skill development in other areas of occupation.
 - a. Meal preparation activities promoted skill development in health management, social participation, and work/education.
 - b. Money management activities also supported skills required for work/education.
 - c. Medication management was noted to support skills for health management.

The results from thematically coding the qualitative data demonstrates that IADL therapy groups can foster diverse skills for occupational engagement in various areas of occupation. The skills developed can be generalized by participants and applied for increased function and independence in other areas of occupation, even if the group is focusing primarily on IADL activities.

Experiential

BPC clients from the community participated in 9 weeks of life skills groups with sessions addressing health management, social participation, IADLs, and work/education. This OTD student was responsible for the creation and implementation of life skills groups focused on IADLs as well as developing and analysing data from the post survey (Appendix B) focused on IADLs. For nine weeks, four life skills group sessions were offered at the BPC. Two groups would be conducted in the morning in collaboration with a local transitions school who would

transport participants to the center, and, two groups would occur in the afternoon with community participants. This OTD student ran IADL groups based upon the IADL goals expressed by the participant at intake. IADL group activities included meal preparation activities, medication management, money management, and community access. Results from the scholarly component and participant responses assisted in the development of the Life Skills group manual (Appendix D) that the given to the BPC for project sustainability. Group protocols in the areas and activities cited by participants as most beneficial towards their goals in IADLs were included in the manual. In total, this OTD student created four IADL groups in the following areas with 4-6 group sessions outlined for each group: meal preparation, medication management, money management and community access. All handouts, presentations and materials to run the groups was also created by this OTD student and included in the manual. In total, 22 IADL group protocols along with materials were included in the Life Skills manual (Appendix D). The aim of this manual is to provide the BPC and it's students with evaluated and effective group protocols in order to increase sustainability of the program in the future.

To further promote the sustainability of this project, this OTD student in conjunction with the DEx team created a sustainability plan (Appendix E) outlining long term goals. One long term goal is to collaborate with community partners and organizations through a level I fieldwork site to provide life skills group services by running groups from the manual created. Another goal is to expand the areas of occupations offered throught the life skills group programming as well as expanding to include more diverse populations of participants.

By implementing this project, the OTD student aimed to create Life Skills services at the BPC addressing IADLs in order to promote occupational engagement, independnece and quality of life to community members with a disability. The Life Skills manual (Appendix D) and

sustainability plan (Appendix E) will work to promote the sustainability of this project so that OTD students at the BPC can continue to offer effective IADL group services to individuals with an IADL goal.

Discussion/Recommendation

Through this project, this OTD student sought to create and implement a Life Skills group addressing IADLs at the BPC, a student run, pro-bono occupational therapy center. Results of the “Client Perceptions of Occupational Engagement Provided Through Life Skills Services at the Bear Paw Center” survey (Appendix B) found that overall, the IADL life skills services provided at the BPC positively impacted participants’ perceptions of occupational engagement in IADLs. IADL groups were found to also foster skill acquisition in various areas of occupation, not just within the scope of IADLs. Results from the study also assisted in the creation of a Life Skills Manual (Appendix D), given to the BPC to promote sustainability of the project. This pilot study can be used to demonstrate the effectiveness that occupation-based groups focused on IADLs can have on occupational engagement and independence.

Future recommendations include continuing to use the Life Skills groups manual at the BPC and level I fieldwork sites to provide effective life skills training to individuals. A limitation in this pilot study was that due to scheduling conflicts the areas of occupation focused on in groups each week needed to be alternated and as a result, skills could not be developed consecutively, affecting positive habit formation. A recommendation would be to offer groups of one area of occupation consecutively in order to allow individuals to build upon skills from week to week. Further research into the benefits of implementing IADL groups is also recommended. There is limited research on how occupation-based IADL focused groups can impact performance in meaningful activities, or how IADL group activities can address necessary skills

required for other areas of occupations and tasks. Additionally, further research into the use of meal preparation groups to build skills not only in IADL tasks, but other areas of occupation such as health management, social participation, work etc. is also warranted. From the qualitative data, participants noted that the meal preparation activities fostered skill development in other areas of occupation other than IADLs. Meal preparation groups may be an effective and unique tool to allow participants from various backgrounds and goals be able to work on necessary skills in one group. Expanding services to include virtual group sessions is also another area to explore. Providing virtual sessions allows individuals who do not have transportation to the center to participate in IADL groups. These are recommendations and implications for future research are important to explore in the future to continue to improve upon the services created and provide individuals with the opportunity to build skills necessary for independence in IADLs.

Learning Objectives

The Learning Objectives and Evaluation plan was developed prior to the start of this project as a formal assessment to this OTD student's performance at the conclusion of the project. It is comprised of eleven Learning Objectives. Objectives one through eight are standard objectives created by faculty members of the doctor of occupational therapy program at Western New England University. The last three learning objectives were created by this OTD student. The Learning Objectives along with evidence of accomplishment are as follows:

1. Collaborate with various professionals as part of an interprofessional team to advocate the role of occupational therapy in a nontraditional setting.
 - a. Student worked collaboratively with staff at recruitment sites for recruitment of participants through flyer by June 2023

- b. Demonstrated and educated on the role and scope of practice of occupational therapy and the benefits of including occupational therapy within organizations where occupational therapy is typically not available through partnerships such as the Bear Paw Clinic
2. Document a needs assessment for a particular population and use said assessment as the foundation for planning a successful Doctoral Experiential Capstone Project. Additional evidence will include feedback from consumers that indicates the impact of the project on the population they represent.
 - a. Performed and completed a needs assessment with SWOT analysis of site during first 3 weeks of the DEx.
 - b. Determined IADLs to focus on during group sessions based on research of population needs, best practice
3. Demonstrate proficiency and professionalism with the use of personal computers, learning platforms, zoom meetings, etc to fully document and implement Doctoral Experiential Project for WNE as well as for members of the population served.
 - a. Kept zoom video on whenever possible during zoom meetings with DEx site, DEx site mentor, DEx faculty mentor and any other professionals.
 - b. Kept a running timesheet logging all hours worked during the DEx through end of July 2023.
 - c. Maintained an organized computer file for all DEx related documentation.
4. Recognize and be able to describe the diverse systems of service delivery that are most cost-effective and considerate for health, social, and educational settings, both traditional and nontraditional. Through both clinical and reflective writing, be able to articulate a

sensitivity to cultural, linguistic, and other diversities and describe solutions for care disparities.

- a. Completed all required reflective writings by the duration of the DEx
 - b. Reflected on the cultural, linguistic diversities as well as diverse service delivery options that pertain to my DEx in reflective writing assignments
5. Demonstrate the ability to work with others to identify meaningful objectives, organize, manage, and motivate people and resources, communicate effectively, and oversee action to accomplish stated program or service goals.
 - a. Collaborated with fellow DEx students and target population to create and implement an 8-10 week life skills group through the Bear Paw Center by mid June.
 - b. Communicated effectively with team members by responding promptly to emails or phone calls (within 24 hours).
 - c. Created a schedule outlining steps to accomplish service goals for each participant by completion of groups.
6. Demonstrate the ability to implement in existing programs, and plan for in developing programs, an occupational therapy process that is occupation-based, client-centered, culturally sensitive, and ethically appropriate.
 - a. Worked with fellow DEx students, professors, and mentors to increase sustainability of Bear Paw Center developed by previous DEx projects
 - b. Created and implement life skills groups targeting IADLs with an occupation-based approach that is client centered by mid June 2023
 - c. Creation of life skills group manual for future use

7. Document an experiential and scholarly project that reflects the literature in restorative justice/community re-entry and use responsive, ethical methods. The scholarly process and results should be made accessible to the college and the community, especially to the population served by the project. A report of the project, presented in a professional format that others can replicate or build upon, will be evidence of accomplishment.
 - a. Created a poster of the results of the project and its outcomes to be presented at the completion of the DEx
 - b. Completed a literature review on the subject and population regarding occupational engagement in areas of health management, social participation, work/education, and IADLs
 - c. Researched and utilize evidence-based practice during implementation of program
 - d. Made education materials easily and quickly available to all interested parties and participants
8. Through both clinical and reflective writing, be able to articulate a clear awareness of my own personal and professional strengths and boundaries and identify supports and strategies for goal achievement.
 - a. Completed all required reflective writings by the duration of the DEx
 - b. Incorporated evaluation of personal and professional strengths and strategies
 - c. Completed a professionalism evaluation pre and post test or rubric
9. By the completion of the doctoral capstone project, this student will submit one scholarly work to be presented and/or published in a peer-reviewed journal and/or conference.
 - a. Completion of a research poster and/or research article of project outcomes

- b. Submitted scholarly work to a conference and/or peer reviewed journal by end of DEx
10. Through implementing evidence-based practice, site knowledge, and creativity this student will implement measures into program development for sustainability of project
- a. Researched evidence-based frameworks and practice that incorporates sustainable change and action steps
 - b. Outlined steps in program creation and implementation specifically affecting program sustainability

By the conclusion of the DEx project, this OTD student met all of the objectives outlined.

Further details and evidence of accomplishments can be found in Appendix- where the completed Learning Objectives and Evaluation Plan is located.

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**Appendix A: Western New England University College of Pharmacy/Health
Sciences Informed Consent Form for Online Surveys**

Title of the Project: Client Perceptions of Occupational Engagement Provided Through Life Skills Services at the Bear Paw Center

Principal Investigator: Dr. Erin Wells, OT, OTD, MSOT, OTR

Co-investigator: Ileana Alfonso, OT/s, Alisha Bailey, OT/s, Isabella Lagos, OT/s, and Olivia Nappi, OT/s

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Erin Wells, OT, OTD, MSOT, OTR

You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey entitled "Client Perceptions of Occupational Engagement Provided Through Life Skills Groups at the Bear Paw Center" to obtain individual perspectives of independence in the areas of health management, social participation/leisure, work/education, and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs). Occupational engagement is when a person actively takes part in daily activities that they enjoy and find important, as well as how this shapes their identity, and interactions with others and their surroundings. This is a research project being conducted by Dr. Erin Wells OT, OTD, MSOT, OTR, Ileana Alfonso, OT/s, Alisha Bailey, OT/s, Isabella Lagos, OT/s, and Olivia Nappi, OT/s; Doctor of Occupational Therapy Students at Western New England University (WNEU) College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences. It should take about 20-30 minutes to complete.

BENEFITS

You will receive no direct benefits from taking part in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about individual's perceptions of their abilities to engage in health performance, Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs), social participation, and work/education tasks.

PARTICIPATION

Taking part in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research. You may exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

RISKS

There are risks to taking part in any research study. It is not likely that you will be at risk for any physical or psychological (mental) harm because of your participation in this study. You may find the questions to cause distress and/or fatigue. You may decline to answer any questions and you may voice concerns to the investigators at any time.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The survey will remain completely confidential by ensuring that recording IP addresses is turned off in Google form settings prior to the survey being posted. No one will be able to identify participants and/or caregivers or their answers. Survey answers will be sent to a link at google.com/forms where data will be stored in a password-protected electronic format for at least six years. Data will also be stored on the password protected laptops of these investigators and Dr. Erin Wells for six years.

The results of this research study may be published in a medical book or journal, or used to teach others. However, your name or other identifiable information will not be used for these purposes without your specific permission. None of the information that we may publish or present in any reports, presentations, or papers will include information that can identify you as a participant in this study.

CONTACT

If at any time you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about the study, please contact Investigators Ileana Alfonso, OT/s, Alisha Bailey, OT/s, Isabella Lagos, OT/s, and Olivia Nappi, OT/s by email at ileana.alfonso@wne.edu, alisha.fernandez@wne.edu, isabella.lagos@wne.edu, or olivia.nappi@wne.edu. Investigators can be reached by phone at (610)880-1521, (781)771-9212, (904) 603 – 3447, or (401) 258 – 7100. You may also contact Faculty Advisor, Dr. Erin Wells, by email at erin.wells@wne.edu or phone at (413) 796-2110. If

you have any questions or concerns about the “rights of research subjects”, you may contact Dr. Jessica Carlson, Chair of the Institutional Review Board, at (413)-796-2325, jessica.outhouse@wne.edu, or Dr. Minna Levine, College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences, Member of the Institutional Review Board, at minna.levine@wne.edu. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the Western New England University Institutional Review Board.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT:

Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

- I am a participant completing this consent form

Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that

(1) You have read the above information

(2) You voluntarily agree to participate

(3) You are 18 years of age or older

(4) Bear Paw Center client

(5) Any admitting diagnoses and conditions

(6) Participated in at least one life skills session in areas of health management, social participation/leisure, work/education and instrumental activities of daily living

(7) You are a fluent English speaker

(8) I know that I can stop the survey at any time

-Agree, Survey will continue

-Disagree, Survey ends here

- I am the caregiver of a participant completing this consent form on behalf of a participant

(1) You have read the above information

(2) You voluntarily agree to allow your dependent to participate

(3) Your dependent who is participating in this study, is 18 years of age or older

(4) Your dependent who is participating in this study, is a fluent English speaker

(5) Your dependent who is participating in this study participated in at least one life skills session focusing on either health management, social participation/leisure, work/education, and instrumental activities of daily living

(6) I know that I can stop the survey at any time

-Agree, Survey will continue

-Disagree, Survey ends here

Appendix B: Online Survey

Background Information:

Occupational engagement is when a person actively takes part in daily activities that they enjoy and find important, as well as how this shapes their identity, and interactions with others and their surroundings.

Please indicate below:

- I am a participant completing this survey
- I am a participant completing this survey with caregiver assistance
- I am a caregiver completing this survey on behalf of a participant

Questionnaire: Please rate how these statements apply to you or the participant using the

Likert Scales:

Rate how true these statements are to you.

Please select: Yes, No, Maybe, Sometimes

Health Management

1. I make healthy choices
2. I am physically active
3. I can understand my emotions
4. I can schedule appointments
5. I do well managing my symptoms

Did the Bear Paw Center help you towards your goals in health management? Yes, No, Somewhat

Tell us which activities you participated in that were most helpful to improve your health management.

Social Participation/Leisure

6. I can communicate with others without fear or worry
7. I can build strong friendships with others
8. I can understand non-verbal cues
9. I can understand the feelings of others
10. I share interests and hobbies with friends

Did the Bear Paw Center help you towards your goals in social participation/leisure ?
Yes, No, Somewhat

Tell us which activities you participated in that were most helpful to improve your social skills.

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs)

11. I do well with managing my medications
12. I can keep track of and budget my money
13. I can prepare food for myself (snacks, a meal etc.)
14. I can wash, fold, and put away my laundry
15. I can perform light housekeeping tasks (sweeping, dusting, washing dishes, etc.)
16. I take part in personal shopping tasks (grocery shopping, clothes shopping etc.)

Tell us which activities you participated in that were most helpful to improve your IADLs.

Did the Bear Paw Center help you towards your goals in IADLs? Yes, No, Somewhat

Work/Education

17. I can search for a job
18. I can keep a job
19. I can use technology for work and/or education
20. I can identify a problem
21. I can take steps to solve a problem

Did the Bear Paw Center help you towards your goals in work and/or education? Yes, No, Somewhat

Tell us which activities you participated in that were most helpful to improve your work/education.

Appendix C: IRB Approval Form

Subgroup of the IRB & Human Subjects Committee
FWA00010736 Approval Form[&]

Responsible Director: _____ Dr. Levine _____

Title of Project: Client Perceptions of Occupational Engagement Provided Through Life Skills Groups at the Bear Paw Center

College Proposal Number: _____ COP-IRB#188

This research proposal is exempt under Federal Regulation 46.104.d.2.i

It is deemed acceptable according to the Belmont Principles and the American Psychological Association's Ethical Guidelines for the Use of Human Participants for a period of one year.*

_____ This research proposal has undergone an expedited review under Federal Regulation _____. It is deemed acceptable according to the Belmont Principles and the American Psychological Association's Ethical Guidelines for the Use of Human Participants for a period of one year.*

_____ This research does not qualify for exemption or expedited review and will need to be reviewed by the entire board.

Signature _____ *Monna Levine*
_____ Date _____ 4/28/2023 _____

Renewal requests due before _____ 4/28/2024 _____

[&] Note: Authority to approve exempt or expedited research originating within the College of Pharmacy.

* Note: It is your responsibility to notify the IRB of any adverse events that occur during your research. You must also request an additional review before you introduce changes to the proposed protocol. Maintain a copy of your original application, any requested changes, and this signed approval form. You will need to submit these if you apply for a renewal.



LIFE SKILLS GROUP PROTOCOLS

Ileana Alfonso, OT/s
Alisha Bailey, OT/s
Isabella Lagos, OT/s
Olivia Nappi, OT/s



INSTRUMENTAL ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING(IADLS)

Group Protocols created by Alisha Bailey OT/s



Appendix E: Sustainability Plan

PROGRAM STRATEGIC PLAN

(Program Title) Life Skills Services through Bear Paw Center

(Student Names) Alisha Bailey, OT/s, Ileana Alfonso, OT/s, Isabella Lagos, OT/s, Olivia Nappi, OT/s

(Organization) Western New England University _____ Years: 2-5 years

Analysis of program evaluation, internal and external environments:

	Program Evaluation Results	Internal Institutional Environment	External Environment
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The diversity within the groups allowed the participants to work on performance skills that were the most valuable to them regardless of if those were the intended performance skills for that area of occupation Overall findings based on participant reports indicated that the life skills services provided were beneficial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-existing BPC provided researchers with sufficient space, resources, staff, and volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The researchers were able to advocate for the field of occupational therapy when collaborating with community sites Holyoke Transitions Academy staff were actively involved in the groups and verbally reported positive feedback
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skewed data on post survey due to participants not being able to differentiate between each of the occupations Takes time for participants to build new skills and habits (Ex: Stages of change model) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of consistency between the types of groups due to limited Bear Paw Center schedule availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant absences resulting in missing groups Insufficient transportation causing some individuals being unable to participate in the groups
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows future DEX students to run effective life skills groups based on data findings Data outlines deficits in initial program implementation to improve groups run in the future (ex. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing BPC clients and expanding on services provided Expanding the number of community members involved in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researchers built a strong, professional connection Holyoke Transitions Academy granting future opportunities for OTD students to

	running groups one occupation for a set period of time before continuing onto another occupation)	groups will provide a more enriching experience to student volunteers prior to going off on level 2 fieldwork	complete level 1 fieldwork placements
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited resources and supplies provided Future students may be inattentive to data provided by the researchers and experience similar mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of interest from student volunteers to continue the program Limited BPC schedule availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of interest from local community members or sites to participate in life skills groups

Long-Term Program Goal	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date for Action	Results / Update
Life Skills Program group protocols will be consistently applied and integrated in Level I fieldwork experience at a community site, resulting in enhanced participant engagement and skill development	Collaborating with community sites and other OTD students interested in working with BPC to expand populations served and adapt group protocols to meet specific needs of populations/clients	DEx researchers, Year 1 & 2 OTD	July 2023	In Progress
	OTD students will conduct a needs assessment and community profile to identify population needs and how they may be addressed through life skills groups	Year 1 & 2 OTD students	December 2023	In Progress
	OTD students will run life skills groups, adapting group protocols as needed at community site	Year 1 & 2 OTD students	December 2023	In Progress
	OTD students will collaborate staff members and faculty at community site to determine which activities from the protocol will be beneficial to conduct each week	Year 1 & 2 OTD students	December 2023	In Progress

Long-Term Program Goal	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date for Action	Results / Update
The Life Skills Program and group protocols will be expanded to include additional areas of occupation, and/or adapt to accommodate the	Collaborating with community sites and other OTD students interested in working with BPC to expand populations served and adapt group	DEx researchers, Year 1 & 2 OTD students	July 2023	In Progress

unique needs of diverse populations, resulting in increased program accessibility and effectiveness for a wider range of participants.	protocols to meet specific needs of populations/clients			
	OTD students will conduct a needs assessment and community profile to identify population needs and how they may be addressed through life skills groups	Year 1 & 2 OTD students	May 2024	In Progress
	OTD students will work in collaboration with BPC to schedule life skills group sessions	Year 1 & 2 OTD students	May 2024	In Progress
	OTD students will create new group protocols on other areas of occupations not addressed in groups manual as well as adapt current group protocols to suit the needs of diverse populations	Year 1 & 2 OTD students	May 2024	In Progress