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## Pediatric Teletherapy: Treatment Ideas Using Household Items

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- - [Fawn] Our course today is Pediatric Teletherapy: Treatment Ideas Using Household Items. Our presenter today is Tasha Holmes. She has a bachelor of arts and sociology from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and a master's degree in occupational therapy from Nova Southeastern University. She's been an occupational therapist for over 16 years and has worked in a variety of settings with age groups spanning from toddlers to the elderly. She has spent over nine years providing school-based OT services with more than six of those years using a teletherapy service delivery model. Her teletherapy experience has allowed her to provide school-based OT services across the United States as well as internationally. In addition to direct treatment services, she also spent time teaching at the Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant program at Central Piedmont Community College. Welcome back Tasha, so glad to have you.

- Thank you, Fawn. I have lots to share with you today, so I will just go ahead and get started. You can take a look at my disclosures right here on this slide, and I'll quickly go over the learning outcomes. After this course, participants will be able to identify what items are commonly found in most households, identify ways to repurpose household items for pediatric teletherapy treatment interventions, and also to identify ways to implement teletherapy treatment interventions using repurposed household items. Okay, and so I'd like to start out with a quote from this journal article; poverty is tied to structural differences in several areas of the brain associated with school readiness skills, development in these brain regions appears sensitive to the child's environment and nurturance. So we're looking at the fact that what the child has in their environment also as well as how they're nurtured in the home. It can actual calls structural differences in areas of the brain. And these observations suggests that interventions aimed at improving children's environments may also alter the link between childhood poverty and deficits and cognition and academic achievement. So

the wonderful thing about this is that we as OTs, we can certainly be a tool for altering this child's environment and therefore really helping a child who is poverty-stricken benefit in so many different ways. And so I've started out with these because we're gonna talk about household items that we can use for teletherapy for specifically populations that really don't have anything. I received a lot of feedback from my last presentation, that they're just some kids that have nothing at home and what can you use for therapy and to do teletherapy with? And it's also nice just to mix it up for those of you who have kiddos that do have resources. And so I'm taking a look at one of the AJOT articles, occupational therapy practice guidelines for children and youth, practitioners should emphasize the use of activity and occupation-based approaches to improve learning, academic achievement and successful participation in school. So we're taking a look at using actual activities and actual occupations to improve learning. And so we as OTs, that's definitely what we're looking at. We just have some evidence-based information to support that and so that's what we'll also be taking a look at when we're looking at these activities. Are they activity-based or are they more occupation-based activities?

Okay, so we'll start out just quickly with session preparation. I won't spend too much time on that. Non-digital material suggestions. I would suggest for the clinician would be whiteboard, dry erase markers, books, coins, butter knives and/or silverware. So for example, for myself, I have my office silverware, which doesn't match and I'll show you on a little bit later on what I like to do with that and a dark-colored sharpie because it shows up really well on screen. So these are things that you can have on your end that will help facilitate the teletherapy session. Okay, so for teletherapy preparation, just prior to the session, you wanna determine what materials the child has at home. And you can do that a few different ways. You can do that with some games of scavenger hunt of what do you use to comb your hair, or what do you use to brush your hair with or what's your favorite shirt or show me your favorite toy or do you have a book, something else that I like to have kids do so that way they don't necessarily feel bad if

they don't have it, I can say we're working on a yes or no activity. So do you have X, Y, and Z at home and the child runs to find out, no, I don't have that. Okay, so that's in the no column. So that way the child doesn't feel like embarrassed that they may not have one of the items that you have, or you can certainly directly contact the parents to find out what type of materials you have at home. That's a little bit of a fun way that you can build a rapport, get some gross motor moving it in with the child, just being able to, okay, can you run and grab this item. Consider the positioning needs of the child, will the child need to, or should the child complete this activity in supine? So should they be on their back or maybe they might need to be in prone to do this activity, should the child being tall kneel. So you're just taking into consideration what the child's abilities are the time and then also in addition to what other things that they may be working on if you're collaborating with other members of an IEP team or a treatment team, different things like that.

So let's really think about like, what position do we want the child participating in these activities. Also, you may wanna think about using pre-made slides, so that way you can reuse them over and over, and you don't have to spend time manipulating the items. Sometimes it takes a little bit of a while, depending on what type of activity you're doing. If you have to keep changing your items around, when you could just show a slide and say, for example, I would like you to do this. I'll talk a little bit more about that as we get a little bit deeper into the presentation. So like I said, with the materials available, you can do a scavenger hunt. You can do a home tour. Of course, you wanna make sure that the parent feels comfortable with that before offering that to your child. But some kids are really excited to show you their home and show you their dog and show you their room. And that's a really good way for you to get a good Eiffel of what things may be available to you for using for teletherapy. Materials bingo is another great thing too. So maybe instead of the yes or no, the practicing the yes or no, you can do materials bingo, and you can put different things on your card, a brush, a toothbrush, a book, a ball, different things and if the child has that thing, they can run

and grab it or they can place like a bean or a ripped up piece of paper, or if you're doing it on computer, they can click to say that they have that item, and you can just keep a running tab. As I mentioned previously, getting information from the parents, the parent checklists, a conversation with the parents, and you can even ask the parents to send pictures. I've had parents send pictures of their animals the child's animals or favorite toys or things like that and I like to put it into a fun activity. I can put it into a slide and we can use that for further use. I actually had one child who just loved his, his Guinea, not his Guinea pig, his, I can't think of the name of hermit crab. And so mom sent me a cell phone picture of the hermit crab and I use that as a writing prompt. And it was really cute because as soon as I showed him, he's like, that's dinky, my hermit crab.

So material considerations, do you want to use the items more than once? So something like this, if I have an egg carton, that's something that can certainly be used more than once. Is it gonna be something that's also needed for daily use? So I'll show you later in the slides that we can do something with soap. And is that the bar of soap that the family is gonna to need that night for washing up? Or can we use that soap for a couple of weeks before it's needed to be used, how often will the item be available? So it's really wonderful to give you, I could give you a whole bunch of different ideas, but these things may not always be readily available just because some involve food that's perishable, or it may be, it's maybe if you're using a shampoo bottle or something you're going to have to wait until they use the whole a whole bottle of shampoo. So you can't plan on that for next week. That might be one month from now. And you say, please save your shampoo bottle. So that way we can use it. How should the session be structured to get the most use out of the item? So really thinking about the progress of the use of the item, so we'll look at that a little bit more later too. So that way you're getting the most use from the item, because you don't want to rip up the item before you may be right on it, because that's kind of a wasted opportunity if you write on it first and then you rip it up, you know you can get more uses out of it.

And like I said before, are the item is perishable? I do like to use food for therapy and too so we need to think about the progression for use. So maybe that when you have the session around 11:00, 11:30 before lunch, or you have it right before snack time, depending on what time your session is, deciding what you'd like to use. You also wanna think about the storage of the materials, where are we going to put these materials so that where they're in a safe place for next week or for every session, shoeboxes work great, putting it in a special drawer or cabinet where you put those things, because we are using a lot of household things, for example, the egg carton, if it's just sitting on the counter and someone may come and throw it in the trash, and then you've lost that opportunity.

Okay, so when you're looking at therapy considerations, and this is also from the occupational therapy practice guidelines for youth and ages, article in AJOT, engagement in daily occupations should remain the central focus of goals and intervention. Practitioners should use manualized programs that have clear activity and occupation-based strategies, as opposed to those that are solely working on performance skills or client factors. So we really wanna have a means to the end where it's working on something that the child is able to do something functional and not just building skills. So we'll look at that too. Practitioners should collaborate with clients and caregivers to establish meaningful occupation-based and achievable goals and use intentional strategies to maintain a collaborative relationship through the therapy process. This is awesome when you're doing this for teletherapy, because you are directly working with the clients and your caregivers in their home environment. And so can do a lot of occupation-based activities in their actual natural environment. Another consideration, consistent caregiver training and instruction should be provided to promote carry over and the power of the caregiver to effect change and support the child should be emphasized. So once again, this is a wonderful thing we're in the home already and when we're about kids that may be the victims of poverty they're in impoverished households. Parents who may have difficulty with nurturing some of the

special needs for their children, we can actually model those different types of things and show them how this is gonna work in the actual environment.

Okay, interventions for children younger than three should actively include parents during interventions and in home program. Wonderful thing about teletherapy because we are working in the home and we are including the caregivers. So we're certainly covering those things. So I want you to take a look at this slide. So this is looking at the fine motor activities in classrooms. So paper-and-pencil versus manipulation tasks, and this comes from a replication study that was done. And you can also find this article in AJOT as well. And it's taking a look at, although there's so much technology in schools, you can really see that children are still doing paper-and-pencil tasks, and they're actually spending a significant amount of their day doing tasks that involve fine motor manipulation. So it's certainly appropriate to continue to work on these activities, even though we're using technology for our mode of service. And even though there's been so many technological advances that we have the opportunity to take advantage of.

All right, so let's jump right into this. So coins, if you can stand coins and brushes. So that would be one of those things, you can have the child go and grab what kind of brush they have the first session. And you can see what type of brush the child has. You can see these two types of brushes. These are two that I have in my house, and they work really great for standing quarters in, or you can stand dimes in, or you can stand all different types of coins in them. If you do have a child that has putty or plato at home, you can also have the child stand them inside of those as well. This works really well with teletherapy, with having the angle of the camera on the students and angle towards the child's hand. And for yourself, I did see that a lot of you are using Zoom and you're using Google Meet and FaceTime and different. Those three were the biggest ones that were being used with Zoom and Google Meet being the two biggest ones. What I like to do if I'm using either Zoom or Google Meet, I will use a second

camera. What you can do with your second camera? You can actually just sign into the room with your cell phone, if you want or another device, and have that pointed towards your hands. It can be a little bit tricky as to how to maybe set your cell phone up or set up your iPad. There's things around the web for helping with those cameras.

One of the things would be if you use, I've seen a few used the Osmo camera, and I've used that the reflector for the Osmo, with your cell phone or your iPad, you can angle towards your hands, or if you mounted on something, but something alternative that you can also do is you can use your cell phone or your iPad to be angling towards your face because it's already shooting towards you. And if you're using a laptop, you can use the laptop to bend that top down and actually have that pointing towards your hands. If that's a little bit easier for you, but certainly signing in with a second camera will allow the child to watch you either demonstrate or something pretty neat that you can do. You can actually make a slide show and click it step-by-step for having maybe one coin in your brush and then another coin, and then another coin. And then you can verbally give those directions out to the child. Something else you can also do with the coins and the egg carton, you can see that this is an 18-egg carton, but certainly with a six, a dozen egg carton, you can make a Mancala game and you can use your coins for that or you can use beans for that. And you can also use that for sorting. So those are some different things that you may have, the child may have around the home.

Something I else that I also like to do too, with the egg carton, you can also play tic-tac-toe. So you can just pick nine of the squares. I don't think you can see that on camera, you can pick nine of the squares and you can have the child add in the bean or add in the coin for you. So maybe you're gonna be pennies and they're going to be quarters and you can play tic-tac-toe that way also. So that would be one of the things where you would have an angling towards their hand. They're doing everything on their end. Let's go to our next slide. So stringing beads is a great one too, string alternatives would be shoelaces, Q-tips, uncooked spaghetti. Bead alternatives would be pull tabs,

cheerios. You can even do it with keys, buttons. So right here, you'll see, these are the tabs from drinks and then here's a shoe that I have in my house. So I strung the tab through the shoe string. You can make it, you can string it through the smaller hole. You can grade it and string it through bigger hole. The one thing I will say about the smaller hole is that sometimes it does get stuck on the shoe string. So you might wanna just keep that in mind too, when you're doing that. But that's another one of the things where you're gonna have the camera angled down towards the shoe. And you might wanna show this in a slide while you're talking through and talking to the child about how to hold it or talking to the parents and coaching them through what position, which hand the strings should be in, should it be in the nondominant hand, or should it be in the dominant hand and also talking about which end do you want to use for the tab or what item you're going to use?

So here you can see, I use a hair clip, a bobby pin, and one of the tabs, again, you can put those on Q-tips. I will say Q-tips are, most people have shoes, at least one pair of shoes with shoe strings at home. They have Q-tips, almost everyone probably has Q-tips at home as well. As far as bobby pins and hair clips, a lot of times you will find people have some type of hair clip. And so that could be something that you have hair clip, bingo, where you say, "bring me one of your hair clips at home" or you ask the parents what hair clips are available. So here's some more hair clips, hair clips on the bottom of a shirt work really well, too. And so you would have to decide, do you want your child that you're working with? Do you want them in standing? So that way you can see the clips, which I think would probably be a better angle is to have the child stand up and hold the shirt out. And then to put the hair clips on it while they're in standing. This is also one of the activities you can certainly have the child do, either lying in supine or lying in prone, depending on what else you wanna work on. So if you had the child lying in supine, they would actually have to do it and they're almost doing it blindly. So you can have them trying to put them on there and not looking to see where they're putting the hair clips or you can have them working on core strength by

trying to pull their head up enough. So that way they can look to see where they're going to put the shirt. You can also do this in prone by having the child lie down and try to put the clips on the back of their shirt. And so that's great for working on range of motion, but doing it in a fun way. Soap, most people have something to wash with. If you're working with a household that doesn't have a lot of money, most of the times you can find bars of soap. A lot of times cheaper than you can find for some of the fancier body washes. So there may be some bars of soap at home, but most people have a lot of bars of soap. And you can see once again, I have the bobby pin here. You can't see the full picture, but what I did is the child is actually in tall kneel.

So the child's in tall kneel, and this is on a piece of paper that's on the couch and what the couch is doing is couch is helping with positioning. And so that's one of the things where you can work on too, depending on, you can collaborate with the physical therapist. To see, what types of positions are you working on during your sessions and you can have the child positioned and tall kneel when they're completing these activities. And so what this is, is just taking a bobby pin and shredding it and shredding the soap. And so this is a great fine motor activity. Soap gives really, really good resistance. So just shredding it. And so some things that you can do. So like I mentioned, at the beginning of the presentation, really talking about changing a child's environment. And so we certainly have the power to do that. And if you're working with an impoverished household, the child may not have any books there. And so something really neat would be, is we could talk about if we have some white soap, we could make snow, we could couple it with the book. There once was a lady that swallowed some snow. And so that could be something that you're reading while the child is making this snow or we could have points in the book where after I finish a page, then the child starts to make snow. If we had green soap, we could be cutting grass. And there's a book called, "The Little Mower That Could." And so that's a really fun book that you could read while we're cutting the grass with our green soap. Another one would be, if you have any other color soap, we could do "Splat the Cat: I

Scream for Ice Cream" and we're making shaved ice, or we're making ice cream, something like that. You can couple the books with that. So feeding the sock, I think socks are wonderful and it could be feeding whatever you want. So right here, we have rainbow dash. And so we were feeding rainbow dash some socks. So while actually we weren't feeding rainbow dash socks, we were feeding rainbow dash apples. And so that's just balled up sucks, and we're gonna stick them down. You're gonna pull it open and we're gonna stick it down into the sock and so that's a great bilateral coordination activity. So you just have the child grab a sock a long sock and we can decide what is the sock, is it a snake? What type of animal are we feeding? Socks are all also really great because socks are great as sock puppets. And sometimes kids take more direction from sock puppets than they might from their OT or from their parents.

So if the sock puppet is wondering if we could stay on task, then we might stay on task a little bit better than, constantly saying, "Okay, we need to focus" or, "Okay, we're moving on to the next activity." Maybe the sock puppet wants know what our next activity is. So some other suggestions would be coupling it with the book, "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" or coupling it with a feeding activity. So feed the animal first and then have the child put the sock on their hands to hold the eating utensil so that the animal can feed them. So that way they can take turns. And so this is where you would wanna think teletherapy- wise, are we gonna do all of our activities in the kitchen today because you wanna think about, we don't wanna do something that's starting out with a bathroom activity and then goes to another room while you can certainly do it. It's certainly feasible. And I've certainly gone room to room before too, you wanna think about efficiency and you also wanna think about which rooms in the house the parents feels comfortable with you viewing. And so maybe if we know we're gonna do a feeding activity today, we might wanna do everything at the table. Or if the parents don't mind us doing a feeding activity on the floor, because maybe that's where the child's more comfortable. Or maybe once again, we're thinking about position issues

for the child. Maybe the child might need to sit on the floor with their back up against the wall or their back up against a couch. So that way they're out of their wheelchair or so that way they're getting more core supports while they're working on their feeding activity. So we wanna think ahead about those types of things. Another activity, suggestion, using a plastic container for pushing buttons or coins through it. So if you have like a little butter container or a cooler container, or I don't know, if you have cheese container, those are things are great to sticking buttons and coins through there. And you could pair it with one of the, if you give a mouse books. So there's lots of different books in that series too.

So I could say, if you give a mouse a such and such, and then maybe the next one is, if I give Sarah a button, she might put it in the dish, something like that. Or if I give Landon a bean, then he might put it in the container. So we can talk about those feeding the container each time you have to give the mouse something, because if you've read any of those books, the mouse always wants something. So every time the mouse gets something, our container gets something. Okay, pasta boxes are great. And so that's another one of those things where you wanna think about it. Maybe the family does not eat pasta every week. And so our one and only chance might be next week, they were planning for spaghetti or making macaroni and cheese or something like that. And so we want to plan ahead and say, if you have any pasta boxes, could you please save those? If you do have a child that does have scissors, it's great for cutting with resistance. I really like cutting cardboard boxes, I'm just cutting it up or pairing that with a book or fun activity that works really well. They can also be used as reading guides, writing guides. You can also use it as actual paper. And so that's where we also wanna think about during teletherapy, will we have one chance with that box?

So we might wanna start out, we might wanna take the box apart. And so here's two different types of boxes. So you might want to take the box apart. And depending on

the child's age, we can have them maybe do that as part of the therapy session, or we can have the parent prep it for us. But I love these little windows because these windows are really great for using, for visual tracking when reading. And so if I take that section, I can put that to the side. I can use the back of the box as a piece of writing paper, and then I'll go into my cutting. So that way I'm getting the most out of my box. This one right here that says the Maryland Science Center, that's just an envelope that had the little window also, envelopes were great, too. Junk mail works great for ripping, for cutting, also they have the windows, they're great for visual tracking for reading as well. And so once again, that's one of those things where maybe you wanna start out with an activity.

You can have the child go get the book, then they're gonna open the book for you. And then what they can do is, they can use the reading guide. We can maybe read a couple of lines or work on some visual tracking or I can ask them if they do have a book, can you find all of the letter A's and they can use that for visual tracking for all of the letter A's I'm having that angle towards them, the camera angle towards them. I also use it as a writing guide. So here's our same two boxes, except they're using, that's a writing guide. You can have the child right on the back of the box, or this is actually a piece of paper bag. So you can use the paper bag. Cereal boxes are really great. They're also great for cutting, if you have scissors, if not, they're great for hidden pictures. They're great for making puzzles. So let's take a look. All right, and so when you're thinking about teletherapy tips, you want to use the intact box first. So that's, once again, we're thinking about planning ahead and what exactly are we gonna do with this box 'cause we get one chance once we've cut the box up. It's cut up. So you might wanna use the intact box first for visual perceptual activities, and then you might want to next use it for handwriting and drawing, and then you might want to use it for cutting. Alright and so here's two boxes. Here's a box of fruit loops, which you'll hear, my kids always refer to as the treat cereal, because that's not, I always tell them we can't have that for breakfast, that's a treat cereal. So if your family's buy a treat cereal then you probably

have more fun things on the back of it than this box of Kashi cereal that you see right here. But with the fruit loops one, it's a great visual perceptual box just in itself. There's so much going on. And so this might be one of the ones where maybe we take this out and we take this until it's therapy time and we work on some of these activities. I also, the kashi box is great though, because it has so many words on it. So if you have scissors, we could certainly cut this up and make sentences that we can copy. And of course, we have paper and a pencil or I can say, where's the word play? Or can you find the word go? Or can you find the G? So it's a great visual perceptual. It's great for visual perceptual activities. Handwriting activity is great for that too. You can see these really big letters here. It does look like there's holes in it, but those black marks are actually black dots that I made with a Sharpie. And it's just so that way you can see it really well on camera, but tracing inside of the letters, that's great for handwriting.

So in addition to looking for different things on the boxes and something that's great too, I'll skip ahead a little bit, but if you do have kiddos that have intellectual disabilities and you're working on life skills and different things like that, we can actually look for the numbers and we can actually, the cereal boxes are great for learning about nutrition and reading and learning about ingredients and things that are healthy and what's not so healthy. So cereal boxes are really good for that too, as well as any can or package that you have in the home. And even talking about, fresh fruits and vegetables, don't come in packages.

Once again, this is one of the things where you wanna check with the parents and make sure you feel comfortable. You can set your teletherapy up in the kitchen and if you put it on a counter, so that way you're getting a full view of what's in front of you, you could even perhaps look in the refrigerator and see how many things that have packages and how many don't or how many things in the cabinets that have packages and how many don't and discuss what the difference nutritionally, when you find things that come in boxes or fresh foods or just discussing grocery shopping and making

grocery lists, different things like that. And something else you could actually also do too. What I've done is, I've had opened up my kitchen and I've done it where the camera is facing the items in my kitchen and I'm having my student on the other end, tell me, okay I put things on the counter and I ask them, okay, well, where should this go? And, Oh, this is cold or you're right. Where should I put this in my refrigerator? Okay, I'll put this away. Where should I put this? And I'll show them, okay, well, this is where I put my cans. This is where I put my boxes, where do you put yours? And just working on some different life skills that way too. Here's that paper bag again, here's a plate and here's a can and I made mickey mouse. And so it's a great tracing activity.

Once again, if you have something to trace with, because unfortunately we do have some kids that don't have pens or crayons or pencil access, but that still doesn't mean that we can't use our imaginations and put the plate down and use our finger to trace it and then put the can. Where should we put the cans? So that way we can make a mickey mouse and, well look, we made an invisible mickey mouse. So you can certainly still make it fun that way. That's one of those things too, where you're thinking about child positioning, where are we gonna do this because this is gonna require a surface that's hard. So that way hard stable surface for you to work on. I think I accidentally switched my slides. I should have went with the cereal boxes, but here's the scissors and here are the cereal boxes that are cut up. I think I actually cut one up into like six pieces. And then I caught one up into maybe like eight or 10 pieces. So it's really nice for grading the puzzles. So you can start out maybe one week with the one cereal box and it's caught up in six pieces and then next week, maybe we're gonna take that same six pieces and make it a 12-piece puzzle. And then maybe the following week, because the 12 piece puzzle isn't a challenge anymore we might add in another 12-piece puzzle box puzzle and mix all of them all up together and the child has to sort them out. and so that's one of those things where you plan ahead and you say would you be able to save your cereal boxes for me? And this is what we're going to do with the cereal boxes.

So tips, find an online picture or take your own picture of the intact cereal box to present as the finished model and then place it on the slide. That's another way to grade it. So that way the child can see, okay, this is what the intact box look like and this is what it's supposed to look like or you can not have that model there in order to grade it. Like I said before, you can grade it by cutting it into smaller pieces or mixing up the pieces or you can even, you can use your camera and angle it towards your hands and you can have the child work on giving you directions as to how to put it together. And so you probably would maybe only wanna make that a few pieces. So that way they're and label the pieces by number. So that way they can say, we'll put number one next to number two, or put number two on the left of number one. You wanna be mindful that if you do that, think about how the child is actually viewing your activity.

So what's right side up for you, maybe upside down for them. So you wanna make sure that you angle your activity. It may need to be upside down for you in order for them to see it right side up. And that's another thing. If you're using a slide, I do always like to use that second camera, especially if you're in the Google Meet because Google Meet doesn't have the option of that white board like Zoom does. If I'm in Google Meet and I'm either presenting with my screen or I'm showing a slide where I can't see what the student's doing, but I can only see my screen. What I do is I sign in on my cell phone, I turn my camera and my sound off. And then I tell the student, Oh, you are gonna see me pop up a second time, but you can ignore that. That's just so that way I can make sure I see you and see my screen at the same time. And so that way I can still see what the student is doing or the child is doing while they're looking at what I'm presenting on my screen. Therapeutic practice should be favored over sensorimotor approaches for the development and remediation of handwriting and literacy skills and performance. And so this came from occupational therapy practice guidelines for children and youth ages five to 21 in the same AJOT article. So we're taking a look at

some therapeutic activities for handwriting. So things that we're gonna look at that are actually working on the actual occupation of handwriting. So writing paper alternatives, paper bag, junk mail or receipts. When using a pencil pen, marker and crayon, those are usually the best things to use when you're telecasting for teletherapy on either end, just because it shows up really well on the screen. And with the pencil on the darker the led, the better works really well. All right, so for writing paper alternatives, if we don't have those things available, carpet great, especially if you have the carpet that is pretty lush and you stick your fingers in and it leaves the end tentation, but even still any carpet is fine because it's giving resistance and it is giving that sensory motor feedback like was discussed, but we do also need to actual work on the handwriting.

So it's good to give that multisensory input for the handwriting and we wanna make sure that yes, the child is getting a lot of sensory experiences when they're working on forming their letters. But we also wanna make sure that they are actually working on the correct formation of the letter as well. So the carpet is great for that because you can still watch what their body is doing, how they're forming the letters. Writing pencil alternatives, you can use a finger, a Q-tip, coins or comb. And so I'll show you some of these alternatives. I'll show you some pictures of it after the slide. Writing paper alternatives, a sandwich baggie filled with lotion conditioner or soap. And then, with that, you can use a rattail or pintail comb, a coin a Q-tip, a bobby pin and so I will show you that. So here you see, and you can even use money. So this brownish comb, that's a rattail comb. The pintail combs have like the metal end. So you kind of be wanna be careful with those because if the child presses too hard, they could pop the bag. But as you can see here, here is, this is high and my daughter was writing that. I took a picture of her writing that with the rattail comb, and we use a can of tomato sauce to hold it in place, even though she was holding it with her left hand. So it does make it a little bit tricky sometimes to the bag will move a little bit, but you can certainly grade it by using something really heavy, or you can grade it by using something a little bit lighter, depending on how much you want the child to really pay attention to using that

left hand. So it's great for really getting them to recognize, to use the left hand, but as you can see, it puts a nice indentation, so you can certainly write words and then you can erase them away and it gives a nice multisensory writing experience. And so that's one of the things where you can certainly model the letter formation.

So you also wanna think again, how was your child viewing what you are practicing or you're modeling for them. And so you may need to have yours upside down, and then you can certainly use a dime or penny or a button and you can put it at the top where you're gonna start and you can use that to make your guideline for where you start for your letter formation, and you can have the child imitate that. So here's some tips for the clinician, and this is best demonstrated on a flat surface. You can certainly do this on a vertical surface, but the thing is the lotion will start to fall to the bottom. You also wanna take into account and like I said before about your second camera, how's the child seeing it. If you're using a laptop, you can angle the camera towards your table and write the letters upside down. So that way it's right side up for the child. So that's, if you don't have the access to the second camera. Place the bag on a firm surface, the child can be in a seated position or in prone props. So it works great for being in prone prop.

Let's see, and so if there's only one camera angle, angle it toward the child's hand. However, depending on the streaming devices angle, this may be limit what the child is able to see on the screen. So essentially what that means is that if the child is using a laptop or Chromebook or something like that, and they angle their laptop angle towards their hands, if I'm demonstrating things that they need to see on the screen, it might make it a little bit difficult for them. So that might require for them to get into a position to look down to see how if the laptop is angled towards their hands. So you want to be mindful of that as well. A good way to kind of combat that. If they do have to angle it down towards their hands, you can do one of two things. You can have them build the laptop up higher and angle it down because then they can still see the

screen while they're looking up and you can still have the angle towards their hands, or you can have them push it back further and angle it down. And you can try working on the bottom of your screen. So if you're working at the bottom of your screen, it works a little bit easier for them because where it's angled, they're missing the top of your screen. So building letters and shapes, you can use Q-tips and you can certainly color them. You can color yours and have the child imitate, you can say, okay, well, and this is color code at one where it's green, yellow, red. So I'm gonna to put my green Q-tip down and then my yellow on, and then my red one. And depending on how you teach making squares, there's several different ways. I always tell my students, okay, we're gonna make an L and then we're gonna finish the box. And so for me, I would say, okay, we're gonna go green, yellow, red, purple. But you might say, okay, we're gonna do the purple first and then green, red and then yellow.

So that just gives you a way to give them better cues since you're not able to be hands on and gives the parents cues also as to what order of sequence you're giving the child. This right here, these are my work silverware. I don't know if you can tell in this picture, but if you take it and you enlarge it with the forks I can say, okay, I'm with forks, with the knives they each have a different base. And so that way that helps me to differentiate between which knife I'm talking about, because they all have different bases. There's a cell phone cord that I used to make the letter S the knives for the letter L. Here's a plate and some spaghetti that I used to make the space but you can also use that for letters too. And I'll kinda speed up a little bit, 'cause I want to make sure I get all these slides through all these slides. And I will say like, spaghetti is great too. I have had a child that had PICA and due to COVID, everyone is stuck in the house. And so then everyone got it. And and he's eating Legos and all kinds of things too. It was really great to be able to use spaghetti because I could say, go ahead. You can have the spaghetti, when we're working on letter formation, you can see here this is one of those examples where I said, where you probably wanna have slides made, It would take me too much time to put this together, to make it say LOL or OMG and that

way it works with form constancy. I can have the child imitate it, that way it's on the screen. I don't have to worry about where my second camera is. I don't have to worry about am I getting everything in, on the camera, the child can just see what I want them to make or what I want them to see. And then here, I'm just making patterns with a cell phone cord, a drink, a fork and a spoon.

So that's something else that you can do too. Activities suggestions, I think I covered that and that's why talking about the slides. Showing these on the slides certainly makes it more efficient, and then setting up separate slides, making it step by step was really something that's really efficient too, because sometimes you really need to break it down for the child, setting up a slide show, making the slide show with step by step, you can continue to reuse it. You can send it home as like a home exercise program for the child. And then, so if you're using like Zoom or Google Meet, once again, you might wanna sign in with your cell phone, just so that way, while you're clicking through the slide, you can still see what the child is doing and not just what's on your screen. Let's take a look. You may wanna give the parent a week notice so that spaghetti can be purchased and then send an email to have her prepared. I like to use a an add on called mixmax. And what I'll do is I'll say, okay, Tuesday, I need to my email, my parents for Thursday, just to remind them. And so on Sunday, I can set up my email reminder and tell it to send it to them on Tuesday. So that way I don't forget. So that way we have everything we need for therapy spaghetti works best at room temperature. So like the parent could prepare it the night before and refrigerate it.

However, I would just send a text or quick phone call or an email and say, 15 minutes prior to the session, do you think you could pull the spaghetti out? So it's nice and warm for us to be able to use. And so maybe we're gonna have spaghetti for lunch that day, because we already have spaghetti that's made or they may had spaghetti for dinner last night and we just pulled out a few pieces of spaghetti to work with for OT that day, that where we're making the most use out of their resources. Poor postural

control. So I mean, if you're looking at kids that have some really poor postural control, and we're looking at some teletherapy activities that we wanna do, supine charades is a great one too try to help, the parent can certainly help manually put their body into a position where we try to figure out, okay, what's going on there. And you can make up really silly stories. If they're going to put their arms and legs all the way out, maybe they're the landing X for a helicopter or something very, very silly or you could certainly do something and then have them imitate. That once again, you also wanna think about camera positioning, what's gonna be the most efficient? Are you gonna demonstrate it? Are you gonna have this on the slide already? Supine dressing, I would suggest showing a video of what to do for the supine dressing and then show a video as the example.

And then if you want to demonstrate to add an extra layer, or if you want you to just talk the child and the family through just so that way with the video, they kind of know what's expected because for a lot of families, teletherapy is very strange. And so you want me to exactly do what> But no, we're gonna start out with clothing on already, and this is what we're gonna practice. And it works really great with you get one of the adults clothing and kids love to dress up in adults clothing. So maybe before the session, they get a chance to pick out a really cool outfit that they can work on. Tall kneeling position, working on a chair, couch or coffee table, you're gonna walk the parent through the positioning cues using visual and verbal cues. So that may be where you wanna show a picture, but you also want to physically show the parents what's going on. And so you're wanting to think, what other activities are we gonna to do? So that way we're not constantly changing their camera angle and we're being very efficient for how we're setting this up. Therapy considerations from the article activity and occupation-based interventions to support mental health, positive behavior and social participation for children and youth on this says, this is moderate to strong evidence supports the use of yoga and sports, moderate strengths, evidence supports the use of play and creative arts. And so teletherapy is great for this. You can play

broom, hockey, laundry, basket, corn hole or basketball. And so maybe that's like our treatment at the end, like all of these games and we're working on stuffing, pulling the socks together or stuffing them together to make a corn hole bean bag, a floor triathlon where you're swimming, biking, and running. So that works great where you're going from prone and you're pretending to swim and trying to flip over to being in a supine position for your bike and your run.

Those are all fun things that really help especially kids now who are pretty much trapped at home because of COVID that these are all fun things that they can do to help with mental health and social participation because the whole family can do this, our brothers and sisters can do this activity too, some great add ons, the books swim, no swim or don't throw it to mo or Ben's adventures. I think those books are excellent and then YouTube yoga, I won't spend too much time on these activities suggestions so that we can keep moving on. Origami, washcloth origami. So you can use washcloth if the family has a dollar bill or even a receipt, you can certainly use a receipt for these two but just doing some origami and so you can see here, I took a dollar and I followed the video and I made a dollar bill house and I added some quarters and I made a whole picture. And so this is one of the things where you can demonstrate, or you guys can do this together. That's a really fun activity. Let's see, on the basis of evidence, the skyline recommend that occupational therapy practitioners consistently collaborate with families and caregivers and provide services in natural context of the desired occupation.

So teletherapy, like I said before is great for that. We're gonna participate in the occupation, right in right where it actually is going to happen. And so with that being said, let's think about some life skills. I did see on the survey that, some of you do work with kids that have intellectual disabilities and for those kiddos, a lot of times it works it's best to actually do the actual activity not to have simulated activities. So meal planning is great. Finding the recipe, making a store list and then checking online to

see if the items are on sale. You could even go as far as ordering the items online, if that's the parents wish or depending on what the current climate is right now, maybe even going to the grocery store and maybe we have the cell phone, and this is what we're doing, we're actually getting the actual items. We're on the cell phone using FaceTime. I know some of you say you're using FaceTime, but you can certainly use Zoom or Google Meet on it or VC. And we're putting the items in the carts. Actually hanging and folding clothes. Hanging and folding clothes, I find that works best if I have the hangers that the child has, and we're literally doing this together. So I'm walking them through it, I'm showing them this and I have the parent helping the coach. Sorting money is another great activity, sorting real money. Because once again, we wanna make sure that the activities carrying over. Buying therapy activities to practice money management.

So I will have some kids and I'll say, what game would you like to play because this game cost 50 cents and this game costs 75 cents, so which would you like to play? And then the child would have to count out for me, the money for what activity they'd like. And then they put that money aside and we've paid for that activity. We play that activity at our next activity. I also do something like this where I'll say, kind of like the prices right, we have a pair of scissors, my scissors cost 50 cents, do you think you could count up 50 cents for these scissors? So we're working on real life activities too, but also just thinking out, here's they getting dressed in a supine race, somehow I mixed up my slides, but this is activity I had my kids do this. And you can see that if your hat falls off your head, then you're disqualified. So I'm trying to keep them on the back and bring their legs up and they had they put the shirt on while they're on their back and the pants on. And so that works great for kids who have poor postural control, but also works great for kids who don't need to work on some range of motion, some other dressing techniques or different things like that. And so getting dressed in supine, just having the child literally practice getting dressed in supine, actually, no, I didn't know, I put that slide there. I was trying to teeter between, should I

put it with the mental health part for the game, or should I put it more of the activity, the ADL. So I think I decided to put it with ADLs. So actually getting dressed in supine. So actually having the child practice, getting dressed in supine, if they have a lot of postural difficulties or they have a lot of physical disabilities, which will not allow them to stand or sit to get dressed.

And like I said before, using parent clothing, grading this by using stretchy pants versus jeans, which jeans are easier because they hold their shape. Stretchy pants are kind of hard adding socks because it requires more range of motion, different types of fasteners having a skills-athlon or escape room with multiple life challenges and that's one of the things we're gonna check with the parents and make sure this is okay, do we even have the capability to do do it this? Or maybe our escape room is just gonna be all in the kitchen because it's gonna have to be put all of the cold things away and then you come back to the computer and you get it point for that or you get to advance to the next one activity, or it could be kids that had some sensory difficulties it's washing your hands and then it's brushing your teeth and then it might be combing your hair, or it might be putting on a pair of pants so just different activities that you could put together and you can decide teletherapy wise, are we going to stay in this just this one room or do we need to be mobile for this? They have their escape room and then at the end, yay, you escaped, you were able to do, complete all of these multiple life challenge activities.

So this is a DIY cardboard shirt folder. I've actually used these for students. I've had a student that I was using this with before, but the dad actually was the one who built it. So I wanted to see if I could make one with just using a knife at home because most people have knives. This is just a regular box. And so you can see, I just started out with the box and sort of cutting and measuring and taping, I just use the knife to cut the slits. And so what this shirt folder does is, it helps you to fold shirts. You can watch the link, that'll give you a little bit more information about it. Real quick, some of the

other life skill things that I like to do that also help with skills, certainly like cutting apples or cheese or bread so cutting different things with butter knives and just grading that. And that's great for life skills, but it's also great for some of the littler ones. If you're working on the hand strengthening, pot and pan bongos, those are great bilateral activities, so just using the pots and pans, but I think I will stop here so I can answer a few questions. The camera, O-S-M-O. It's actually a whole game kit, it's called Osmo. My kids have one and I had seen online that you could actually use it for, to help with a second camera and it works really well. Let's see. What writing programs do I think works best for teletherapy? You know what, I like to use a blended. I kind of use a blend of handwriting without tears, just some multisensory-type stuff. There's the size of matter of program, which works well for some kiddos. I kind of just do like a whole mesh depending on what my students need. I will say what works really well.

Whenever you can couple visual cues with verbal cues that works really well. And so I think less about the program and more about how are you able to relay those cues for the child too? So it might just be you need those color-coded cues, or you need directional cues in addition to a handwriting without tears program, or you may need on paper depending on what child, what paperwork's best with the child. So I would say teletherapy-wise, it's kind of a mesh, it's more of what works best for the child versus the actual program from what I've seen. Let's see. So that was lotion that was inside. It says what has been used in the Ziploc bag for writing that was a lotion. But you could also use conditioner. You can also use soap to which you would want soap that you can't see through, you want clear soap, because it makes a little bit more difficult to see the indentation of the letters.

Let's see. What does it mean typical 30-minute session look like using household activities, including transition time in between activities? I will say I try to limit the transitions. And so usually my transitions will be standing and sitting or my transitions will be sitting and prone. And so that way my activity are either confined to either the

table and the floor or standing up and the table or standing up and the floor, I feel like transition between two surfaces is probably what works best unless you have a child that is super, super, super busy. Then in that case, you might wanna position the camera. So that way you're getting a full room of a view. I have also done in the kitchen where I've just set it up in my kitchen and I've told my student that you won't see me, but you'll see my stove. And we've literally cooked together and I we've done it like a cooking show where the student was the host of the cooking show. My camera is pointed towards my stove and their camera is pointed out far enough that I can see them go to the refrigerator and go to the stove. Assessments that I use, let's see. Assessments that I use online. I use the Beery VMI and the Motor Free Visual Perceptual Tests. For informal assessments, I'll use typing.com with the camera pointed towards the hands.

So that way you can look at finger positioning and get a general gist of typing speed, and also the sensory processing measure on sensory profile too. So those would be the four standardized tests that I use. Am I using out? Yes, so I do buy my materials, but the thing is I have two, I have a seven and an eight-year-old. So a lot of my materials are just things I would already have to buy for my household anyway. And so if you have a lot of few food allergies, you certainly don't want to endanger yourself. I would just take pictures. I would just do a Google search and take pictures and put those into slides and you can certainly use those. Something really cool that you can do too you could just go into PowerPoint and just get a picture of maybe one Cheerio and duplicate it and then use just multiple pictures of those Cheerios and make a whole slide show for ones Cheerio on a slide or depending on what you would like to do. But yet you certainly don't have to touch anything that you don't want to and you certainly wouldn't want to endanger your health by doing that. Let's see any strategies for students with increased behaviors and resulting in? Yes, so what I do allow depending on the level of the child, I do allow children to walk away from the computer and what I will have them and once again, it also depends on the child too. Sometimes

that child has to ask for a break. And so I will say, okay, you need to ask me for a break. And the child will come back and say, can I have a break or they might sign break, or they might hold up something that we may have, maybe we hold up a pen when we wanna break if the child is nonverbal and that means they need a break, they get a break, I put a timer on it.

I don't chase children. I think for one, sometimes when children run and hide it's because they need a safe place to go. And I don't wanna invade that. And then for two, if you're chasing them, that kind of encourage behaviors. You don't wanna do that either, but for that type of child, then maybe we need to do a couple of more transitions and we need to find out where their preference for having OT. I did have a student who liked to do OT in the bathroom. And so that's where we did it. We did OT in the bathroom with the door shut, and that was a safe space for that student and that student can move around in that confined space. And I could still see that student the entire time, but I don't request that all my students specifically in front of the screen the whole entire time, if we're working on something that requires that, then I try to break up my sessions. So that way they're doing able to do standing and able to do sitting. So they're able to change positions.

What do the headphones do for? So I like the headphones because I feel like just for me, I can hear my student a lot more clearly. And I do have birds chirping outside my window sometimes when I have my window open. And I think that my student can hear me a lot more clearly through my microphone as well, but I like to have the headphones on personally, just because I feel like it really helps them focus on my student and I can hear them really well. So I'll take about one more question and then you're certainly, I'll certainly email all of the answers to your questions. I want to make sure that I answer everything. What are some fast backup activities in case a parent forgets an item that is needed or loses it? I usually have a lot of online activities that I use as a backup. So if the parent doesn't have X, Y, and Z, or they're like, "Oh, I

forgot." I can say, "Oh no, that's okay. I have this online activity that we're gonna go ahead and do first" or I usually start out with my sessions with a gross motor activity anyway, so that way the student can go ahead and do their gross motor activity. Why the parent either finds it, was able to gather materials, if not, then I certainly have backup online activities, but that's a very good question. And actually, if you email me that question, I could send you some specifics of things that I really like to do just as a backup. If I've got to pull a rabbit out of my hat really quickly. So thanks everyone for joining me. I hope this was helpful and yeah, feel free to email me. I appreciate feedback and if you have any questions, I'm always happy to share resources or if you know something that I don't know, and you wanna tell me about it, I love to have your information too, because it's a teletherapy is continuing to evolve even day by day, minute by minute. So, alright. Thank you very much. Hope everybody has a great day.

- [Fawn] Thank you so much, Tasha for a great talk and great activities. I hope everyone has a great rest of the day. Join us again on Continued in [occupationaltherapy.com](http://occupationaltherapy.com). Thank you.