

# Addressing Rest and Sleep in Children from an Occupational Perspective

Expressions of Interest Sought  
Sydney/Brisbane – Term 2/3, 2022

2 days

Sleep is essential for a person's health and wellbeing. It plays a crucial role in our body and brain's physiological maintenance. During sleep the body restores resources that have been depleted by waking activities, allows growth and boosts the immune system. While sleeping, the brain processes and retains information that has been learned in the day and makes it accessible for future use through long term memory. Poor sleep has significant impact on the occupational performance of children and their families. Lack of adequate sleep affects mood, motivation, judgment and our perception of events, it can also lead to cognitive problems that impact may impact on the ability to learn in school.

As the pace of life increases, including the social and academic demands on children/families, our sleep patterns have suffered. It is estimated that 40% of children and adolescents experience some form of sleep problem during their development. More alarmingly however, is the high incidence (some studies estimating approx. 80%) of sleep disorders in children with underlying neurodevelopmental abnormalities (ie ASD, ADHD, ID). This is of particular concern for this population where underlying neurological complications may already be contributing to neurocognitive performance deficits, and be adversely affecting the quality of life for them and for their families.

Occupational therapists have a unique role in identifying sleep disturbance, as part of their assessment of an individual and family's daily activity routines, participation and occupational performance. Occupational therapy is also in a prime position to address sleep problems by targeting the context/environment, performance patterns and/or the individual's psycho-emotional state that may contribute to poor sleep.

### Aims/Objectives

At the end of this workshop, participants will gain and understanding of:

- The neurological and psychological importance of sleep (and adverse effects of poor sleep)
- Social and developmental issues affecting sleep
- The impact of person's psycho-emotional state (ie anxiety, stress, depression) on sleep
- Environmental factors and adaptations (physical, sensory) related to sleep
- Sleep hygiene/promotion of healthy habits to promote rest/sleep
- Develop sleep goals and intervention plans to reduce sleep disturbances, based on communication, sensory and behavioral strategies.

The workshop will include practical sessions (ie case studies) to assist participants integrate their knowledge and skills. This workshop is open to Occupational Therapists.

### About the Presenters

**Dr Chris Chapparo** PhD, MA, DipOT is widely recognised on an international level for her contributions to occupational therapy through teaching, research and community service activities. Dr Chapparo has co-authored the Occupational Performance Model (Australia). Dr Chapparo has interests in cognition, management of sensory/ motor problems in children and adults and occupational therapy theory. Dr Chapparo is a founding member of Sensory Integration International and the Australian SI Faculty and she is a neurodevelopmental therapy instructor. Her research interests lie in the areas of children's information processing and social participation.

**Annie O'Connell** M.App.Sc (OT) has over 30 years of experience, working as an OT in a variety of paediatric settings in Australia and overseas. Her Masters by Research investigated 'Sleep Disturbance in Children with Autism and the use of a Waterbed'. From 2003 to 2015 Annie was the Lead Practitioner for the '*Sleepwise project*' addressing sleep disturbance in young people with developmental disabilities. She has also been successful in obtaining two research grants that has allowed her to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Sleepwise* approach for children 2–18 years of age. In 2009, a Churchill Fellowship allowed her to further explore the management of sleep disturbances in the UK, USA and Canada. Annie is a well respected conference presenter, combining her practical experience with extensive research; and the provision of practical strategies.

**Expressions of Interest** for this workshop are now being sought. Please register your interest by contacting Zi Mei Events on [info@zimei.com.au](mailto:info@zimei.com.au) or (07) 3358 3689.