

Anxiety: Stress: Resilience in Children An Occupational Performance Approach

Expressions of Interest Sought

Melbourne

Term 3, 2026

Children today are growing up in an increasingly complex world. Academic pressure, social expectations, digital exposure, family stressors and global uncertainty can present children with challenges, setbacks, failures and difficult/disappointing situations. For children, worrying about everyday activities (eg task transitions, playing with friends, completing homework tasks, parental relationships), as well as worry about external events (eg natural disasters), can significantly detract from their occupational performance within a myriad of daily tasks. Anxiety is considered to be one of the most common forms of psychological disorders, affecting up to 20% of children and teenagers. Anxiety symptoms can interfere with a child's ability to effectively participate in school activities, self-care tasks and social opportunities.

Emotional resilience is the ability to "bounce back" or overcome life's challenges. Emotional resilience is a valuable skill for all children. The capacity to be resilient empowers children to develop coping behaviours, to persist or work through setbacks, cope with stress, develop confidence and maintain a healthy self-esteem. Supported by evidence from neuroscience and resilience frameworks, this workshop uses an occupational performance approach to outline the various ways occupational therapists can assist children and families to promote and support children's resilience.

Aims/Objectives

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Recognise how anxiety and stress may present (and impact on occupational performance) across different neurotypes and developmental profiles
- Explain the variety of possible internal and external factors that influence anxiety and reduce/foster resilience in children
- Apply strengths-based, neuroaffirming strategies to support children in responding to life's challenges, including:
 - facilitating authentic social connection and belonging
 - supporting positive identity development and self-understanding
 - enhancing emotional awareness and regulation in ways that respect individual differences
 - building flexible planning and problem-solving skills
- Collaborate with parents and teachers to create supportive, inclusive environments that reduce stress and promote participation

This workshop will look at a range of programmes/interventions that address the needs of a variety of ages and populations from vulnerable young children, through to primary and high school services.

This two day workshop is suitable for occupational therapists.

About the Presenter



Associate Professor Chris Chapparo PhD, MA, DipOT -

Dr Chapparo 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.

Expressions of Interest for this workshop are now being sought. Please register your interest to info@zimei.com.au