

Parent-to-parent training: Going beyond family-centered interventions. Extended Discussion at the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists National Conference, 15-18 June, Saskatoon, Sk. Canada.

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Abstract:

Introduction: Parents play a major role in the rehabilitation and training of their children with chronic disabilities. Having children with special needs can present parents with many challenges in everyday activities including management, social and educational experiences. Parents often gain valuable knowledge and positive experiences from the processes of solving these problems. The purpose of parent-to-parent training is to transfer these positive experiences among parents. It helps parents to identify, organize and present their experiences to other parents in their own language and in their own words through workshops, pamphlets, and video clips.

Objectives: This presentation aims to discuss the concepts, theoretical basis, and pros and cons of parent-to-parent training.

Methods: The session will begin with presentation of concepts and theories underlying the training. Parents' and therapists' roles will be discussed and differences between this approach and other approaches such as peer-training will be explained. Then, a video clip developed during parent-to-parent training will be presented as an example. In small groups, participants will discuss how parent-to-parent training may be implemented in their own settings.

Practice Implications: This approach helps parents to share their experiences with and provides support for vulnerable parents. It also helps therapists to understand parents' needs and priorities.

Conclusions: Parents with rich experiences can be valuable sources of information for other parents having children with chronic disabilities. Therapists can help these parents to organise their experiences and share them with other parents. In this process, parents not only provide their supports to other parents but transfer their positive knowledge to others.