

0039

**Occupation Interrupted: Exploring the impact of past trauma on parenting & childhood occupations.**

Kate Piromalli

*Benevolent Society, Sydney, Australia*

**Background**

The occupation of parenting can be significantly impeded by past trauma. Without intervention, a parent may experience difficulty in undertaking daily living and struggle to achieve occupational balance. Past trauma may impact on parental perceptions of their child's behaviors and capacity to participate and engage in support of the daily living and occupational needs of their child. In turn, the child's ability to utilize their parent as a safe base to explore their world, choose and balance their occupations can be negatively impacted.

**Aim/Purpose**

To demonstrate occupational therapy in practice to:

- prevent and address complex care needs such as past trauma in children and adults;
- assist vulnerable families to optimally participate in daily living tasks, chosen occupational roles and to rebuild family and community links.

**Method**

The presentation will draw on case studies from The Benevolent Society's Brighter Futures South West Sydney programs.

**Discussion** will identify issues practitioners face in the context of comprehensive targeted social programs to vulnerable families and demonstrate successful interventions being delivered to families with complex care needs with potential to be more widely applied.

**Conclusion**

Occupational therapy has much to offer in complex care contexts. Core components of occupational therapy can enhance the range of options and approaches available to vulnerable families and assist in breaking cycles of intergenerational difficulty in undertaking both parent and child occupations.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The presentation will assist participants to:

1. identify potential impacts on the occupation of parenting from past trauma;
2. identify factors that impact on a child's ability to optimally participate in childhood occupations;
3. articulate core components of occupational therapy that may be employed in a range of contexts when working with other social science professionals and models of practice to support the occupations of parenting and childhood in families in need of complex care.