

## ABSTRACT

Project Title: Boston University Occupational Therapy Leadership Center  
Project Number: MC-00007-36  
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**KEY WORDS:** Occupational Therapy, Pediatrics, Maternal and Child Health, Leadership

**PURPOSE:** To improve the health status of mothers and children, this project was designed to train leaders in pediatric occupational therapy (OT) who are knowledgeable about broader issues and aspects of health care and can have an impact on intervention for children and their families in practice, research, education, and advocacy, and in influencing public policy related to health care. Additional purposes of the project were to develop and disseminate materials to enhance pediatric content in OT training programs and to provide continuing education, consultation, and technical assistance in pediatric OT geared to the needs of the MCH community.

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

1. Enhance OT's knowledge of MCH issues and broader aspects of health care for children and families.
2. Develop leaders in OT education who can incorporate relevant research and knowledge, including broad issues of health care for children and families, into

effective teaching.

3. Develop leaders in OT research who are able to develop and implement programs of research that generate new knowledge, document functional outcomes and quality of life for children and families, and incorporate it into evidence-based practice.
4. Develop leaders in OT who are well versed in systems, issues, and policies affecting health care and who can advocate for health care for children and families.
5. Develop and disseminate curricula, teaching models, and other educational materials to enhance pediatric OT education related to family and child health.
6. Provide continuing education, consultation, and technical assistance to pediatric OT training programs and to the MCH community.
7. Increase the number of leaders in the profession including those of ethnic minorities.

METHODOLOGY: The project has three major components:

1. Specialized doctoral-level OT training and stipend support: courses in issues in MCH and policy and advocacy offered through BU SPH, and the LEND programs; practicum in Policy and Advocacy; mentored experiences in research, grant writing, and teaching.
2. Development and dissemination of curriculum and training materials that incorporate Bright Futures, include a population-based perspective, integrate culturally competent, family-centered community-based care, and utilize new technology.
3. Continuing education, consultation and technical assistance through workshops, presentations, meetings of program MCHB training projects and Project Directors of the Centers for Leadership in Pediatric Occupational Therapy, and assisting State Title V and other agencies serving the MCH population.

Our Project involves direct linkages with several Title V agencies and other organizations including: a) BU MCH Department, SPH, b) the LEND programs at the Shriver Center/U

Mass Medical Center, and at Children's Hospital, c) the MCHB Behavioral Pediatrics Fellowship Training program at BU Medical Center, d) the Fetal Alcohol Education Program, e) The Occupational therapy MCH Leadership Centers at USC and UW-Madison, f) The State Departments of Health of MA, NY, and ME, and g) American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and the American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF).

EVALUATION: The project advisory committee evaluated the project annually through documenting completion of short-term and long-term activities. Trainees' performance was monitored through performance in courses, practica, teaching and research activities, participation in Title V activities and on advisory boards, numbers of publications, presentations, and grants. Teaching performance, trainee self-evaluation, and teaching portfolios were monitored by the project director and the trainees' advisor. Continuing education programs were evaluated by participants' written feedback. Materials developed were evaluated by user satisfaction.

RESULTS/OUTCOMES: Twenty-five students participated in the doctoral program and 16 of these students graduated during the project period. Eleven of the 25 students were MCH-funded. Six of these MCH-funded students graduated, and five are continuing.

All of our MCH trainees have taken courses at the School of Public Health (SPH), Department of MCH and the CORE courses at LEND programs that have enhanced their knowledge of issues in MCH. All students taught in a variety of contexts, maintained teaching portfolios, and participated in mentored research. Eleven sponsored continuing education programs served 840 participants. Membership in our Pediatric OT Educators Network included 175 pediatric OT faculty representing 110 OT programs. Technical Assistance was provided to 12 Universities in six states, 11 Title V programs including

four State Departments of Health and two LEND programs, the American Occupational Therapy Association and Foundation, and numerous community-based organizations.

Faculty gave more than 350 presentations reaching almost 30,000 participants. Doctoral students gave more than 250 presentations reaching more than 15,000 participants.

**PUBLICATIONS/PRODUCTS:** Faculty published 205 articles, including 16 articles on evidence-based practice. Collectively, the 25 doctoral students published 64 articles while in the program and 78 articles post-graduation. Fact sheets on various topics were produced such as: Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Infant, Toddler, and Preschooler Development, Safe Playgrounds, and Social Justice.

**DISSEMINATION/UTILIZATION OF RESULTS:** Materials were disseminated in professional journals, books, conference presentations, workshops and institutes, on the web, and through an e-mail newsletter to pediatric OT faculty.

**FUTURE PLANS/FOLLOW-UP:** The Doctoral Program in Therapeutic Studies will continue until all trainees have graduated and then be replaced by an interdisciplinary doctoral program. Faculty will continue with professional networking and relationships, although without MCHB support, consultation and technical assistance to Title V programs will be significantly curtailed. The manuals and other educational materials developed by the project will continue to be used and MCH philosophy will be infused in the curriculum. Most important, the spirit of this MCH project will continue in the professional activities of the MCH trainees who completed our program.

**TYPE/AMOUNT OF SUPPORT AND RESOURCES NEEDED TO REPLICATE:**

Replication of this project would require an institution with a strong research faculty knowledgeable about the needs of mothers and children. Funding for trainees and release time for faculty collaboration with public and community agencies is essential.

ANNOTATION: The purpose of the Boston University Occupational Therapy Leadership Center was to enhance services for mothers and children by providing doctoral training of occupational therapists for leadership roles in education, research, and policy and advocacy. Furthermore, the BU Center has supported the MCH community and enhanced clinical service effectiveness through a comprehensive system of technical assistance, continuing education, consultation, and development and dissemination of educational materials for the MCH community. The evaluation plan combines both qualitative and quantitative measures for the doctoral program, the trainees, and related activities.

KEY WORDS: Occupational therapy, Pediatrics, Leadership, Maternal and Child Health, Doctoral training, Mothers and Children, Curriculum, Continuing Education, Consultation, Technical Assistance

