

The impact of using the Move to Learn motor sequences on young school children's performance in the classroom.

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Introduction

Teachers in Australian schools are under pressure to produce significant learning outcomes within their classrooms. Classrooms are often made up of children who have varying abilities, including gifted children and those with learning difficulties. Move to Learn (MTL) is a set of specifically designed motor sequences based on sensory integration and perceptual motor theory. Developers of MTL claim that implementing the motor sequences on a daily basis can improve children's performance in the classroom and result in improved academic outcomes.

Objectives

The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of the MTL sequences on children's performance within the classroom as measured by selected classroom skills.

Methods

A randomised controlled trial evaluated 650 primary school children in regular kindergarten, first and second grade classes. Children were randomly allocated by class to two groups: a control group (that received regular classroom curriculum) and an experimental group (that received daily MTL sequences in addition to regular classroom curriculum). The children's performance was measured at the beginning and end of the study (one school term) using a classroom performance rating scale as well as measures of reading, writing and drawing. The data were scored and analysed by independent raters.

Results

A significant between group difference was found on classroom performance measures including aspects of writing and to a lesser extent reading. Children who received the MTL sequences improved significantly more than children receiving only the current curriculum. Results also found that the impact of implementing the motor sequences was different for each school year group.

Conclusion

Implementing the MTL motor sequences can assist with improving children's performance within the classroom and subsequent academic development in selected areas. Contribution to the practice/evidence base of occupational therapy

This study contributes to research and evidence based practice to support the potential use of movement sequences such as MTL as an addition to school based therapy programs aimed at improving classroom performance in young children.