Pediatric Occupational Therapy Pracitioners' Perspectives on Barriers and Facilitators to Participation in Home Programming

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Purpose

To explore pediatric occupational therapists' perspectives on factors influencing home program carryover, including caregiver partnership, home routines, child characteristics, and technology use.

Research Questions

1. How do caregiver beliefs, partnerships, and challenges influence home program carryover?
2. How do home routines, environments, and family demands impact implementation?
3. How is technology used to support home programming, and what features are most and least effective?



Background Information

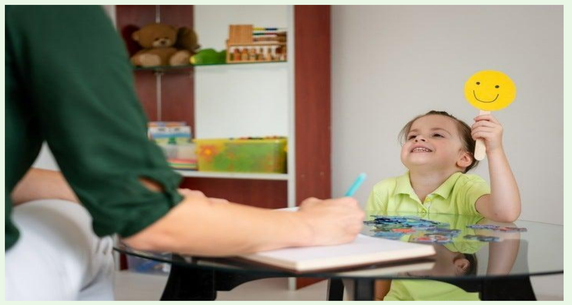
Home programs are a central component of pediatric occupational therapy, supporting skill development and the generalization of therapeutic gains across environments. Embedding interventions within daily routines, such as play, feeding, and other occupations, promotes meaningful participation and improved outcomes. Routine-based approaches provide structure, predictability, and opportunities for repeated practice within natural contexts, making them an effective method for supporting carryover and functional skill development in children.

Survey Themes

Theme	Subthemes	Representative Quote
Caregiver Capacity & Engagement as a Barrier	Time constraints; stress/burnout; confidence; competing demands	"Families frequently have busy lives with competing demands… making it difficult to consistently implement strategies."
Clarity, Education, & Collaboration as a Support	Clear recommendations; caregiver education; communication; shared responsibility	"Providing very specific tools and explaining how to implement them helps."
Home Environment & Routine Fit as a Barrier	Lack of structure; distractions; mismatch with routines; expectations	"Distractions in the home environment… interfere with carryover."
Child Factors & Regulation as a Barrier	Sensory needs; behavior; regulation; task tolerance	"Lack of cooperation of the child impacts carryover."
Socioeconomic & Contextual Barriers as a Barrier	Financial constraints; access to resources; family demands; geography	"When families are low income… extra tasks feel impossible."
Technology as Support	Visual supports; caregiver education; communication tools; screen time	"Visual supports like charts and schedules are helpful."
Strategies That Improve Carryover	Routine embedding; caregiver coaching; practice across contexts; simplification	"Embedding strategies into daily routines is key."

Methodology

A qualitative survey design was used to examine clinician perspectives on barriers to home carryover in pediatric outpatient occupational therapy. Thirteen occupational therapy clinicians from outpatient pediatric settings across Maine were recruited using purposive sampling through professional networks and clinics. Data were collected via an anonymous, open-ended electronic survey distributed through Google Forms, which included five domains: caregiver partnership and beliefs, home environment and routines, child factors and tolerance, technology and electronic supports, and access/geography. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns related to participation facilitators and barriers.



Clinical Bottom Line

Home program carryover is less about the intervention itself and more about how well it fits within the caregiver's capacity, daily routines, and real-world context. Effective carryover is supported by clear communication, caregiver collaboration, and strategies embedded into meaningful daily activities.

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References