



Stenden

What Works in Art Therapy with Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders?

2012 - 2016

Celine Schweizer

Promotor Prof. E.Knorth

Co-promotor dr. M.Spreen

PhD

Design:

Mixed Method

Aim:

Development of Practice Based Evidence
about specific art therapeutic elements in art
therapy with children with autism

Building Practice Based Evidence

(Van Yperen & Veerman, 2008)



Niveau 4

Effectiveness: N=1, repeated case study and/ or experimental study

Niveau 3

Indicating: Efficacious, Causality

Niveau 2

Theoretical: Review, Meta analysis

Niveau 1

Descriptive: Observation, Document analysis, Interviews

PhD

min. 4 publications in scientific, international, peer reviewed journals, about:

- Tacit knowledge of art therapists: Pilot, practice based evidence.
- **Systematic review: theoretical evidence.**
- Standardizing of theoretical concepts: Delphi study.
- **Validation of treatment program: 10 case studies.**
- Validation of observationlist.

Child with autism

Problems with:

Flexibility

Social and communicative skills

Self image

Pilot: Practice Based Evidence

Submitted to 'Focus on Autism and other Developmental Disabilities':

Exploring What Works in Art Therapy with Children with Autism: Tacit Knowledge of Art Therapists

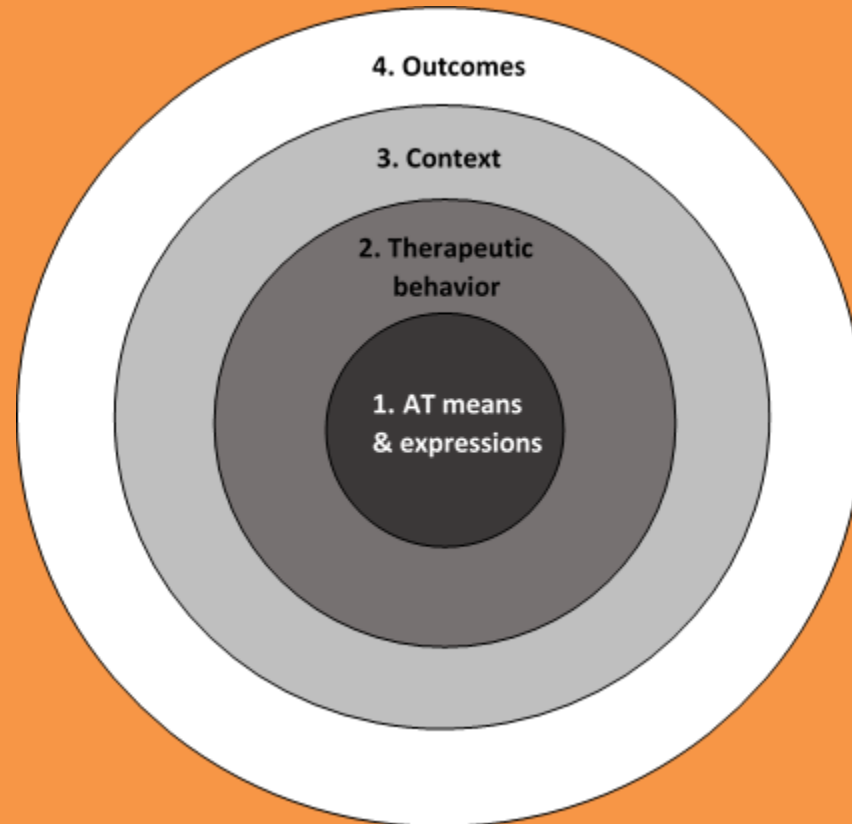
Celine Schweizer, Marinus Spreen,

Stenden University of Applied Sciences

Erik J. Knorth

University of Groningen

Pilot Results



COAT model: Context and Outcomes in Art Therapy

Pilot Results



Systematic Review

Schweizer, C., Knorth, E. J., & Spreen, M. (2014). Art therapy with children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A review of clinical case descriptions on 'what works'. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 41(5), 577-593, doi: 10.1016/j.aip.2014.10.009.

Selection and Findings

- Dutch and English language
- 18 studies, (6 in databases, 12 handsearch)
- Incl. grey literature (onpublished theses)
 - 2 group AT studies (2x n=25)
 - 1 x case study
 - 15 x practice examples in theoretic frame, about total 19 children

AT means and expressions

1. Varied tactile visual sensory experiences of the child to encourage child to make variations and to show flexibility and expressivity
2. Shapes and themes in the beginning often stereotyped, and both representative and pre-representative.
3. Development of personal art work
4. Increasing verbal and non-verbal communication during art making

Art Therapist Behavior

1. Attunement on clients needs, both non-directive and directive.
2. Sharing experiences.
3. Stimulating visual and tactile sensoric experiences.
4. Supporting shaping process.
5. Verbal support and stimulation.

Context

1. Settings of treatment
2. Referrals and Aims
3. Duration and frequency of treatment
4. Transfer

Outcomes

1. More flexible and more relaxed.
2. Improved social and communication skills.
3. Improved self image.
4. Improved learning skills.

Delphi study

- Standardizing theoretical concepts
- Consensus of 20 art therapists and referrers about theoretical evidence
- 3 rounds
- Agreement in numbers (0 – 10, Gower) as well as descriptive.

Next steps

- Writing of treatment program and observation list, based on Delphi results.
- Testing treatment program in 9 AT practices with video feedback of parents and teachers
- Validating observationlist with video's (students? international?)

New possibilities with fruitful knowledge



*Thank you for
your
attention!*