ADVOCATING FOR CHILDREN. Edited by Smith AB, Gollop M, Marshall K, Nairn K. Dunedining, New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 2000, softcover, 223pp, $39.95 US.

The contents of this book present a selection of papers from an international conference on the theme “Children’s Rights: National and International Perspectives” held at the University of Otago in New Zealand in 1999. A combination of theoretical, legal/ethical arguments and research-based information in favour of children’s rights is included throughout the book. There is an introduction to the book which sets forth the topic of children’s rights, followed by 14 chapters and a summary statement. All of the 14 chapters underscore the importance of highlighting children’s rights in areas such as health care, education, family protection services, and the environment.

Child advocacy is defined in the introduction as involving “taking a proactive approach towards recognizing the rights of all children, and responding by changing systems, policies and individuals, to ensure that they are given the opportunity to reach their potential and improve the processes which affect their daily lives. It is not about undermining the role of parents and families, nor is it about denying children their childhood” (p. 14). Adopting the framework proposed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC), the discussion of children’s rights throughout the book centers around three main types of rights: provision, protection, and participation rights. Provision rights is discussed in the book as rights to minimum standards of family life and access to parental care, health, education, social security, physical care, play, recreation, culture and leisure. There are several chapters
in the book that address issues of provisions rights, such as in chapter 2, where a discussion of these rights revolves around children with disabilities. Also in chapters 3 and 13 children’s rights to education and early childhood education are discussed. In chapter 6, the rights of Maori children with respect to health and education are discussed.

Protection rights are defined in the book as the right to be safe from discrimination, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation, substance abuse, injustice and conflict. A number of chapters address these issues. In chapter 1 the topic of trauma and children’s rights is addressed. In chapter 4, these issues are discussed with the cultural context of life in Sudan. The author questions the role of spirituality in development and presents emerging research in this area.

With respect to participation rights which have been described in the book as civil and political rights to a name and identity, to be consulted, to physical integrity, to freedom of speech and opinion, there are many chapters that address such issues. For example, chapter 5 and 10 deal with legal issues: chapter 5 discusses the judicial and legislative conceptions of childhood and children’s voices in family law, and chapter 10 tackles the topic of legal reform to facilitate children’s participation. The issue of consent in child health in relation to upholding participation rights of children and young people is presented in chapter 14.

A refreshing sociological perspective to childhood which challenges traditional psychological theoretical conceptions is outlined in chapter 9 by Dr. Berry Mayall. In my opinion, as an educator and researcher in childhood disability, this was one of the more intellectually stimulating chapters of the book. It is suggested that children are perceived not as objects of adult concern, but as competent, contributing social actors, people who can interact with and influence the family, the school and the world around them. The effect of globalization on children and youth is dealt with in chapter 12 in the context most directly related to urban families and children. Global trends have become popular and it is nice to see that this topic is addressed in this book.

In the last chapter of the book, the main question asked is “Where do we go next?” In conclusion, this book reminds us that children’s rights must be viewed in a cultural context, and although the focus was largely on children in New Zealand, there is much that can be learned about children’s rights that can be applied to children around the world. In summary, this book will be of interest to pediatric occupational therapists and physical therapists, many of whom come from a background of advocating for better environments and services for children. On the professional level, this book may inspire many to reevaluate how child
friendly their practices are and to increase the involvement of children in decision-making.

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ADAPTED AQUATICS PROGRAMMING: A PROFESSIONAL GUIDE. By Lepore M, Gayle W, and Stevens S. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1998, hardcover, 314 pp. $37.00 US.

This is a highly comprehensive book that addresses adapted aquatics for children and adults with a wide range of physical and developmental disabilities. Any of the following who use aquatics for habilitation or rehabilitation would benefit from its content—aquatic instructors and directors, swim coaches, physical therapists, occupational therapists, therapeutic recreation specialists, kinesiologists, special educators, adapted physical education specialists, aquatic participants with a disability, parents or other caregivers of individuals with disabilities.

The authors, all with doctoral degrees, have extensive experience as adapted aquatic instructors. Monica Lepore is a professor of kinesiology at West Chester University, Pennsylvania; William Dayle is chair of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at Wrist State University, Ohio; and Shawn Stevens is the Executive Director of Edgemoor Community Center, Delaware.

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1, “Foundations of Adapted Aquatics,” addresses philosophies and issues that pertain to initiating adapted aquatic programs. Topics include: historical perspectives; legislation issues; benefits of aquatic exercise; therapeutic, educational, recreational and collaborative models for structuring a program; inclusion policies and creating minimally restrictive environments; individualized assessment and program planning; the organization and development of
quality aquatic programs; facilities, equipment and supplies; and functional and safety considerations. Sample assessment forms and program evaluation forms enhance this section.

Part II, “Facilitating Instruction,” provides information on competencies and resources for adapted aquatics personnel. Issues addressed include: essential communication skills; illustrated transferring and positioning techniques; participant care and safety; behavior management; teaching, learning, facilitating and guiding participants toward a goal; common challenges to aquatic participation; modifications of swimming skills, equipment and the aquatic environment. This part is enhanced by a disability reference sheet, which identifies the physical, sensory, cognitive and behavioral concerns that may be associated with various disabilities. Another useful adjunct is an extensive chart that identifies the effects of various pharmacological agents on heart rate and blood pressure during rest and exercise.

“Program Enhancement” is the focus of Part III. Topics include: choosing a program to meet the needs and goals of each participant; participation in disabled sports in the United States; modifying fitness activities for individuals with disabilities; and applications of aquatic rehabilitation for a variety of common physical conditions.

The authors have thoughtfully included an extensive glossary of terms. Five Appendices provide further useful information including A Position Paper of the Aquatic Council; assessment forms and checklists; games and activities for various children’s age groups; information gathering forms; informed consent and liability release forms; sources of equipment and supplies; relevant organizations; pertinent journals, manuals, textbooks and videos.

The book is very readable with many headings and bolded terms. The font is somewhat larger than typically seen in textbooks. Numerous photographs and figures enhance the content. Each chapter concludes with a summary and review questions.

The authors are to be commended for providing the reader with a thorough presentation of information and resources. They address current trends and controversies, including mainstreaming, “reverse mainstreaming” and segregation. Their philosophy is to empower the participant and to above all see each one as a person, not a disability.

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REACHING OUT IN FAMILY THERAPY. Boyd-Franklin N and Hafer Bry B. New York: The Guilford Press, 2000, hardcover, 243 pp., $46.50 CN.

Reaching Out in Family Therapy really lives up to the glowing remarks by the reviewers quoted on the back cover of the book. This volume focuses on home-based, school, and community interventions with families. It provides a hands-on approach to intervention which is grounded in a coherent framework of concepts and guiding principles and research evidence. The principles discussed are well-documented with scholarly references and richly illustrated with relevant, detailed case studies which are generously distributed throughout the book. Although these case studies will be most valuable to American readers, since they clearly pertain to families living in the USA, they do exemplify many concepts, principles, and intervention strategies that are more generic. Thus, they are also likely to be relevant to readers outside the USA.

“Part 1: Overview” explains that the volume is based on both authors’ experience over more than 25 years with intervention with families and family therapy supervision. It provides an overview of the book as well as a clear introduction to the core concepts underpinning their approach to family therapy interventions and the material they present throughout the book. These concepts include: a multisystems (ecological) approach to service delivery which allows the therapist to view “the realities of clients’ lives in more a complete and complex way” (p. 5); cultural sensitivity and competence; emphasis on strengths (of family members, school, and community); empowerment of the family; proactive and active interventions; value of support and support networks; community involvement; and prevention. The authors also discuss their meanings for the concept of outreach, that is, not only working outside the office with one or more family members in the home, but also intervening in the context of the other settings which are important to clients’ lives. Part 1 concludes with a very insightful and practical discussion of cultural, racial, and socioeconomic issues that focus in particular on African American and Latino clients and families.

“Part II: Home-Based Therapy” begins by delineating a framework of guiding principles for intervention based in the family’s home setting and then demonstrates through powerful, real-life examples how these principles can be applied with families. The discussion of specific stages of a home-based therapy session and several challenges (e.g., re-
sistance, angry clients) that are often encountered in home-based family therapy provide a good deal of practical information for students and practitioners. A subsequent chapter on multigenerational patterns in families who are in crisis deals sensitively but realistically with four issues that may become “toxic secrets” within families because they provoke considerable pain and conflict. These issues include teen pregnancy, delinquent and criminal behaviour on the part of young family members, sexual abuse of children, and alcohol or drug misuse. Two other chapters in this section centre around working with children and their families and working with adolescents and their families, respectively. Here the authors are careful to highlight essential developmental issues as well as strategies for training and involvement of parents and other family members, as appropriate. The cases presented in this section also underscore the critical importance of the process of family therapy rather than simply focussing on the achievement of good outcomes.

“Part III: School and Community Work” recommends that therapists working with children or adolescents and their families include preschools and daycare facilities, schools (elementary, middle, and high), and communities as important aspects of their outreach in family therapy. This part of the book includes some guiding principles for this kind of outreach but concentrates mainly on the nuts and bolts of how to engage in outreach in school and community contexts. The material on developing successful school interventions and utilizing support groups as community interventions offer some particularly helpful insights for practitioners. This section concludes with a complex, multisystems case which clearly illustrates practical intervention strategies which integrate the involvement of family members in the home, teachers from the client’s school, community and peer support networks, and the spiritual support of the client’s faith community.

“Part IV: Research and Supervision” marshals an impressive amount of empirical research evidence for the effectiveness of proactive multisystem interventions with children and families who are considered “at risk.” Their critical discussion of this supporting research literature attests to the rigour of the authors’ approach to family therapy. This section also develops a brief discussion around the refreshing assertion that the authors’ philosophy of supervision emphasizes empowerment for both family therapists and their supervisors. Although the supervision issues raised are not discussed in much detail, topics such as management of crises, supervisory dilemmas, and mechanisms for building skills, providing support, and developing team work are raised for readers’ consideration.
The authors of this book are to be congratulated for producing a truly useful, well thought-out volume. Although the authors are both professors of Psychology, Reaching Out in Family Therapy is highly recommended for students and practitioners of occupational therapy and physical therapy who work with or plan to work with families.

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CREATIVE THERAPIES: A PSYCHODYNAMIC APPROACH WITHIN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY. Atkinson K and Wells C. Cheltenham, UK: Stanley Thornes Publishers Ltd., 2000, softcover, 302 pp, index, $34.95 US.

Creative Therapies was written to fill some gaps in existing literature in the area of psychodynamic approaches in OT practice. The book addresses underlying theories, applications and evaluation in the use of creative modalities and is a welcome reminder of the principles and processes upon which OT practice in mental health was built. Furthermore, it advocates the use of creative therapies in light of the profession's reclamation of its roots: occupation and meaningful activity. With current practice solidly focused on community integration, evidence-based practice and measurable outcomes, psychodynamic approaches have all but become invisible in OT. This text retrieves creative modalities and makes them, once again, accessible and acceptable for practicing therapists.

The book is divided into three parts: Creative Theories, Creative Media, and Creative Progress. Throughout these sections, the concept of creativity is explored and applied as a process evidenced in four ways: in activities used, in the therapist's style, in the individuals involved, and in the therapeutic process of change. Relevant literature has been consulted and cited throughout the volume, but the source of many
ideas and examples appears to be the authors’ extensive teaching and clinical experiences.

Section one provides an overview of theories and philosophies that underlie the use of creative therapies. The authors describe creative therapies as a marriage of psychodynamic theory and occupational therapy, and accordingly, devote significant discussion to the psychodynamic approach and OT philosophy. A framework by Hagedorn (1997) is used to explain where creative therapies fit into the philosophical foundation of OT. The early and groundbreaking work of the Fidlers in psychodynamics, specifically object relations, is summarized and used to understand the existing view of psychodynamic principles in OT practice. Humanistic theory and Cognitive-Behavioural theories are also reviewed in fair depth with highlights of major theorists’ contributions. Throughout the theory section are portions of bordered text entitled “Relevance to Creative Therapies.” Within these portions, the authors explain the significance of theoretical principles in creative therapies, though applications are largely explanatory as opposed to practical in nature. A succinct and useful table summarizing theoretical foundations and their influence on creative therapies helps to organize the information presented. Also included in Section One are dimensions of creative working, including a discussion of the environment, group membership, working relationships and working processes, amongst other factors. Any therapist working with groups would benefit from a review of this section as key principles and issues to group process and development are examined. Finally, the “art of the therapist” is addressed, and again this discussion has universal appeal to therapeutic interventions of many sorts, as therapeutic skills such as reflection, reasoning and communication are discussed.

Section two of the book is entitled “Creative Media” and examines a variety of creative modalities and their application. Not since the Fidlers’ activity analysis involving creative media has this topic received such thorough discussion. Properties and capacities of each medium are discussed, followed by examples of its use. Although the authors state it is not their intent to provide a manual of activities or exercises to be applied in creative therapies, they, in fact, do provide such information in this section on media. Many of the applications are innovative and appealing, and this practical orientation balances the book’s previous emphasis on theoretical issues.

Part three, “Creative Progress”, concerns itself with the need for evidence-based practice within the field of creative therapies, and the focus on continuing professional development. Clearly a review of outcomes related to creative therapies or evidence related to its efficacy is a criti-
The need to make practice evidence-based is acknowledged by the authors, although they do not cite the evidence themselves. Suggestions for research, particularly qualitative research, are made and are well warranted.

Creative Therapies is a useful and enjoyable book that stands alone in its mission to reinstate the use of psychodynamic principles and creative modalities in OT practice. In view of the profession’s renewed commitment to meaningfulness in occupation, the approaches and techniques outlined in this book are worthy of consideration by practicing therapists.

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REACHING THE YOUNG AUTISTIC CHILD: RECLAIMING NON-AUTISTIC POTENTIAL THROUGH COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND GAMES. Janert S. London: Free Association Books, 2000, 153 pp., $20 CN.

This book was written to be a practical resource book for parents, nursery school workers and teachers as well as others whom you could assume to be occupational and physical therapists. There is a strong emphasis initially, on normal development of infants and how innately, interactions, bonding and joint attention occurs, all leading to appropriate communication skills. For children with autism, there are gaps in communication due to their inability to see the meaning and importance on what is happening around them and therefore a diminished desire to communicate, to interact and attend. Communication strategies and activities given in the book, all focus on bridging the gap and trying to put meaning and create a desire for children with autism to communicate in a playful and fun manner. This is often reminiscent of how young infants and adults interact in a reciprocal manner.
Specifically, part one focuses on Adult Behaviours that help in children's development. Some examples that were illustrated included the following: being playful, exaggerating adult behaviours to attain or hold attention, talking through an activity, singing and dancing, letting them know when there needs to be a change, and giving this action meaning.

Part two continues with giving specific games and activities that will promote growth and development for children with autism. Highlights include musical and vocal activities, hide and chase games, turn taking activities, and using simple cause and effect toys. It was felt that with these activities the child will not only be more playful but will understand and use communication more and with greater proficiency.

Part three talks more about some of the idiosyncrasies of children with autism, like the need to hold, line up, or spin toys, as well need to focus on body sensations without appearing functional or meaningful. Janert believes that these actions occur to keep the child inwards or “me world” bathing in sensory sensations and therefore again inhibiting interactions and communication skills. She feels this further necessitates the need for stressing interaction games so the child can develop meaning to his actions and interactions.

Overall, the author did a good job of emphasising the importance of the normal development sequence theory in establishing bonding between child and caregiver which allows communication to flourish. The book presented playful and fun activities to develop more meaningful interaction and communications for young children with autism. Parents and individuals like occupational and physiotherapists working with young children with autism should find these strategies and activities useful. Although, one did need to sift through much dialogue into the reasons why behaviours were occurring before the concrete ideas which may be a deterrent to some. In addition, some explanations for the autistic behaviours especially in article 3 were presented with an overly assumptive flavour putting advanced cognitive and emotional meaning on children who are apparently having difficulty understanding language. This book could be recommended for individuals who wish to read about a more psychological than physical perspective of young children with autism, yet want to have immediate ideas on how to bridge the gap so these children understand and start to communicate effectively.

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