

Advocacy and enablement to build capacity together. A contextual approach to facilitate occupational engagement for persons with differing abilities amidst Ecuadoran and Brazilian social realities

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Introduction/Rationale: The United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child guarantees rights for freedom of expression for children and outlines the responsibilities of parents to provide guidance for children. Children with differing abilities may be at risk for loss of this freedom because they may not be able to explore personal interests and environments.

Children may be intentionally or otherwise segregated through denial or restriction of participation in occupations. This occupational apartheid influences occupational engagement and ultimately limits the potential these children within the context of the community.

Objectives: Explore how immersive experiences link to crucial contextual needs.

Describe collaborative efforts completed in Ecuador and Brazil.

Approach: This contextual approach supported a child's capacity to explore and to provide opportunities for occupational engagement. Collaborative engagement linked the child to occupational therapy. Advocacy and enablement through service and education built capacity in the community and to support a child's development.

Practical Implications: This collaborative approach yielded successful integration of local community individuals and organizations to engage with the residents of these communities. This evidence supports an approach for replicable and sustainable actions by the community and for the community.

Conclusion: This approach has the potential for replication and success when collaborative engagement is aligned with individuals and communities in need of capacity-building to transform occupational engagement within a social occupational therapy perspective. Additionally, this process may lead to micro-, meso-, and macro- level changes and occupational justice, capacity-building, and policy change.