

## **Parental Occupational Executive Training (POET): A unique intervention model for improving daily functioning of young children with ADHD symptoms**

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**Introduction:** Children ages 4-7 years with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) symptoms cope with functional difficulties in all areas of life, associated with delayed Executive Functions (EF). These challenges put children at increased risk for psychosocial disorders. In order to prevent and provide tools to empower these children, early evaluation and intervention should focus on their daily challenges and EF deficits.

**Objectives:** To investigate the feasibility and efficacy of the Parental Occupational Executive Training (POET) intervention, that teaches parents of preschoolers with ADHD symptoms to improve their daily functioning and EF.

**Method:** This study was a comparative, quasi-experimental, crossover and mixed method design. Participants included 72 children aged 3.83–7.08 years with ADHD symptoms (55 boys), assigned by a controlled method to a study and comparative group. Parents participated in eight 45-minute weekly individual training sessions, and completed questionnaires to evaluate the intervention efficacy. One of 17-trained occupational therapists evaluated each child, defined 2-5 personal intervention goals with the parents and implemented the standardized intervention.

**Results:** Seventy-one families completed the intervention. Among the parents, 80.56%- 94.44% reported implementation of the training up to the seventh session. There was significant short-term improvement in children's ADHD symptoms, EF, goal performance, and management of daily routines. Parents' satisfaction of their child's functioning and perception of their knowledge about EF and skills to support their child's functioning significantly increased.

**Conclusion:** The POET is a novel, applicable and effective occupational therapy approach that has early positive effects on daily functioning of preschoolers with ADHD symptoms.