

Celebrating

Patching a Quilt, Creating a School-Based

In recognition of OT Month 2017, *OT Practice* presents a sampling of educational and promotional efforts made by occupational therapy practitioners and students around the country over the past year.

Patching Together a Quilt to Celebrate Occupational Therapy Month

Jennifer Long

In occupational therapy, our work is similar to the assembly of a quilt. We work together piece by piece, and when all the pieces are sewn together to form the quilt, we can embrace our larger goal: independence and improved quality of life for our clients.

The occupational therapists at the Center for Lifelong Learning, in central New Jersey, had the same thought when they decided to create a quilt for OT Month last year. The Center for Lifelong Learning is a special education school for children ages 3 through 21 years with autism spectrum disorder and a variety of physical abilities.

For OT Month, we wanted to know what OT means to our students, so we distributed pieces of cloth to all 24 classrooms in our school with the assignment of having

the students draw or write "What OT means to you." Our students got right to work, creating patches depicting items such as forks and knives, crayons and pencils, toothbrushes and combs, buttons and jackets, and all types of cooking utensils.

One teenage boy drew a picture of a plate of his favorite food with a fork and knife, because occupational therapy had taught him how to cut his food. Another student was very proud of himself for learning to tie his shoes, so he drew a picture of a shoe. Students also drew smiling faces and traced their hands. One of our students wrote, "OT makes us strong and independent."

The therapists were ecstatic to see the individual pieces from each classroom,



each piece radiating its own personality. After collecting all the individual pieces of the quilt over several weeks, occupational therapist Annie Padmore, MSOT, OTR/L, assembled the quilt with her sewing machine and added special details, including a puzzle piece border for autism awareness.

It was important for us not only to create a quilt demonstrating what occupational therapy means to our school community, but also to highlight autism awareness, because a majority of our students have autism.

Additionally, the therapists added a sensory component to the quilt. They wanted the quilt to be tactilely as well as visually inviting, so they added texture material, such as real zippers, shoelaces, and a textured ball. The quilt, representing the presence of occupational therapy in our school and the lives of our students, has found a home on our school wall, proudly displayed for all to see. 🧵

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Rose Parade OT Float

The Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC) helped spread the word about the value of occupational therapy around the world with a float entitled Celebrating a Century of Occupational Therapy at the Annual Rose Parade on January 2. Seen by more than 75 million TV viewers around the world, the float also generated a huge amount of sharing on social media sites. For more on OTAC's OT Centennial Float initiative, visit <https://goo.gl/W90GSf>.