

University of South Dakota

USD RED

Occupational Therapy Capstone Presentations

Theses, Dissertations, and Student Projects

Spring 5-2-2023

Occupational Therapy in Family Education: Fourth Trimester Wellness to Kindergarten Readiness

Gabrielle Madeline Hagen

Gabrielle.Hagen@coyotes.usd.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://red.library.usd.edu/ot-capstone>



Part of the [Occupational Therapy Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hagen, Gabrielle Madeline, "Occupational Therapy in Family Education: Fourth Trimester Wellness to Kindergarten Readiness" (2023). *Occupational Therapy Capstone Presentations*. 105.

<https://red.library.usd.edu/ot-capstone/105>

This Oral Presentation/Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, and Student Projects at USD RED. It has been accepted for inclusion in Occupational Therapy Capstone Presentations by an authorized administrator of USD RED. For more information, please contact dloftus@usd.edu.

Occupational Therapy in Family Education: Fourth Trimester Wellness to Kindergarten Readiness

Gabrielle Hagen, OTS

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shana Cerny, OTD, OTR/L, BCP, TBRI® Educator

PURPOSE

1. To integrate TBRI® Nurture Group© intervention and occupational therapy concepts into a community-based parent education program to promote child attachment and development.
2. To advocate for the role of occupational therapy in provision of care for both mothers and infants.

BACKGROUND

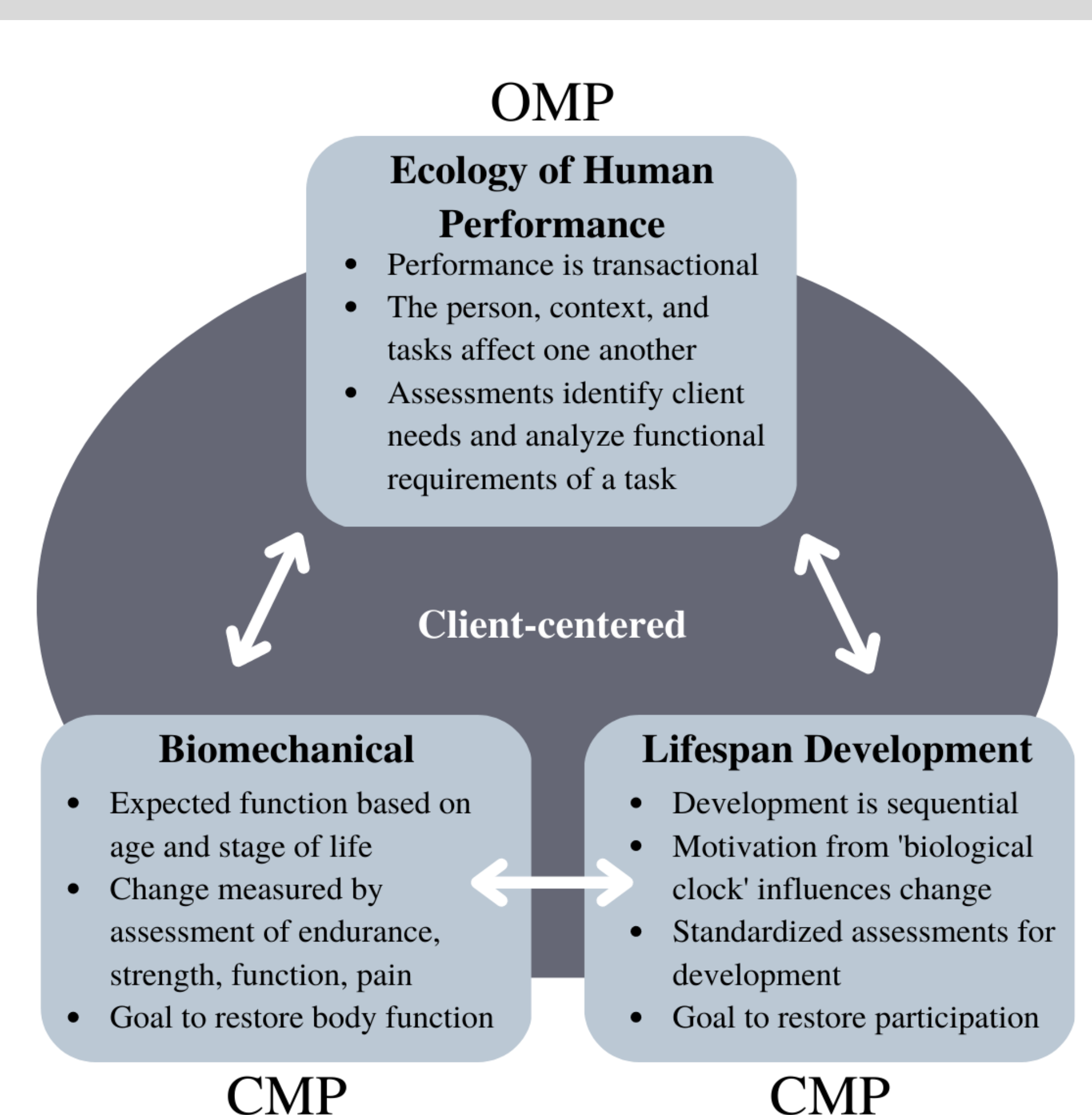
- Children who are provided with enriching experiences that promote development of cognitive, socioemotional, and behavioral skills are more likely to succeed in a kindergarten environment (Votruba-Drzal & Dearing, 2017).
- The TBRI® Nurture Group© model has been researched to provide positive outcomes for children who engage in this intervention (Cerny et al., 2021; Sloan et al., 2020; Tucker et al., 2017; Vincent, 2017).
- Occupational therapists are equipped to support engagement in child-rearing occupations and individualized meaningful activities.
- Despite the complex complex physical, psychological, and social challenges of the 4th trimester, mothers report feeling unprepared (Martin et al., 2014).
- There is a call to action for improved, holistic postpartum care through collaborative efforts (Tully et al., 2017).

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

- Attachment Theory poses that secure relationships develop as a result of consistent, warm responses to infant needs (Fearon & Roisman, 2017).
- An eclectic approach was used to merge the concepts from the Ecology of Human Performance model (Dunn, 1994), the Lifespan Development model (Cole & Tufano, 2020), and the Biomechanical Frame of reference (Gilen & Nilsen, 2018) to understand how occupational engagement for parents of young children may be influenced by tasks and roles related to child-rearing (Ikiugu et al., 2009).

METHODS

- Early Childhood Family Education class was offered at a rural elementary school in Southern Minnesota for a total of 12 weeks.
- Participants were recruited through the school webpage, community education Facebook group, and flyers posted throughout the school.
- A needs assessment was conducted to determine which topics would be most valuable and relevant for parent education.
- TBRI Nurture Group© band-aids were incorporated to parent-child circle time.
- Weekly education handouts were provided for the caregiver participants.
- The Child-Parent Relationship Scale and Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire were voluntarily completed by parents as a pre- and post-test measure at 12 weeks.
- A comprehensive literature search was conducted to inform development of *The Fourth Trimester OT* accessible webpage.

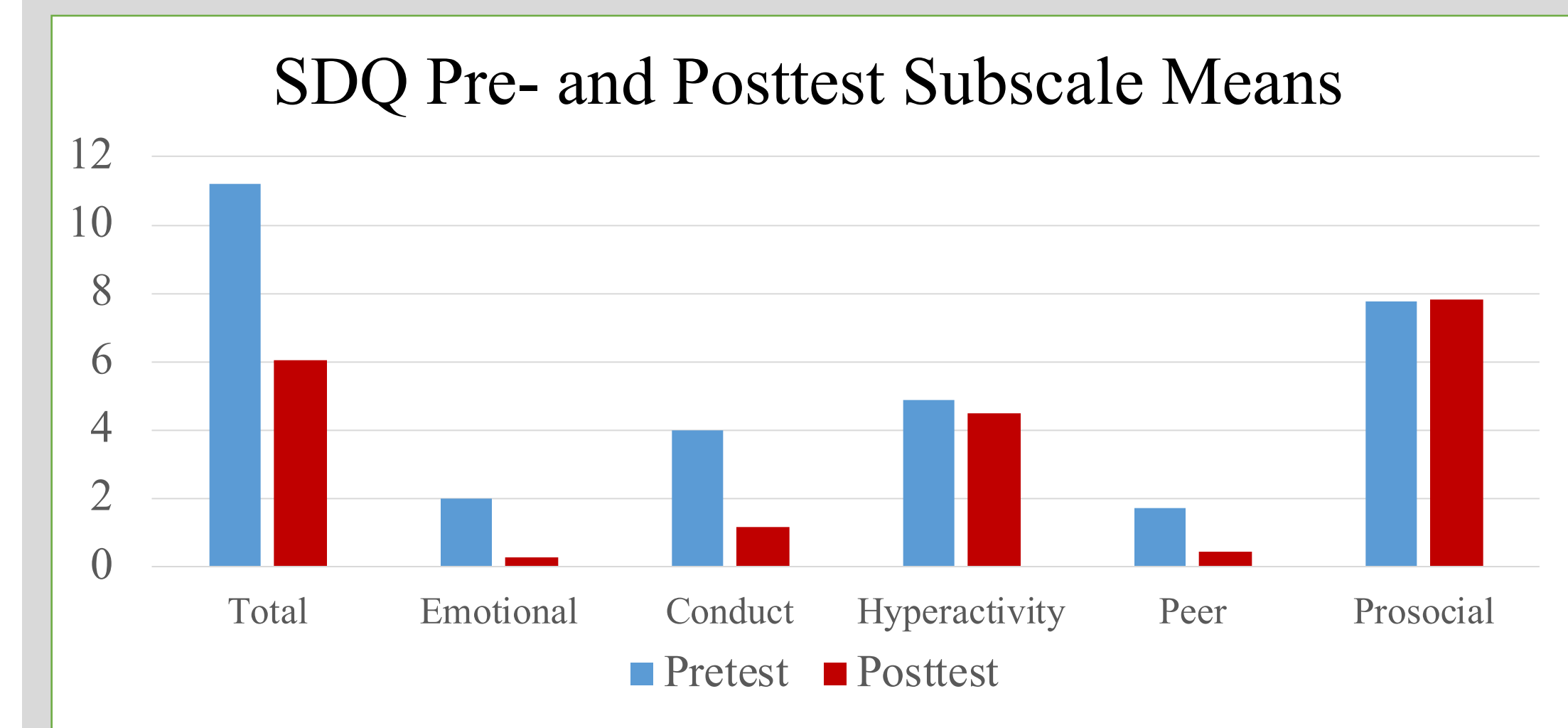
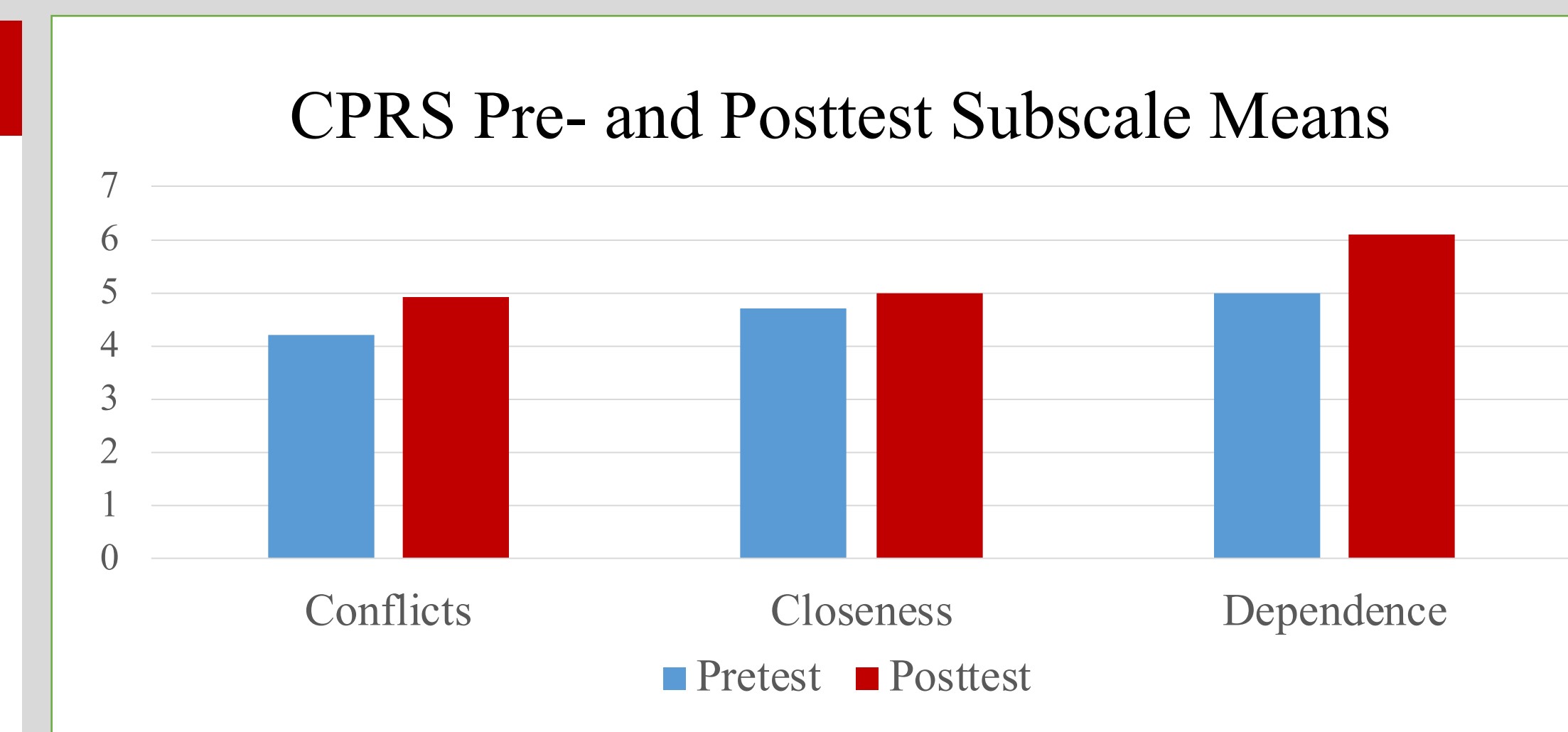


RESULTS

- An independent samples t-test (pretest N=4, posttest N=2) indicated that all CPRS subscales increased following participation in ECFE Nurture Group© activities.
- A paired t-test (N=3) of SDQ data resulted in decreased mean scores within each subscale; this change was not statistically significant.
- An independent samples t-test of SDQ data (pretest N=5, posttest N=4) resulted in statistically significant decrease in emotional symptoms, conduct problems, and peer relationship problems following participation in ECFE Nurture Group© activities.
- Parent participants expressed overall satisfaction with ECFE course structure and content.
- *The Fourth Trimester OT* webpage was made publicly accessible for individuals who have access to the electronic link.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

- The quantitative data demonstrates that integrating a trauma-informed approach to an early education program is an effective strategy to decrease social-emotional problems for children ages 2-5 years.
- Participation in TBRI® Nurture Group© activities may have contributed to improved closeness between caregivers and children.
- The parent education topics provided caregivers with relevant, applicable information and strategies to use in their daily routines.
- This project also clarified the need for more collaborative and holistic services for postpartum mothers.
- OT practitioners may provide support to the 4th trimester family through education and training using an individualized approach.
- All objectives were fulfilled throughout the capstone experience.



IMPLICATIONS

- Occupational therapists have the knowledge and skills to address both physical and mental health challenges that parents of young children may encounter.
- Early intervention programs are a valuable resource which contribute to the development of secure attachment and social-emotional skills for young children.
- There is a need for continued expansion of OT practice in EI services and in health promotion for postpartum families.
- Additional research on the direct effect of occupational therapy services geared toward health promotion of mothers and infants post-birth is warranted.

REFERENCES

