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Social Participation in People with Developmental Disabilities: A Systematic Review

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Social participation in people with a developmental disability: A systematic review

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Background



1/6 children aged 3-17
have a developmental
disability ¹

People with
developmental disabilities
often have difficulty with
socialization and
interactions with others ²

Participating in social
interactions can decrease
stress and anxiety while
improving quality of life ³



Research Question

Which occupational therapy interventions improve social participation in people with developmental disabilities?



Method



Inclusion criteria: articles published from 2013- 2023, written in English, participants have a current diagnosis of a developmental disability

Exclusion criteria: Systematic reviews & qualitative studies were omitted from this present review

We reviewed 97 titles and abstracts from four databases and retrieved 13 full text articles

Eight articles met inclusion criteria



Method



Four databases were searched



Two researchers reviewed each title and abstract



Two researchers reviewed each full-text article



Consensus meeting for inclusion of articles

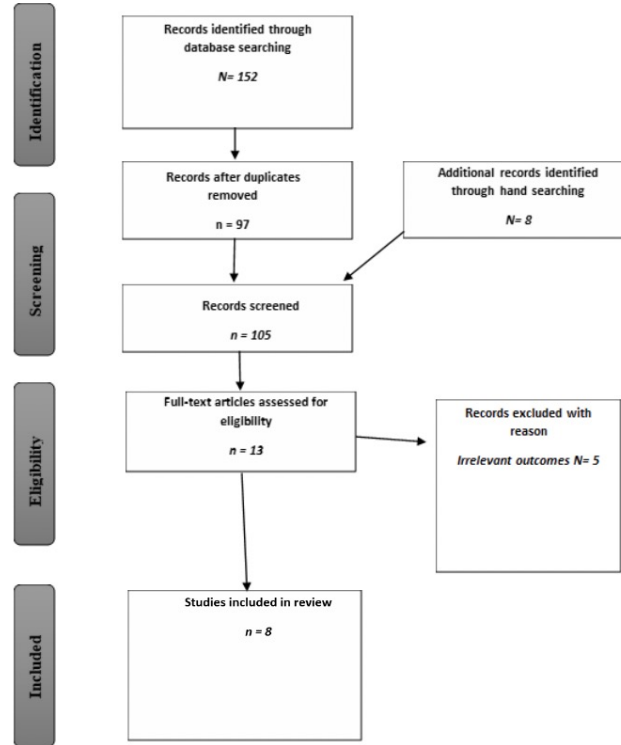


Data was extracted onto an evidence table



US Preventative Services Task Force level of certainty and grade definitions

Results



Results

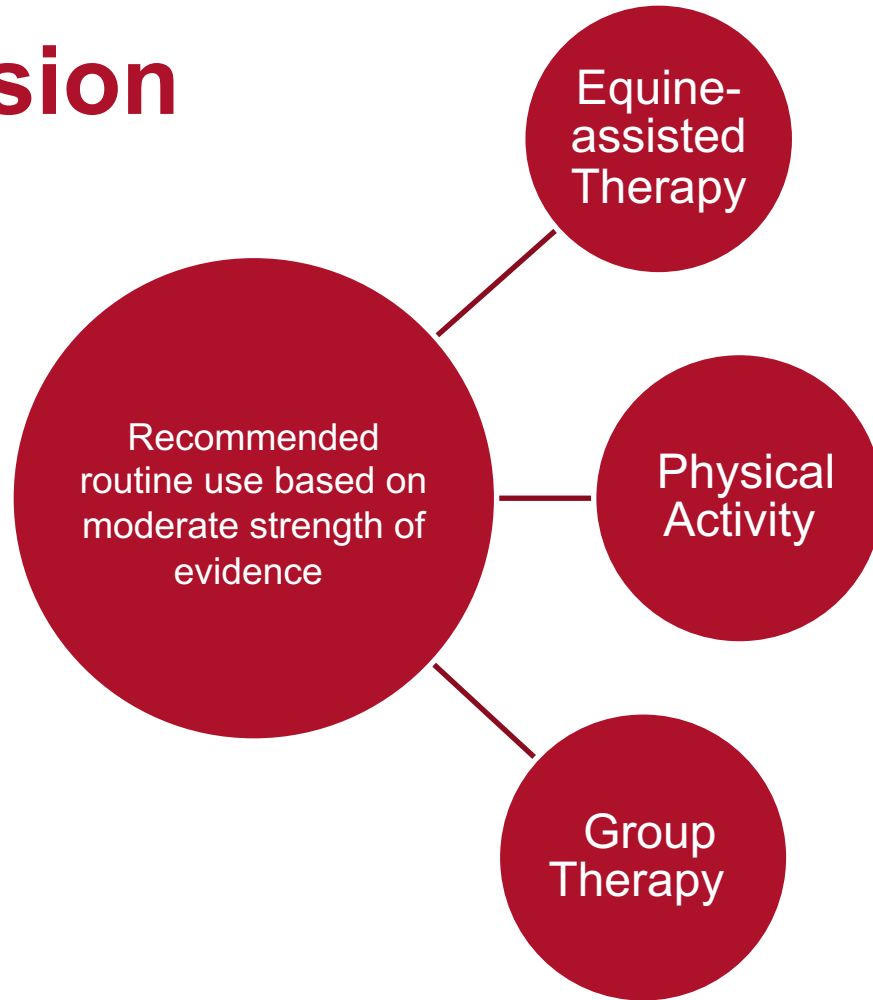


Themes	Number of articles	Level of Evidence	Strength of Evidence	Description of Intervention
Physical Activity	3 articles ^{4, 5, 6}	3 Level IIIB	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports camp Adapted climbing Dance program
Equine-Assisted Therapy	4 articles ^{7, 8, 9, 10}	1 Level IB & 3 Level IIB	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horsemanship activities Vaulting program Activities with or related to a horse
Group Sessions	4 articles ^{4, 6, 7, 11}	3 Level IIB & 3 Level IIIB	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equine-assisted Sports camp Mentorship program Dance program

Level	Type of Evidence
Level IB	Well-designed randomized control trial (RCT)
Level IIB	Two group nonrandomized study
Level IIIB	One-group pre-posttest study

Strength	Description
Strong	2+ Level I well designed and conducted studies
Moderate	At least 1 Level I high quality study or multiple moderate quality studies (Level II/III)
Low	Small number of low-level studies, flaws in the studies.

Discussion





Limitations

Lack of control group 4, 5, 6, 8

Small sample size 4, 5, 6, 7, 9

Short duration of intervention sessions 5, 9

Non-standardized or inconsistent outcome measures 6, 7, 8, 10, 11



Implications

Future Research:

- Longer duration and more diverse samples
- Random allocation to group

Practice:

- Implement group and physical activity into interventions
- Implement or provide referrals for equine-assisted therapy



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