5-30-2017

Dance & Down Syndrome: Parental Perceptions on Dance and Movement-Based Interventions

Ami A. Parke  
*Grand Valley State University*, parkea@mail.gvsu.edu

Cara J. Murray  
*Grand Valley State University*, zoncac@mail.gvsu.edu

Rebecca D. Need  
*Grand Valley State University*, needr@mail.gvsu.edu

Kathryn Edick  
*Grand Valley State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ot_pediatrics](https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ot_pediatrics)

Part of the [Occupational Therapy Commons](https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ot_pediatrics), and the [Pediatrics Commons](https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ot_pediatrics)

**Recommended Citation**  
[https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ot_pediatrics/7](https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ot_pediatrics/7)

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Occupational Therapy Graduate Research at ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pediatrics by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.
Dance & Down Syndrome: Parental perceptions on dance and movement-based interventions

Ami Parke, Cara Murray, Rebecca Need, Jeanine Beasley, & Kathryn Edick
Abstract

This qualitative phenomenological study was designed to identify parent or guardian perceptions on the benefits of dance and movement-based interventions for their child who has Down syndrome. Individuals with Down syndrome face limitations in social-emotional skills, physical skills, and life skills, and research on the benefits of dance and movement-based interventions demonstrated some evidence of improvements in these skills. Researchers utilized a parent focus group in order to gain insight into how dance impacts their children with Down syndrome. A number of themes emerged from the data analysis process including improved movement, psychological well-being, and routine and retention. The theme of improved movement included concepts such as motor planning, balance, coordination, exercise, and increased strength and tone. The theme of psychological well-being included increased happiness, connecting with typically developing peers, and a sense of belonging. The theme of routine and retention included ideas about structure, routine, and learning and applying skills. The implications for dance and movement-based intervention in the field of occupational therapy are discussed, as well as suggestions for further research studies on this topic.