

2022 Illinois Recreation Therapy Association Virtual Conference

November 14 – December 31, 2022

NOTE: All sessions have been pre-approved for CEUs by ATRA/NCTRC.

1. Recharge Your RT Batteries: How ATRA Empowers Recreational Therapists (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- **Brent Wolfe**, PhD, CTRS, LRT, FDRT, Executive Director, American Therapeutic Recreation Association, Wakefield MA

Session Description

At the heart of what every recreational therapist does is empowerment. We empower our clients to overcome barriers. We empower our clients to attempt new challenges. We empower our clients to enhance their quality of life. At the core of every recreational therapist's daily job is the idea of empowering others. But who is empowering recreational therapists? Who is looking out for recreational therapists the way recreational therapists look out for others? The answer to this question is the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA). This session will look at the idea of how ATRA lives its mission to empower recreational therapists. Additionally, we will discuss ideas on how engagement leads to empowerment.

2. The Trauma Informed TR Professional (.15 ceu)

Speakers

- **Karla Belzer**, MS, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Champaign, IL
- **Chelsey Beyers**, MA, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Champaign, IL
- **Molly Hofer**, MA, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Chicago, IL

Session Description

Becoming “trauma-informed” means recognizing that people often have many different types of trauma in their lives. People who have been traumatized need support and understanding from those around them, including therapeutic recreation professionals. Often, trauma survivors can be retraumatized by well-meaning professionals. Understanding the influence of trauma is an essential first step in becoming a compassionate and supportive professional. This session will provide participants with a shared understanding and language of trauma, awareness of the prevalence of trauma, and a shift in thinking to become more trauma-informed and aware.

3. Wits Workout: A community-based holistic brain health intervention (.15 ceu)

Speakers

- **Chelsey Beyers**, MA, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Champaign, IL
- **Molly Hofer**, MA, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Chicago, IL

Session Description

Drawing on factors that shape brain health (e.g., sleep, stress, physical activity, nutrition, social engagement), a multidisciplinary team led by University of Illinois Extension educators developed and implemented *Wits Workout* (WW). This interactive program aims to increase socialization, reduce isolation, and promote intellectual engagement for adults 50 and older. Recreation therapists will learn about the content and delivery of WW and how it can assist them in helping their clients maintain or adopt long-term health promoting behaviors. Lessons learned from planning and implementing a multi-site Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) to assess the feasibility and acceptability of Wits Workout, along with the criteria needed in establishing an evidence-based curriculum will be highlighted.

4. Mindfulness Practices to Enhance TR Service Delivery (.15 ceu)

Speakers

- **Karla Belzer**, MS, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Champaign, IL
- **Chelsey Beyers**, MA, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Champaign, IL
- **Molly Hofer**, MA, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Chicago, IL

Session Description

TR clientele often reflect the nervous systems of those around them. Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment with openness and curiosity. It has a variety of research-backed impacts, including reduction in stress, and improvements in job satisfaction, emotional regulation, and focus. To create mindful environment and impact TR service delivery, professionals must first focus on own mindful experience. In this session, participants will focus on cultivating their own personal mindful practice, explore how mindfulness can be used in the delivery of TR services, and discover mindfulness techniques to use in TR interventions.

5. Practice Guidelines of the use of Service, Emotional Support, and Therapy Animals: Important Differentiations for Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (.15 ceu)

Speakers

- **Dixie McGary**, MS, CTRS, CDP, Recreation Therapist, Training Coordinator, Home Instead, Maryville, MO
- **Sue Myllykangas**, PhD, CTRS, Professor, Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, MO

Session Description

There is confusion related to the difference in the use of therapeutic animals and what is supported by the different levels of certification and licensing. This session will present practice guidelines for Recreation Therapists to better understand the differentiation between service, emotional support, and therapeutic animal interventions. No animals will be present in this session. Content is designed for understanding of what a Recreation Therapist can call animal assisted therapy interventions.

6. Rett...Set...Go! & Therapeutic Recreation (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- **Dixie McGary**, M.S., C.D.P., C.T.R.S., Client Care Coordinator and Training Coordinator, Home Instead, Maryville, MO

Session Description

When we hear the starting gun, we understand to leap forward off the starting block. How easy is it to leap into the unknown and often misunderstood world of an unusual diagnosis. Rett Syndrome is a known, but rare diagnosis that typically only affects little girls. Find out why people with RS are often referred to as "Silent Angels."

Understanding a rare syndrome which often presents differently in each child creates unusual challenges for the medical community, parents, and loved ones.

What is Rett Syndrome? Follow the ideology, diagnosis, assessment process, and life of children with RS. We will investigate RS and identify appropriate therapeutic recreation interventions even in the midst of a global pandemic.

7. NCTRC Professional Eligibility Process (.1 ceu)

Speaker

- **Robin McNeal**, CTRS, FDRT, ICE-CCP, Director of Credentialing, NCTRC, New City, NY

Session Description

This session provides an in-depth coverage of the NCTRC Certification Standards and 2021 NCTRC Job Analysis. It will include the requirements for professional eligibility, including the internship guidelines, the online application process, and exam information.

8. NCTRC Recertification and Specialization Area Designation: Continuing Professional Competence (.1 ceu)

Speaker

- **Robin McNeal**, CTRS, FDRT, ICE-CCP, Director of Credentialing, NCTRC, New City, NY

Session Description

This session provides an in-depth coverage of recertification standards and requirements for the areas of specialization. Continuing education, professional experience, and re-examination will be described in detail. Utilization of the 2021 NCTRC National Job Analysis Study in relation to recertification requirements will be discussed.

9. Home or God's Waiting Room?: Purposeful Therapeutic Recreation Interventions for Frail Older Adults. (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- **Sue Myllykangas**, PhD, CTRS, Professor, Northwest Missouri State University

Session Description

We have all been taught that skilled care and long term care facilities are an elder's home. Thus, we know to knock on their door before entering, etc. But are these types of facilities really "home" for older adults with significant medical issues or are they God's waiting room, where residents wait until it's their time to die? With all of the regulations, are residents allowed to do things that help them create a home like setting? Activity Directors (aka Recreation Therapists) provide activities for residents, but are they always purposeful? Are Recreation Therapists truly meeting the needs of the residents we serve? This session will explore models of care that have been tried to improve the settings and care in these types of facilities. Ideas for purposeful programming will be presented.

****Approved content relates to Geriatrics specialization area designation.**

10. Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) tapping in Recreational Therapy: will it work for you? (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- **Rachel Smith**, Ed.D., CTRS, Illinois State University, Normal IL

Session Description

Explore and practice Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) tapping. This technique often called "psychological acupressure" works with the same meridian system used in acupuncture. EFT can be used to resolve a wide variety of issues from anxiety and past trauma to weight loss and pain relief. While there is evidence-based research on the effectiveness of this self-help technique it is currently unregulated. We will explore EFT research and the benefits of EFT and application of this technique in therapeutic recreation. We will also do some tapping so you can judge for yourself if this technique will work for you.

11. Racial Understanding: A Mandate for the Profession of Therapeutic Recreation (.15 ceu)

Speakers

- **Jennifer Stoner**, MS, CTRS, Consultant, Inspire Consulting Services LLC, St. Charles, IL
- **Tracey Crawford**, CTRS, CPRP, Executive Director, Northwest Special Recreation Association, Rolling Meadows, IL

Session Description

This session will focus on two areas that have the potential to increase racial understanding in the field of Therapeutic Recreation. Focus area one is the responsibility of the individual professional to assess where they are on their understanding of diversity and race which includes reflection and continuing education. Focus area two will explore the profession in the areas of professional preparation, standards, and evaluation.

12. Implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act: Do This, Don't Do That, and Enforcement Trends (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- **John N. McGovern**, JD, Accessibility Practice Principal-in-Charge, The W-T Group, LLC, Hoffman Estates, IL

Session Description

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became effective January 26, 1992, more than 30 years ago. Yet why do we still find businesses, nonprofits, and local governments making access and inclusion mistakes? This session will review enforcement trends, highlighted by real-life 2022 scenarios that the audience can solve together! Attendees will leave with strategies that recreation therapists have used successfully from coast to coast.

13. TR Professionals skills that transfer over to facilitating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Training Programs (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- **Patricia Thomas**, MPA, CTRS, Clinical Associate Professor, TR Certificate Coordinator, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM)

Session Description

NCTRC 2021 Job Analysis resulted in some revisions to the NCTRC Exam Content Outline. Now included in the exam under maintain professional competency is an objective that includes content on application of concepts of cultural competency and intelligence. Therapeutic recreation (TR) professionals have unique perspectives based on knowledge foundation and facilitation and leadership skills that may be useful in providing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) training programs. These skill sets may be viewed as valuable to the organization while also promoting the greater value of the TR profession. This session will focus on how a CTRS may indeed apply concepts of cultural competency/humility through the identification of the leadership skills and discussion on why and how to utilize the skills in building a cultural of inclusion at your organization. The session will include lecture, discussion, and small break out activities.

14. “But they might die”: Teaching TR students the value of working with older adults. (.15 ceus)

Speaker

- **Sue Myllykangas**, PhD, CTRS, Professor, Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, MO

Session Description

According to the NCTRC Job Analysis, working with older adults and in skilled care facilities are at the top for hiring CTRS's. Yet, many students question their competency and are not comfortable working with persons older than themselves. I hear the statement, “But they might die” from many of the students reluctant to choose this aged population. This session will share creative methods used in guiding students to a new, accepting point of view. The world is changing fast. In 2034, for the first time in our country's history, there will be more older adults than children. As a profession, we must prepare now to meet the demand that is coming.

****Approved content relates to Geriatrics specialization area designation.**