

# STATE OF THE RESEARCH

## Hippotherapy



Cox College MSOT students research to discover the benefits and uses of hippotherapy. This qualitative study uses a Likert scale survey to collect data to investigate the use of hippotherapy related to the field of occupational therapy.

## Foster Care

There are more than 400,000 children in foster care in the United States. Many of these children have developed difficult behaviors due to traumatic and unsteady experiences and lifestyles. This study focuses on providing parent training to address difficult behaviors and measuring the change in parent confidence to foster parent as a result of the additional training and support.



<http://www.chickswithminds.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/LEARN.jpg>

## Learning through Research

At Cox College, we believe that evidence based practice is vital to the field of occupational therapy. One way we teach and apply scholarship is through our research program. We value research topics and ideas that are relevant to a specific population and culture, meaningful to our students, and applicable to improving or expanding the practice of occupational therapy.

The American Occupational Therapy Association's (AOTA) Centennial Vision states, "We envision that occupational therapy is a powerful, widely recognized, science-driven, and evidence-based profession with a globally connected and diverse workforce meeting society's occupational needs" (AOTA, 2016). Field research is a vital part of our MSOT program. It guides our



## Fall Prevention



[http://media.holidaytouch.com/-/media/images/sla/sla\\_fallprevention\\_handrail\\_lpod\\_304px.jpg?cbf=20150904T130522:6357696872200667467a=en&h=202&w=304](http://media.holidaytouch.com/-/media/images/sla/sla_fallprevention_handrail_lpod_304px.jpg?cbf=20150904T130522:6357696872200667467a=en&h=202&w=304)

Cox College MSOT students are taking a close look at what environmental modifications can be implemented within the home to optimize occupational performance. It is crucial for occupational therapists to know which home modifications and education can enable involvement in everyday activities and yet reduce falls.

One exciting component of this research project is the study of the correlation between falls and the impact they have on one's occupational performance. This study highlights the importance of identifying key home modifications and providing fall-prevention education in order to improve or sustain occupational output in high risk populations.

students through innovative projects and establishes foundational knowledge. The MSOT program at Cox College seeks to address the important concepts of qualitative and quantitative research including the theoretical assumptions, process, and procedures in the field. Our students lead the way for evidence-based research in cutting-edge projects impacting the Springfield area and beyond.

Cox College is committed to putting the student first. Take a look at our current projects. If you have another area of research that interests you, be sure to contact Dr. Amy Vaughan ([Amy.Vaughan@coxcollege.edu](mailto:Amy.Vaughan@coxcollege.edu)). We are always expanding and welcome prospective student research ideas. Our research projects are designed around student interest and available community supports.

## Autism Park

### **Battlefield, Missouri Partners with The Cox College MSOT Program to Plan a Park for People of ALL Abilities**



MSOT students have partnered with the City of Battlefield to create a cutting-edge Autism Park project. The purpose of the park is to expand on current universal design concepts to expand supports for those with sensory processing difficulty. The purpose of universal design is to promote equal access for all individuals to a park that promotes therapeutic exercise, social participation, and provides a worry-free environment for all participants.

This park will feature sensory & interactive playground equipment that can be integrated with current therapy interventions. Students have analyzed the benefit of sensory designed parks and how they provide for individuals with

## Autism Social Skills

One of the main occupations of children is play, while one of the main barriers for those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is socializing. Cox College MSOT students have created a research project that highlights a need for a playgroup for individuals with ASD in hopes of improving socialization skills through occupational therapy group intervention.



Cox College MSOT students are researching whether additional training related to creating and facilitating sensory-motor based social skills groups affects occupational therapy practitioner's confidence in establishing this service in the community.

A video training series for OT practitioners will provide training related to sensory, motor, and behavioral principles in treating children with autism. OT practitioners will take the training and then rate any changes in their confidence to implement occupation-based (play) groups for children with autism, ages 6-11 years.

disabilities across the lifespan. Students will also look for how universally designed parks provide opportunity for therapeutic growth and development. The design of this park is very unique and one of the first ever all-inclusive 'Autism Friendly' parks!

There will be future opportunity for students to partner in this project and continue to develop and implement this universal-design plan.

### *Blueprint for Autism Friendly City*

The Autism Park Project is a part of a larger community project that promotes inclusion, specifically for those with autism. A copy of the Blueprint for the project in its entirety can be found at:

Barboa, L. & Luck, J. (2016, December 11). [Blueprint for an Autism Friendly City: How Battlefield Became the First Autism Friendly City in Missouri](https://www.amazon.com/Blueprint-Autism-Friendly-City-Battlefield/dp/1541072766/ref=sr_l_l?). Retrieved from [https://www.amazon.com/Blueprint-Autism-Friendly-City-Battlefield/dp/1541072766/ref=sr\\_l\\_l?](https://www.amazon.com/Blueprint-Autism-Friendly-City-Battlefield/dp/1541072766/ref=sr_l_l?)

The City of Battlefield Autism Friendly Project is an award winning program teaching citizens and businesses to become aware of social and environmental barriers affecting people with autism. Other cities can follow this guide to modify communication and physical spaces to create a city free of social barriers. All citizens deserve full inclusion in city events and venues, and the team for STARS for Autism will lead you there. Your city can join Battlefield in understanding and acceptance of those with autism, the fastest growing developmental disability in the world today.

If you have any questions or would like to further discuss research opportunities, please don't hesitate to contact Dr. Amy Vaughan at [Amy.Vaughan@CoxCollege.edu](mailto:Amy.Vaughan@CoxCollege.edu).

This Autism Social Skills Project highlights a need for a playgroup for individuals with ASD in hopes to improve socialization skills. In the future, additional projects will be able to capitalize on this work in order to gather additional data related to the implementation of social-motor based social skill groups in the community and around the United States.

