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**"DIR: AN INTERVENTION APPROACH FOR CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES: A CASE STUDY"**

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**Introduction**

This lecture will present a comprehensive "relationship based" treatment approach used to change core deficits in Autism. A single-case experimental design was used to determine efficacy of the DIR treatment approach. Video footage from infancy to age 4 will tell the story of one child with developmental challenges who developed strong capacities to engage socially, problem-solve and learn. A continuous assessment was implemented following the beginning of DIR treatment services.

**Objectives**

Many intervention strategies are used to support children with ASD. Relationship based approaches that are developmental impact the child's core deficits using affective interactions rather than discreet trials. Research using these relationship approaches is limited due to the developmental and process oriented approach, which is more difficult to quantify across a sample. This single case study was implemented to look more closely at one child's progression across a 2 year span of DIR treatment.

**Methods:**

The Functional Emotional Assessment was used to assessment developmental progression every 3 months from the beginning of DIR treatment. Once therapy began, continuous assessment was used to analysis developmental progression.

**Results:**

Significant developmental progression was noted. The diagnosis of ASD was removed. Ben continued to have challenges with anxiety, although his social capacities and learning capacities were within normal ranges.

**Conclusions:**

The DIR treatment approach is effective at supporting children with developmental challenges. However, this model requires extensive parent involvement and an integrated multi-disciplinary approach. This may create limitations for the possibility of this approach being implemented within the guidelines outlined. However, supporting the development of relating and communicating by using affect versus external stimuli has the capacity to impact the child in significant ways.

**Contribution:**

Single case study research helps to define potential research topics more broadly, allows one to cover contextual and multivariate conditions and not just isolated variable. This is crucial in our field of occupational therapy as we approach intervention in a "holistic" manner as well as analyze efficacy of specific interventions.