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"What fires together, wires together: facilitating parent-child relationships in sensory integration therapy"

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Sensory Integration treatment can be more effective if we broaden our ideas beyond only providing specific sensory inputs. To impact the deep neurophysiological components of the brain, we must also bring relationships to the forefront of our intervention. Affect impacts sensory thresholds in a more powerful and integrating way than sensory input alone. The presentation will show how occupational therapy treatment improves when parents are actively involved in the treatment sessions.

This lecture will present theory and current research supporting the notion of affective connections paving the way to more integrated developmental functions. We will re-examine the concepts of sensory defensiveness, under reactivity and modulation disorders through the lens of a relationship based model of intervention. Treatment principles will be presented and the use of video tape vignettes will demonstrate the powerful role of affect and relationship in changing sensory thresholds and supporting more integrated sensory functions.