

An ICF-based Screening Form for Assessing Motor-Participatory Functioning in Children Diagnosed with Autism in Communication Kindergartens: Proposal for Further Development

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This paper presents the development and initial implementation of a screening form for assessing motor-participatory functioning in preschool children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), in Autism - specific preschool where ALUT (The Israeli Society for Autistic Children) operates health promotion treatment services. The complex nature of physiotherapy work in the schools' and kindergarten educational systems highlighted the need for a new dedicated tool, whose purpose is to support the reliable collection of information on Motor-Participatory Functioning faced by children with ASD, which would take into account linguistic, communicative, and social, as well as other, limitations. The screening form was derived from a validated ICF CORE SET - a tool used for the holistic assessment of children diagnosed with ASD. It includes 26 ICF categories representing three functional dimensions: body functions; activity and participation; and environmental influences. Initial clinical experience in kindergartens over the past three years suggests that the form provides physiotherapists with significant support, both in terms of participation-functional focus as a basis for work, and in shortening the initial screening process and accelerating individual and group therapeutic processes. The form has undergone a preliminary limited professional validation process; yet, it is necessary to further expand and deepen the examination. Additionally, it is evident that proper use of the form requires training that emphasizes familiarity with the coding method used in the ICF approach and how to determine the degrees of existing impairments.

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