School-based SIG Wins Best Table at SOPAC 2 Years in a Row

with Joanne Szabo

The 2016 Section on Pediatrics Annual Conference (SoPAC) was a big success and once again the School-based SIG won for best decorated table! Our table looked like a yellow school bus - so creative!

Over 800 professionals attended this final year of SoPAC, as the name retires & becomes the Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy Annual Conference (APPTAC) in 2017. Held in Keystone, Colorado, the theme “Climb to New Peaks of Pediatric Excellence” was taken to heart as participants walked, ran, performed Tai Chi, and hiked our way through the week! SoPAC introduced the Activity Club app, through which participants monitored their steps each day, as well as saw everyone else’s. It was fun giving virtual high-fives to inspire others to keep fit! The ‘highest steppers’ won cool t-shirts.

Thank you, Colorado, for opening your arms to us. If you missed this year’s conference, mark your calendars now because next year’s APPTAC will be November 17-19, 2017 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Topic of the Quarter: PT COUNTS Study

with Susan Elfgen, Sarah Westcott McCoy, Lisa Chiarello & Lynn Jeffries

*Physical Therapy Related Child Outcomes in the Schools (PT COUNTS)* was a national study of school-based PT practice involving 59 school systems in 28 states. It was a prospective, observational study, to describe the changes in students’ participation in school activity, self-care, posture & mobility, recreation & fitness, and academic outcomes, and the relationships of these changes to identified characteristics of school-based PT intervention. The study initially involved 129 physical therapists and 342 students.

The outcome measures used were Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) and School Function Assessment (SFA). The vast majority of students improved on both measures across domains. Students who were less than 8 years of age with higher gross motor function (GMFCS levels I to III) improved more on the SFA than students who were older & had lower function. GAS captured progress for more students than the SFA. Students achieved and slightly exceeded their expected goal attainment for their primary goal as well as posture/mobility, recreation/fitness, and self-care goals. No difference was found by GMFCS level, diagnosis or receipt of outside therapy.

The relationship of the outcomes and services are complex. Depending on the SFA scale or goal category, positive influences were seen based on services on behalf of the student (collaboration, consultation and documentation), positive student engagement, self-care activities, and interventions involving mobility, motor learning, playground access, functional strengthening, and aerobic exercises. PTs should consider these when serving students in schools.

Outcome details are in the *Pediatric Physical Therapy*:

- **Student Outcomes of School-Based Physical Therapy as Measured by Goal Attainment Scaling**
- **Outcomes for Students Receiving School-Based Physical Therapy as Measured by the School Function Assessment**

Project was funded by a grant from the US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, R324A110204.
**Tests and Measures**

**4 Functional Classification Systems**

with Carlo Vialiu

This holiday season, let’s brush up on the uses of 4 of my favorite gifts from researchers – gifts, because they make me more effective as a PT when working with children with cerebral palsy (CP). They are the [Gross Motor Function Classification System](#) (GMFCS), [Manual Ability Classification System](#) (MACS), [Communication Function Classification System](#) (CFCS), and [Eating and Drinking Ability Classification System](#) (EDACS). Each has 5 levels representing clinically meaningful distinctions in function.

The use of all 4 provides the school team a comprehensive picture of the child’s overall function. In addition, their use promotes a common language for the team to collaborate, from assessment, to goal setting and implementing coordinated interventions.

When planning interventions, consider compensatory strategies that provide the ability to be independent right away, or remediation strategies that can improve the child’s intrinsic abilities.

Research has shown the GMFCS & MACS to be stable over time; as such, they are great prognostication tools (not outcome measures). A child who is at GMFCS Level IV at age 2, for example, will likely still be at Level IV at age 12. Early introduction of power mobility addresses the child’s mobility needs now, while at the same time ensuring proficiency using power mobility that will likely still be needed at age 12. Note that the CFCS & EDACS are not predictive, and can be used as outcome measures.

Click here for links to resources on all 4 systems.

**Upcoming APTA Conference**

**APTA’s Combined Sections Meeting**

February 15-18, 2017
San Antonio, TX

CSM 2017 will bring together over 11,000 of the brightest and most innovative professionals for the BIGGEST conference on physical therapy in the country. With programming designed by all 18 of APTA’s specialty sections, you will not want to miss this signature event.

CSM 2017 programming will take place in 3 locations: the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, the Grand Hyatt San Antonio, and the Hilton Palacio del Rio.

Click here for details & registration.

Click here to view programming specific to pediatric PT.

**SIG Leadership Team**

*Chair:* Laurie Ray, PT, PhD  
  laurie_ray@med.unc.edu

*Vice Chair:* Sharon Antoszyk, PT, DPT, PCS  
  sharon.antoszyk@gmail.com

*Secretary:* Brett King, PT, DPT, MPT  
  brettskipt@gmail.com

For any questions for the board, email pediatricschoolsig@gmail.com

**Call for Platform and Abstract Proposals**

**Platform Proposal**

*Innovations in School-Based Physical Therapy Practice, July 14 & 15, 2017 at George Washington University, Washington, DC*

- To expand the topic areas presented at the Innovations conference, we are requesting proposals for brief, 15 minute presentations on topics of interest to school-based PTs. These may special interest or research topics. Please send in the following information by February 24, 2017, to Susan Efﬁgen, seffgen@uky.edu: Name; Email address; Affiliation/Address; Title; Paragraph Description (max 200 words)

**Abstract Proposal**

*Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy Annual Conference, November 17-19, 2017 in Cincinatti, OH*

- The APPTAC 2017 Proposal Site is now open for practitioners who would like to submit session and poster presentation proposals. Apply here. Prior to applying, you can also check suggested topics for 2017, the APPTAC Speaker Toolkit, and proposal review form.