

Illinois Recreation Therapy Association (ILRTA)
Annual Conference
November 13, 2023

DoubleTree Hotel – Alsip, Illinois

Next Step in Racial Understanding: Belonging Matters in Therapeutic Recreation (.15 ceu)

Speakers

- Jennie Stoner, MS, CTRS, CDP, CMDCP, Consultant, Inspire Consulting Services, LLC, St. Charles, IL
- Tracey Crawford, CTRS, CPRP, Executive Director, Northwest Special Recreation Association, Rolling Meadows, IL

Session Description

As quoted by Rachel Macy Stafford, “Remember, the deepest desire of the human heart is to belong...to be welcomed...to know that you are seen and worthy.” This session will explore our attitudes, our language, and our actions regarding race and how they either encourage or diminish a sense of belonging within our communities and therapeutic recreation agencies.

Structured Nature and Forest Therapy as a Recreational Therapy Intervention for Individuals with Special Needs (.1 ceu)

Speakers

- Namyun Kil, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, La Crosse, WI
- Taylor Gonio, Recreation Specialist, Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation, Morton Grove, IL

Session Description

Nature, human health and well-being associations have received growing attention from health professionals in the United States. Nature and Forest Therapy (NFT) is a slow mindful sensory (re)connection of individuals with nature, themselves, and others, which is different from typical hiking and walking. However, NFT is still relatively unknown as an enabler of well-being in the recreational therapy field in the United States, although it is established in some Asian cultures. Thus, this session will introduce a more structured NFT program as an outdoor recreational therapy intervention by discussing structured NFT-related concepts, theories, health and well-being models, empirical benefits, recreational therapy populations (e.g., children and adolescents with at-risk health conditions; veterans with PTSD), and the overall recreational therapy process (e.g., APIE).

Fentanyl...What's All the Hype? (.1 ceu)

Speaker

- Dixie McGary, M.S., C.D.P., C.T.R.S., Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, Mosaic Life Care, Maryville, MO

Session Description

The opiate world is often unknown or misunderstood. Most likely there is someone in “your fold” who is on the opiate journey right now. Why do opiates continue to be so easy to obtain regardless of the FDA urgently cracking down on their use? Learn about the explosion of Fentanyl, the shooting star in the opiate world! Fentanyl has created overwhelming challenges for the medical community, the users and their loved ones. We will investigate the current role Fentanyl plays and identify appropriate therapeutic interventions even amid what has quickly become a crisis that crosses all boundaries.

Addressing Ageism and Promoting Inclusivity in the Therapeutic Recreation Setting (.15 ceu)

Speakers

- Molly Hofer, MA, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Chicago, IL
- Tessa Hobbs-Curley, MS, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Macomb, IL

Session Description

Ageism is stereotyping, prejudice, or discrimination against individuals because of age. Ageist attitudes can be intentional or unintentional and can influence how we think of others – and even ourselves. It is the only “ism” where every human is at risk of being a victim should they live long enough. Recreation therapists will learn what ageism is, its prevalence and impact on individuals and on society, and ways to promote inclusivity in their therapeutic settings.

NCTRC – 2021 Job Analysis Study (.1 ceu)

Speaker

- Robin McNeal, CTRS, FDRT, ICE-CCP, Director of Credentialing, NCTRC, New City, NY

Session Description

This session will discuss the purpose, procedures and results of the 2021 Job Analysis Study and the impact of the study on the practitioner, student and educator, internationally.

NCTRC Recertification & Specialization Area Designation: Continuing Professional Competence (.1 ceu)

Speaker

- Robin McNeal, CTRS, FDRT, ICE-CCP, Director of Credentialing, NCTRC, New City, NY

Session Description

This session provides an in-depth coverage of recertification standards and requirements for the areas of specialization. Continuing education, professional experience, and re-examination will be described in detail. Utilization of the 2021 NCTRC National Job Analysis Study in relation to recertification requirements will be discussed.

Helping Recreation Therapists Develop Professional Relationships: LGBTQAI2S+ 101 (.1 ceu)

Speaker

- Kris Johnson, Associate Professor of Therapeutic Recreation, Aurora University Aurora, IL

Session Description

With the ever-changing ways in which people self-identify, recreation therapist needs to be up-to-date with terminology and issues affecting the LGBTQAI2S+ community in order to create a wholistic and inclusive environment for both multidisciplinary team members as well as clients and their families. This session will review basic terminology, highlight current controversial issues in impacting recreational therapy's delivery of services, and discuss ways in which we can create a sense of belonging.

Emerging Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in TR Education and Practice (.15 ceu)

Speakers

- Patricia Thomas, MPA, CTRS, Clinical Associate Professor, TR Certificate Coordinator, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM)
- Marsha Schwanke, M.S., CTRS, Web specialist, Southeast ADA Center

Session Description

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) has been described as a system capable of generating text, images, or other media in response to prompts (Wikipedia). This is a new and evolving resource for students, educators, and practitioners. This session will focus on some initial or emerging ways generative AI may be used in the Therapeutic Recreation (TR) profession. After a general overview of AI, specific software such as ChatGPT and the implications in both the TR educational and practice settings will be discussed.

Gaining Foundational Knowledge through Managing Destructive Behaviors and Difficult People in Mental Health using your S.M.A.R.T.S (.1 ceu)

Speakers

- Kelly Norge, CTRS, Recreation Therapist, Hennepin County Medical Center, New Richmond, WI
- Kaitlin Carlborg, CTRS, Activity Therapist, Lake Behavioral Hospital, Des Plaines, IL

Session Description

Gain knowledge of what destructive behaviors are in mental health, common psychiatric disorders. Establish a therapeutic relationship with difficult people using S.M.A.R.T.S. (Self Esteem, My support, Assertive, Resiliency, Tool Box, Strength and Courage). Learn modalities and interventions to assist in managing destructive behaviors.

Not Dead Yet: Building Resiliency Against Cognitive Decline and Dementia in Aging (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- Karen Carnicello Wenzel Ph.D., CTRS, FDRT, Online TR Program Coordinator, Eastern Washington University, Littleton, CO

Session Description

In this session we will explore the attributes of leisure engagement that foster cognition in aging. Rather than identifying specific leisure activities that contribute to cognitive resilience in aging, we will explore the attributes of leisure activity as they are experienced by an older adult. The mechanisms of action for cognitive resilience in aging will also be explored. The presentation will report on the results of a systematic literature review involving over 6000 articles on leisure attributes, cognition, and aging. The attributes will further be illustrated using a fictional account of older adults who start a “Not Dead Yet” club.

Recreation Therapists Role in Managing Loneliness and Creating Client Social Interactions (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- Molly Hofer, MA, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Chicago, IL

Session Description

Multiple research studies show that social isolation and loneliness have a serious impact on the mental and physical health, longevity, and overall well-being of older persons. In fact, the World Health Organization has declared social isolation and loneliness a priority issue during the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing, 2021-2030. This session will highlight the difference between, prevalence of, and risk factors for social isolation and loneliness, and the connection between social engagement and health. The role therapeutic recreation professionals play in fostering social connections among their clients, and ideas for building social networks in their settings will be emphasized.

Tai Chi for Life: Implementing a Mind Body Intervention through Recreation Therapy (.1 ceu)

Speaker

- Sheila Swann Guererro CTRS, Whole Health Coordinator, Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital, Hines, IL

Session Description

Tai Chi is an internal martial art based on traditional Chinese medicine and the laws of nature known as Tao. It is a flow of energy balancing the body and mind. A multitude of benefits have been substantiated by evidence based research. An effective and proven skill set based on Tai Chi principles will be taught for Recreation Therapists to create an effective individual and or group intervention help individuals with disabilities improve their health and well-being while developing harmony and tranquility.

Best Practices of Trauma-Informed TR Service Delivery (.15 ceu)

Speakers

- Karla Belzer, MS, County Director, University of Illinois Extension, Sterling, IL
- Kara Schweitzer, MS, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Sterling, IL

Session Description

Becoming “trauma-informed” means; recognizing that people often have many different types of trauma in their lives. People who have been traumatized need support and understanding from those around them, including therapeutic recreation professionals. Often, trauma survivors can be re-traumatized by well-meaning professionals. Understanding the influence of trauma is an essential first step in becoming a compassionate and supportive professional. This session will provide participants with a shared understanding and language of trauma, awareness of the prevalence of trauma, and a shift in thinking to become more trauma-informed and aware.

Task Analysis & Advocacy: How CTRSs can aid in end of life planning. (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- Sue Myllykangas, PhD, CTRS, Professor, Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, MO

Session Description

CTRS's in Skilled Care facilities are often focused on habilitation of their residents. We know that the residents are most likely not going to be going home, so our focus is on maintaining functioning for as long as possible. Using the Socioemotional Selectivity theory as the framework shows that there is a disconnect between resident needs and caregiver needs. This session proposes a way that the CTRS can assist both the resident and the caregivers in navigating the time they have together, and bridging the gap that exists between them.

Trends and Issues in Aging: Implications for TR Practitioners (.15 ceu)

Speaker

- Sue Myllykangas, PhD, CTRS, Professor, Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, MO

Session Description

We know about the increasing numbers of older adults in America, but how many of us keep up with the changing trends and issues happening in care facilities? This session will share the current trends and issues facing rehabilitative and skilled care facilities for older adults and how they impact you as a CTRS. Legislative changes as well as the importance of advocating for our clients and profession will also be presented.