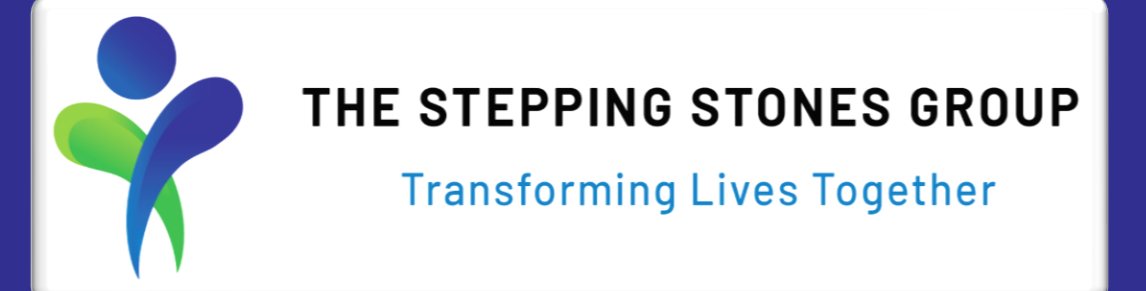


Enhancing Social Emotional Outcomes: Collaborating to Increase Movement Throughout the School Day

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STUDY OBJECTIVE

To examine how Occupational Therapy Practitioners (OTPs) and Teachers integrate movement to support Social Emotional Learning (SEL) amid increasing student needs, and to compare changes in perceived need, training, and collaboration from 2024 to 2026.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Movement enhances:

REGULATION **ENGAGEMENT** **ACADEMIC PARTICIPATION**

- SEL competencies are foundational to student participation and learning.
- Despite increasing SEL needs, structured integration of movement remains inconsistent.
- Movement-based SEL integration aligns directly with OTP expertise in sensory processing, self-regulation, and participation.

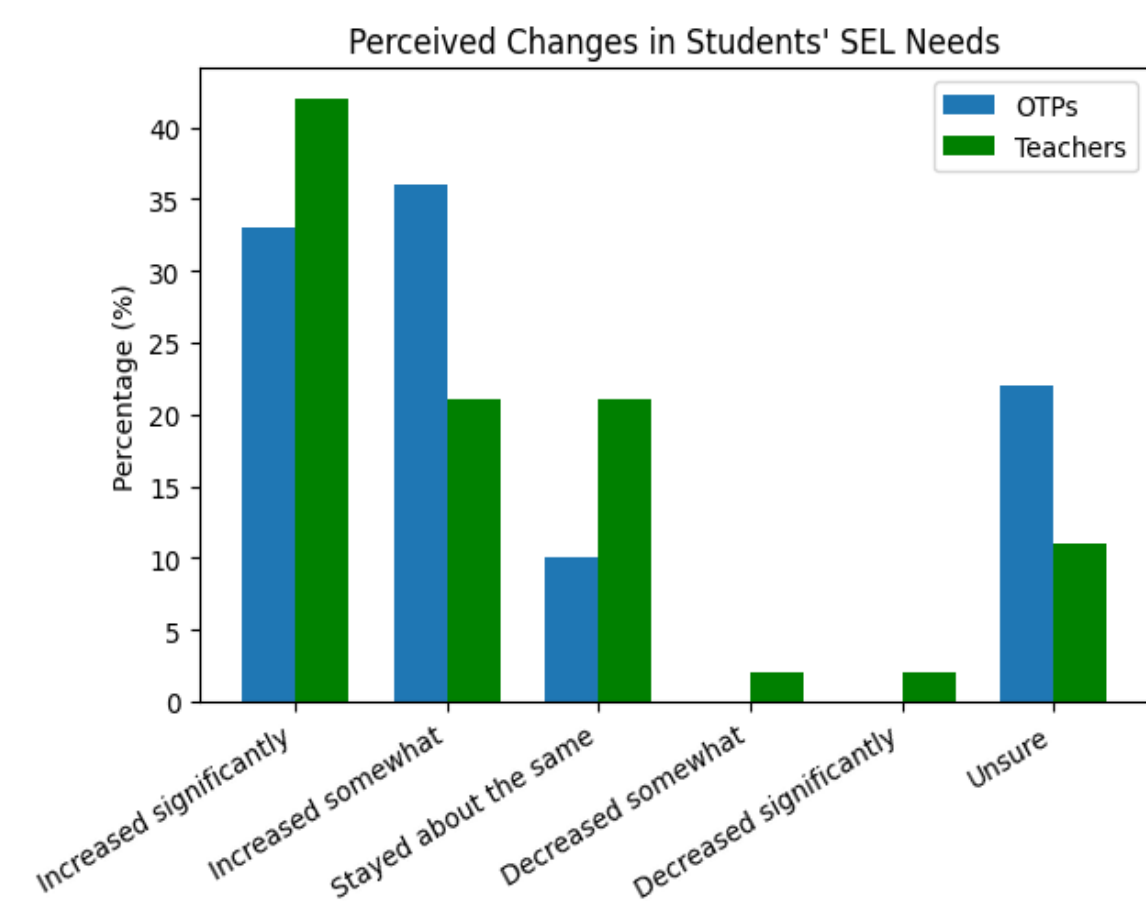
METHODS & DEMOGRAPHICS

Design: Nationwide voluntary online survey

Participants: 85 OTPs | 45 teachers (88% SPED)

Grades: Preschool- High School (approx. 50% preK-5)

Comparison: Similar sample size in 2024

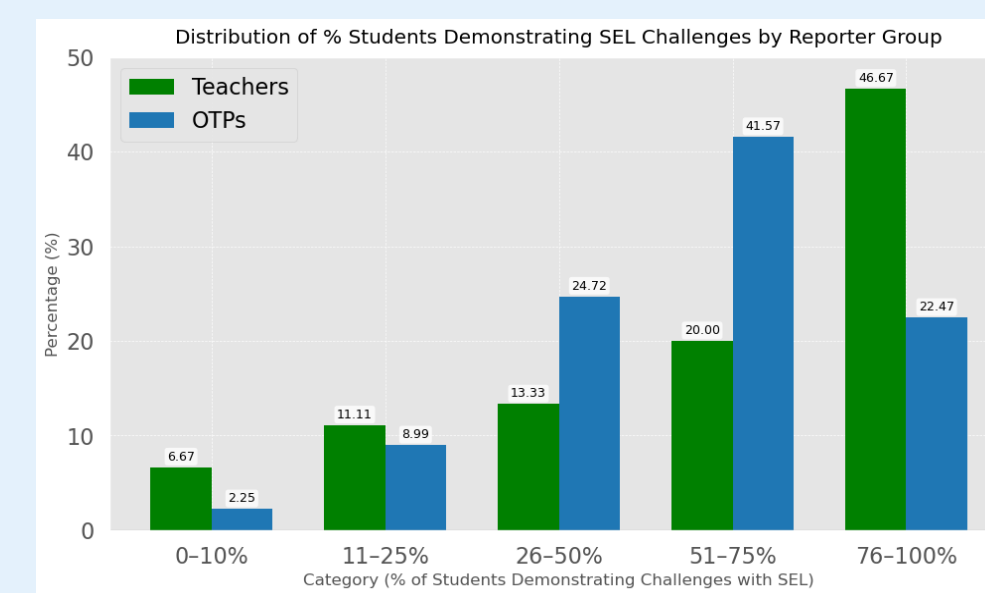


**High Need + Limited Training + Inconsistent Collaboration =
Opportunity for OTP Leadership**

KEY FINDINGS - THEMES

1. SEL Needs Remain High & Increasing

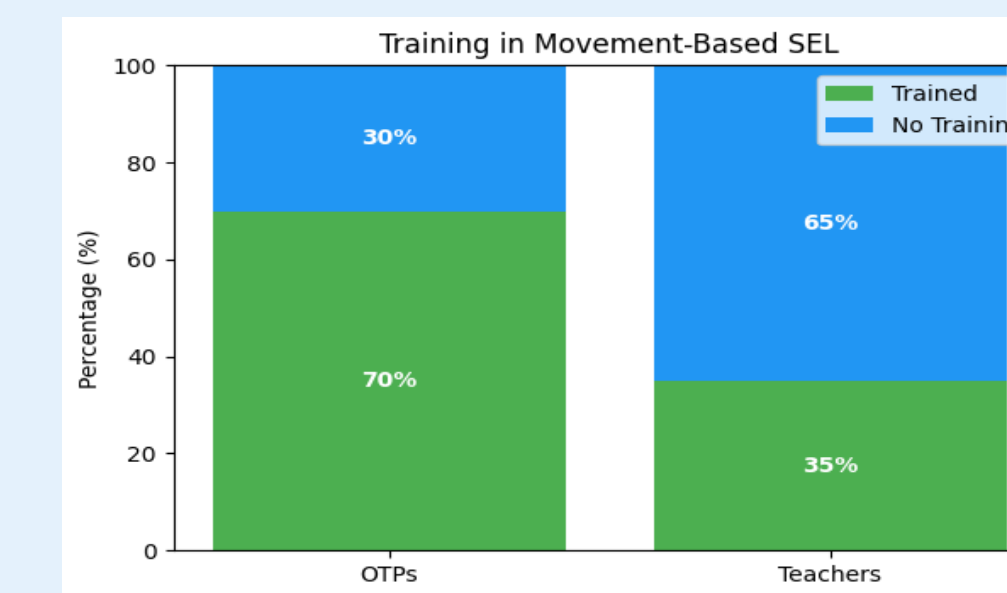
"...children have changed and seek a lot more emotional needs."



Interpretation: Movement is not supplemental, it is essential to classroom functioning.

2. Training Gaps Persist

"I don't know where to start/where to find resources."



Interpretation: A sustained professional development gap represents a leadership opportunity for OTPs.

3. Movement is Used, But Often Brief

"We squeeze in quick movement breaks when students look dysregulated."

- **OTPs:** 65% include movement in ~40% of sessions
 - Main purposes: sensory processing, motor skills, behavior
- **Teachers:** 40% include 1-15 min/day
 - Most common strategy: short movement breaks
 - 31% report SEL components are challenging to include

Interpretation: Movement is widely implemented yet not consistently embedded within structured SEL frameworks.

4. Collaboration Exists, But Is Inconsistent

"I would love more support from OT on how to embed movement throughout the day."

| What Teachers Want | What OTPs Want | Challenges |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources • Training • Co-Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy in from admin • Buy in from staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited time • Limited space • Curriculum demands |

Interpretation: Opportunity exists to strengthen structured partnerships = OTP integration is not yet maximized.

ACTION FRAMEWORK

**Shift reactive movement breaks
→ to intentional SEL-aligned practice.**

EDUCATE

EMBED

ELEVATE

CONCLUSION

- SEL needs remain elevated
- Training and structured collaboration have not kept pace
- Movement is widely used, but often without intentional alignment to SEL outcomes
- Findings across 2024 and 2026 highlight an opportunity for OTPs to lead movement-based SEL integration through education, collaboration, and advocacy

"If movement were intentionally aligned to one SEL competency daily, what would change?"

**Movement + SEL + Collaboration
= Student Success**

LEARN MORE!

Scan the QR Code for Additional Information and Resources.

