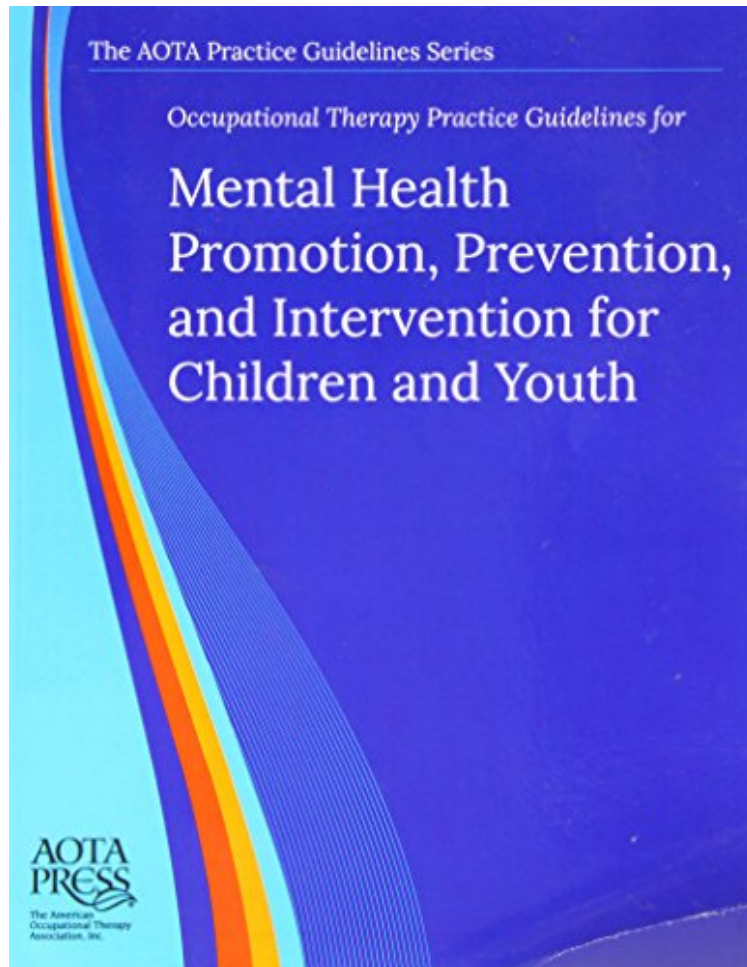


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Of the estimated 70 million children in the United States, 6 million to 9 million have a serious emotional disturbance. However, only 1 in 5 of these children receives any professional help. Over the years, the view of children's mental health services has changed. This new thinking has altered how occupational therapy services are perceived and implemented. In addition to providing services to children diagnosed with a mental illness, occupational therapy professionals can help children develop and maintain mental health in school, community, and mental health settings. Using an evidence-based perspective and public health model, this Practice Guideline provides an overview of the occupational therapy process for mental health promotion, prevention, and intervention for children ages 3 to 21 years. It defines the occupational therapy domain, process, and interventions that occur within the boundaries of acceptable practice with this underserved population. Interventions include those for promotion, prevention, and intensive individualized care on topics such as social skills, health promotion, play/recreation/leisure, and cognitive-behavioral therapy.

About the Author Susan Bazyk, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA, is professor in the Occupational Therapy Program, Cleveland State University, School of Health Sciences, Cleveland, Ohio. Marian Arbesman, PhD, OTR/L, is president of ArbesIdeas, Inc.; consultant to the AOTA Evidence-Based Practice Project; and clinical assistant professor, Department of Rehabilitation Science, State University of New York at Buffalo.