

make it through their day without an extreme behavioral crisis. The families were depleting their limited supply of adaptation energy. Since the family's frequently instituted solution focused energy as a means for dealing with the demands of having a child with autism, and the units' energy resources were already depleted, the chance for dysadaptive patterns of engaging in occupation was greater.

Learning Activity D

Discuss the following:

1. How can we help individuals shift from using predominately primary adaptation energy to secondary energy?
2. How can we help families shift from using predominately primary adaptation energy to secondary energy?

ADAPTIVE RESPONSE MODES

Adaptive response modes represent the status of the adaptation response mechanism. A person, or a system, can generate a mode of responding that is either an existing adaptation response, a modified form of their previous adaptation response, or a brand new adaptive response. One role of an occupational therapist using OA is to help increase the depth and breadth of a person's adaptation responses. When a person has increased ways of responding adaptively, the likelihood of meeting the demands of current and future occupational challenges is greater.

The development of adaptation responses typically follows a natural course. For example, each of us entered the world with a very limited repertoire of adaptation responses, mainly crying when hungry, wet, or uncomfortable. Within months after birth into this world we developed new ways of adapting to and meeting our occupational challenges. For example, we learned to smile, squeal, or make gurgling noises to obtain a smile from a caregiver. In this process of generating modified and new modes of responding adaptively to occupational challenges our adaptation repertoire was enhanced and expanded.

Initial responses to an occupational challenge typically use existing modes of adaptation. When these modes of adaptation are not effective, efficient, or satisfying to self or society, we alter our strategies for mastering the occupational challenge. Occupational therapy practitioners need to be sensitive to the modes of behaviors the person is exhibiting and pay particular attention to instances where the person attempts to solve each challenge with the same solution.

Learning Activity E

What kind of adaptive response modes are the following children exhibiting and why? What is the role of occupational therapy? Apply these questions to the following scenarios (Figure 5-6):

- Children who abuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who bully others at school
- Children who rock back and forth constantly all day long