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Abstract

Approximately one-third of an occupational therapy student's total education is spent in fieldwork (Alsop & Ryan, 1996; Ilott, 1996). Despite the critical importance fieldwork plays in occupational therapy education, little has been published about the methodology by which students are placed in sites. This paper examines the purpose of fieldwork education and describes some of the key players in the fieldwork process. Through interviews with academic faculty experienced in fieldwork, factors involved in the fieldwork placement processes and some of the methods used in fieldwork placement are identified. The importance of fieldwork education is stressed, and it is argued that the placement process may be a key tool in improving fieldwork and thereby strengthening the occupational therapy profession.

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