

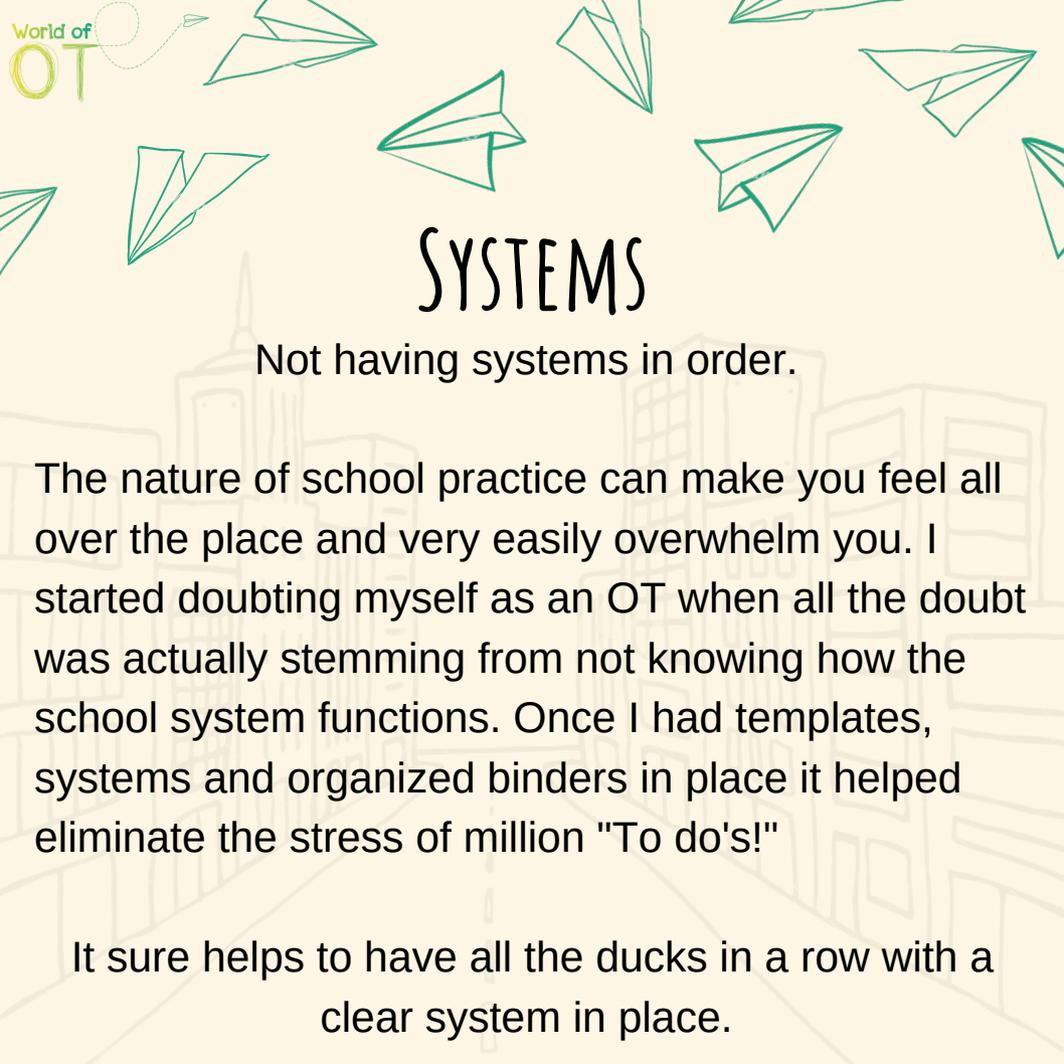
Secrets Revealed

4 MISTAKES I WISH I HAD NOT MADE AS A NEW SCHOOL BASED OT

Ushma Sampat, MS, OTR/L

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Mentoring OT's New to the Schools

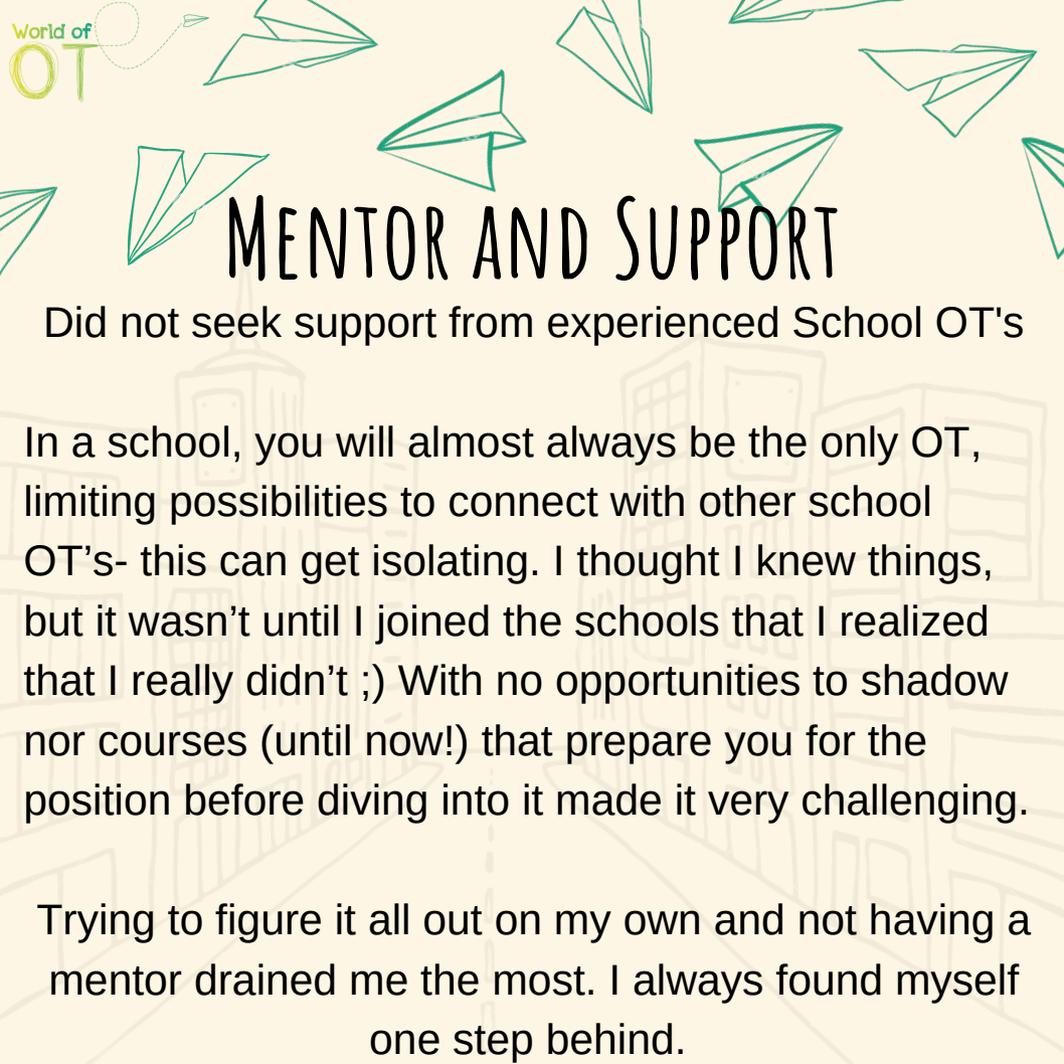


SYSTEMS

Not having systems in order.

The nature of school practice can make you feel all over the place and very easily overwhelm you. I started doubting myself as an OT when all the doubt was actually stemming from not knowing how the school system functions. Once I had templates, systems and organized binders in place it helped eliminate the stress of million "To do's!"

It sure helps to have all the ducks in a row with a clear system in place.



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MENTOR AND SUPPORT

Did not seek support from experienced School OT's

In a school, you will almost always be the only OT, limiting possibilities to connect with other school OT's- this can get isolating. I thought I knew things, but it wasn't until I joined the schools that I realized that I really didn't ;) With no opportunities to shadow nor courses (until now!) that prepare you for the position before diving into it made it very challenging.

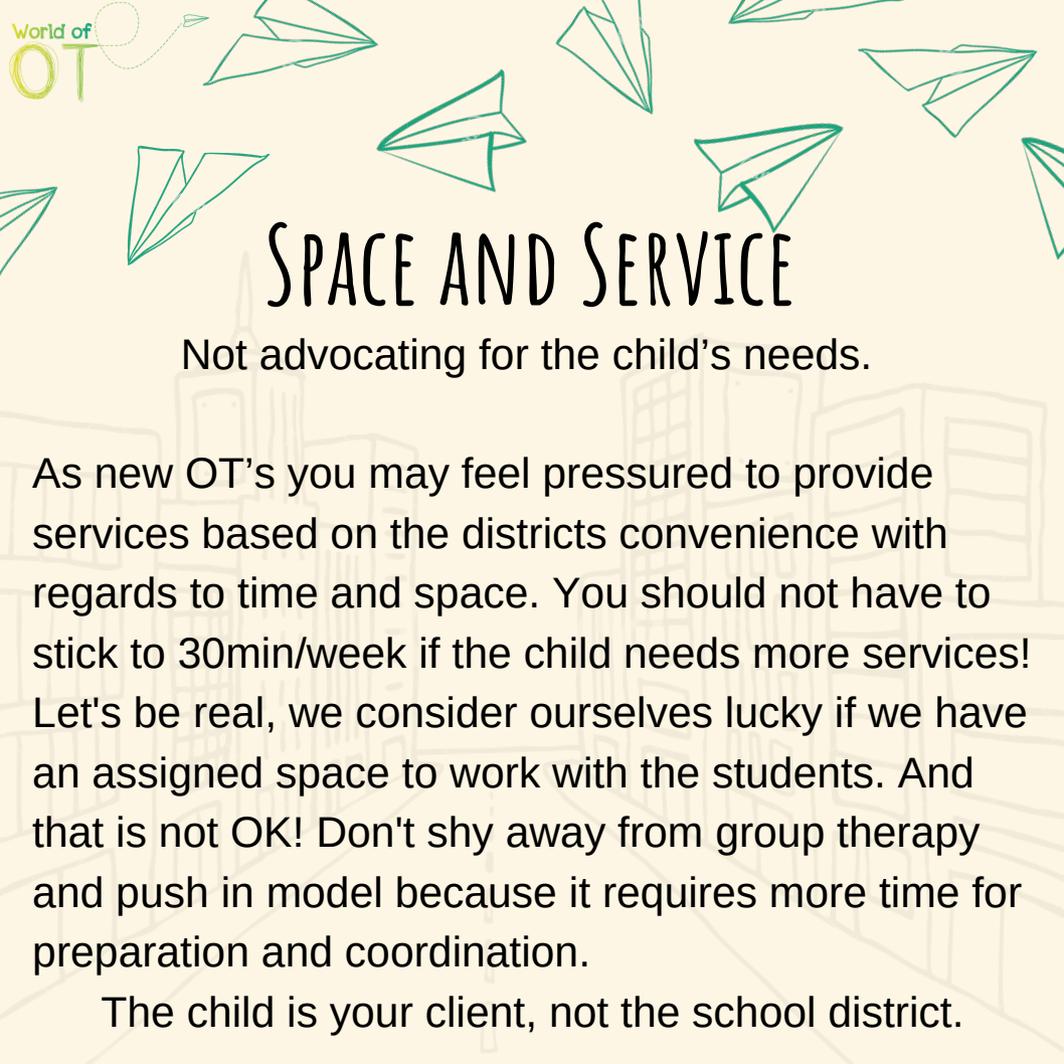
Trying to figure it all out on my own and not having a mentor drained me the most. I always found myself one step behind.

TEAM PLAYER

Not keeping in touch with parents and letting other professional push their way around.

Make sure to introduce yourself and stay in touch with parents to build trust. Include them during the decision making process valuing them as a key team member, rather than informing them of your decisions. As with other professionals, you want to take into consideration their views, but not get influenced or pushed into changing OT services.

That kind of pressure can get to you when you're new. Communication is the KEY!



SPACE AND SERVICE

Not advocating for the child's needs.

As new OT's you may feel pressured to provide services based on the districts convenience with regards to time and space. You should not have to stick to 30min/week if the child needs more services! Let's be real, we consider ourselves lucky if we have an assigned space to work with the students. And that is not OK! Don't shy away from group therapy and push in model because it requires more time for preparation and coordination.

The child is your client, not the school district.



Ushma Sampat, MS, OTR/L
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I strive to provide holistic and comprehensive OT services with team collaboration and training as key ingredients. My passion for improving the lives of children has informed my role as an OT educator. I love supporting fellow OT's through fieldwork, mentoring and internships.

So, are you ready to partner with me to help you soar?

Join us at New to School OT FB group for continued support