

# Naomi Ferziger OTR, Ph.D.

## Biography

Born and raised in New York, moved to Israel in 1987, married and mother to six children.

## Higher Education

- 2011 – Ph. D. Neuroscience, Bar-Ilan University  
Topic: Cerebral Visual Impairment and Visual Attention: The Effects of Enhanced Visual and Cross-Modal Environments on Children Diagnosed with CP and CVI  
Doctoral advisors: Professor Ruth Feldman and Professor Ari Zivotofsky  
Building upon the Coding Interactive Behavior model of Professor Feldman, the research developed a tool for the visual assessment of multiply challenged children, enabling precise evaluation through video analysis.
- 2007-2011– Ph. D. Candidate - Interdisciplinary Brain Science Program, Bar-Ilan University
- 2007 – M.A. Research Psychology – Specialization: Neuroscience, Bar-Ilan University
- 1987 – B.S. Occupational Therapy - Downstate Medical Center, State University of New York
- 1983-1985 – Stern College, New York
- 1982-1983 – Michlalah College, Jerusalem

## Awards and Fellowships

- 2006 – Presidential Doctoral Fellow, Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Program - Bar-Ilan University
- 1996 – Outstanding Health Professional Employee of the Year, Aleh Bnei Brak

## Professional Courses

- 2010 – Selection and Control Mechanisms in Perception and Action, Hebrew University, Jerusalem
- 2006 – Cortical Visual Impairment: Assessment, Gan Eliya, Petach Tikva
- 2005 – Developmental Optometry, Tel Hashomer Hospital
- 2001 – Writing and Fine Motor Disabilities, Kfar Saba  
– Environmental Adaptation for the Disabled Population, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv
- 2000 – Treatment in the "Snoezelen" Environment, 'Beit Izzie Shapiro', Raanana
- 1999 – Myofascial Release, Tel Hashomer Hospital
- 1998 – Clinical student advisor- 14 week training course, Tel Aviv University  
– Neuro-Developmental Treatment Approach (10 week "Bobath" Course), Gan Spivak, Israel
- 1997 – "Active Learning" Treatment Approach, Gan Eliya, Petach Tikva
- 1994 – Abnormal Child Development, Tel Aviv University
- 1992 – Normal Child Development, Tel Aviv University

### **University Teaching Experience**

- 2015-present Acting Director of the Occupational Therapy Program, College of Health Related Professions, Ono Academic College, Israel
- 2011-present – Lecturer, full time appointment, Ono Academic College, College of Health Professions. Courses include: Neuropsychology, Neuroanatomy, Kinesiology Lecture and Lab, From Student to Health Professional
- 2010-2011 – Taught University Courses: Introduction to Clinical Neuropsychology and 'From Theory to Practice', Ono Academic College, College of Health of Health Professions
- 2008 –Neurophysiology of Sensory Systems, Bar- Ilan University, Neuroscience Department

### **Professional Leadership**

- 2014- present – Chair of the National Overseeing Committee of Occupational Therapy in Israel

### **Professional Experience**

- 2011 – 2012 – Director, professional research center, Aleh Institute, Bnei Brak
- 2006-2011 – Clinical Director, visual assessment and treatment program for multiply challenged children, Aleh Institute, Bnei Brak
- 1998-2005 – Chief Occupational Therapist, Aleh Institute, Bnei Brak  
A facility providing treatment for the pediatric and adolescent multiply-challenged population
- 1991-1998 – Staff Occupational Therapist, Aleh Institute, Bnei Brak
- 1989-1991 – Staff Occupational Therapist, Beit Lowenstein Rehabilitation Center, Raanana (Specialty in rehabilitation of post-stroke adult patients)
- 1990, 1989 (Summer) – Staff Occupational Therapist, Hebrew Academy for Special Children, New York (A treatment facility for multiply challenged preschool age children)
- 1988-1989 – Staff Occupational Therapist, Hadassah Medical Center, Ein Kerem, Jerusalem (Treatment in acute care wards including: Neurosurgery, Orthopedics and Burns)
- 1988 (Summer) – Staff Occupational Therapist, Hebrew Home for the Aged of Riverdale, New York (Geriatric Treatment)

### **Publications**

Ferziger N.B., Nemet P., Brezner A., Feldman R., Galili G., and Zivotofsky A.Z. "Visual Assessment in Children Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy: Implementation of a Functional Questionnaire," *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*, 2010; **5**:422-428.

Ferziger N.B., Katz N., Goldberg-Meyer S., and Katz M. "A Survey to Identify and Characterize the Use of Assistive Technology to Improve Function Among People with Intellectual Disabilities," *Report Submitted to and supported by a grant from Shalem Fund for Development of Services for People with Intellectual Disabilities in the Local Councils in Israel*, <http://www.kshalem.org.il/pages/item/404>, 2013.

## **Academic Conference Presentations**

- 2016 Feb – "Cerebral Visual Impairment: Research and Clinical Application," *Ministry of Education Workshop*, Rosh Haayin
- 2015 Dec – "Adapting Work Environments; A Team Approach Toward Visual Assessment of Children with Special Needs," *Israel Optometry Association Annual Conference*, Jerusalem
- 2014 Sept – "Assessment of Visual Attention in Children Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy," *Downstate Medical Center*, Brooklyn, New York
- 2014 July – "Assessment of Gaze and Neurobehavioral Responses among Children Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and Cerebral Visual Impairment," *Oxford Brookes University*, England
- 2014 Jan – "An Interdisciplinary Approach to Visual Assessment of the Multiply Challenged Child", *Conference on Optometry and Learning Disabilities*, Hadassah College of Optometry, Jerusalem
- 2013 Feb – "Assessment of Visual Responses among Children with Cerebral Palsy," *Cognitive Education: Changes, Learning, and the Brain*, *Conference of the of Pinchas Churgin School Education*, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan
- 2011 Dec – "Visual Responses to Unimodal and Bimodal Sensory Environments among Children Diagnosed with CVI", *Kamokha Conference*, Jerusalem
- 2011 July – "Assessment of Gaze and Neurobehavioral Responses Among Children Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and Cerebral Visual Impairment", *5<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Research Institute for Health and Medical Professions*, Ono Academic College
- 2011 June – "Enabling Sensory Environments for Cognitively Challenged Children Diagnosed with Cerebral Visual Impairment", *7<sup>th</sup> National Conference of the Department for the Mentally Challenged*, Tel Aviv
- 2010 May – "An Interdisciplinary Approach to Visual Assessment for Multiply Challenged Children Diagnosed with CP and CVI," *International Conference on Visual Impairment and Developmental Disabilities*, Tel Aviv
- 2009 June – Poster Presentation: "Visual Abilities of Neurologically Impaired Children: An Integrated Assessment Approach", *National Institute for Psychobiology Annual Conference*, Jerusalem
- 2008 November – Poster Presentation: "Assessment of Visual Attention in Neurologically Impaired Children: An Interdisciplinary Approach", *Society for Neuroscience Annual Conference*, Washington DC
- 2008 May – "Visual Assessment and the Multiply Handicapped Child", *Annual Conference of the Department of Welfare*, Kfar Sava
- 2008 May – "An Interdisciplinary Approach to Visual Assessment", *The 4<sup>th</sup> East European Mediterranean Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine Conference*, Eilat
- 2006 June – "Somatosensory Processing and the Sensory Diet", *Continuing Education Program of the Ministry Welfare*, Tel Aviv
- 2005 June – "Sensory Intervention and the Multiply Handicapped Pediatric Population", *Israeli Society for Occupational Therapy Annual Conference*, Tel Aviv

- Poster Presentation: "The Therapeutic Intervention of Hand Splinting for the Multiply Handicapped Pediatric Population", *Israeli Society for Occupational Therapy Annual Conference*, Tel Aviv
- Poster Presentation: "Adaptive Assistive Devices in a Pre-vocational Workshop Setting", *Israeli Society for Occupational Therapy Annual Conference*, Tel Aviv
- 2004 December – "Treatment with a Sensory Diet", *Fifth Annual National Rehabilitation Conference*, Tel Aviv
- 2002 May – "Treatment in a Sensory Adapted Environment", *Conference on Cognitively Challenged Children*, Tel Aviv
- 1999 June – "The Pre-vocational Workshop: Therapeutic Intervention", *Annual Conference on Treatment of the Cognitively Challenged*, Jerusalem
- 1998 July – "The Aleh Workshop for Children with Severe Developmental Disabilities", *'Beit Issie Shapiro' Conference*, Jerusalem

### **Professional Lectures**

In-service lectures to therapy and special educational staffs on a wide range of topics including: anatomy and physiology of the visual system and the development of visual perception, sensory development and treatment, child development, anatomy and treatment of the upper extremity, the development of play skills in early childhood, toys as a therapeutic tool, self-injurious behaviors – possible causes and treatment approaches, the use of adaptive devices, and adaptive seating.