

Activity: Planting Goal: Physical Population: Physical Disability

## TH Activity Plan – Seed Planting in Trays

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### Materials

Potting tables, stable chairs with arms

Tables for completed trays

Potting tudies

Potting soil

A variety of seeds

Labels and pencils

Watering cans/containers

Optional: tablecloths, gloves, trowels

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:** Participants will practice functional skills getting up and down from a seated position while planting seeds in cell packs.

### THERAPEUTIC GOALS:

**Cognitive/Intellectual:** Understand activity that addresses functional skill of getting from sitting to standing position; follow directions & sequencing of tasks

**Physical:** Move from a seated position to standing 4-6 times in a one hour session

**Psychological/Emotional:** Build confidence in physical abilities; understand need for physical rehabilitation; recognize the TH modality that integrates physical rehab with meaningful plant tasks

**Sensory:** Identify personal alertness level & need for breaks (sensory or physical tasks);

**Social:** Work cooperatively in a group setting sharing materials; encourage others who may have difficulty or tire from the physical tasks; plant seed trays which will be used by others

### STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS:

1. **Pre-Session Preparation:** Collect materials and have chairs for all participants. Set up seeds, tudies and watering cans in work area. The functional set-up will be critical to maximize physical functions involved in session (height of potting table, height of chairs relative to tables, tools with various diameter grips, height of side table).
2. Facilitator begins session by introducing the session: planting seeds. Identifying the primary goal: to get up and down to improve mobility 4-6 times during the session prepares participants for the physicality of the session. The secondary goal is to plant seeds, meaningful activity where other programs/people will benefit from their work using the germinated plants.
3. Discuss what seeds are available for planting and how to plant them.
4. Participants get a potting tidy for themselves. This can be done with help or in pairs for people needing some assistance. Have them bring the tidy back to the table and sit down.
5. Give each participant enough soil in the tidy to fill their cell packs. If their upper body, hand or back strength is compromised, cell packs can be partially filled. Facilitator needs to identify this prior to carrying tray.
6. Give each participant water to wet the soil. Have them mix the soil with the water to prep for seeding.
7. Participants fill the cell packs with soil.
8. Each person rises to go to the table where the seeds are and chooses a seed packet. They will return to the table and sit.

9. Each person will plant their seeds in the trays according to the packet instructions.
10. Participants will rise and go to the table for labels and a pencil, then return to their seated position.
11. Every cell pack will need a written label with the name of the seed and the date.
12. Once the seeding is finished participants will rise from their seats and retrieve watering cans or misters and bring them back to their seed trays to water thoroughly. If they are able, & if their assessment has determined the ability/strength to carry the tray to the side table, this can be done. Note that trays with wet soil will be heavier than trays with dry soil.

**APPLICATIONS FOR POPULATIONS:** An assessment of physical abilities needs to be done prior to session by a physical (PT) or occupational therapist (OT). The sit-to-stand test (casual or formal) is a screening tool used by OTs, PTs, and physicians to measure balance, strength and flexibility, and can be used to indicate a person's risk of falling. Often done with a chair without armrests, the person stands up and then sits back down in a given period of time. This type of screening should be completed prior to session as part of a physical or occupational therapy assessment. For practice in session for strengthening sit to stand function, chairs with armrests can be used, attention to each person's balance/imbalance needs to be considered, and the number of times they are asked/challenged to sit-to-stand will vary by individual. It should never be exhausting or uncomfortable when done as part of a TH session, with the primary exercise and therapy undertaken as part of a physical or occupational therapy plan of care and treatment session.

This activity is appropriate for any age group and can be done inside or outside. With elderly or people using mobility aids (canes, walkers etc.) allow time and space for the up and down movement and be sure to iterate the purpose of the session. The number of times can be less or more depending on the group or individual.

**SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS: Facilitators are responsible for knowing poisonous and toxic plants and plant parts.** Tables and chairs need to be stable, and floor surface smooth, allowing for participants who may be unsteady moving from sitting to standing, and transferring trays to another area. Allow for a clear path between tables, and tools with plenty of space, with all hardscapes accessible. Some people may need assistance or be guided in both the functional physical skills of standing from sitting, and in planting seeds in trays. It is best practice when working on a team with a physical therapist, occupational therapist, and/or doctor to make sure the amount and type of movement is appropriate to the individual for both the upper and lower extremities based on the participant's current plan of care.

**NOTES OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:** This activity assumes some prior knowledge of planting seeds by participants. If planting seeds is new to them, consider doing a seeding activity in a prior session with cognitive or other goals, so that time can be spent on the details of seed germination and planting. This activity is focused on the functional skill of strengthening getting up and down from a seated position.

**REFERENCES/ RESOURCES:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). [Assessment 30 second chair stand.](#)

Edits were made for THAD purposes in 2024.

TH Activity Plan form developed by Lesley Fleming, Susan Morgan and Kathy Brechner (2012), revised in 2024.