



Acknowledging AWESOME ACTS in Occupational Therapy

Meet Dr. Nick Reed, PhD, MSc., OT, OT Reg. (Ont.)

**Trailblazer in the
management of
Paediatric Concussion
Clinician
Researcher
Educator**

.....he's one of us!

**And we think what Nick's
doing is awesome!**



Meet an inspiring colleague, who is not only advancing the role of OT in paediatric concussion care, but is a true role model for giving back to the profession...

Dr. Nick Reed graduated in 2007 from the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy at the University of Toronto and now spends part of his time contributing to the OT school where he started his professional training and journey as an assistant professor.

But, what Nick's really come to be known for are his roles as Clinician Scientist within the Bloorview Research Institute and Co-Director of the Concussion Centre at Holland Bloorview, a regional pediatric rehabilitation centre in Toronto, Ontario. These positions enable Nick to fulfill several interesting and rewarding roles:



📌 Researcher – where he has the opportunity to engage in all aspects of the research process from grant writing, study design and data analysis to knowledge dissemination to a wide range of audiences (researchers, health care professionals, users/kids and families). This role also allows Dr. Reed to act as a supervisor to a range of graduate students (Masters, PhD, & Post-doctoral Fellows).

📌 Clinician - where he continues to have the opportunity to share his clinical expertise directly with kids and families dealing with a concussion. Nick provides support to the larger clinical team under the concussion services umbrella to work together to best meet the needs of their clients.

📌 ... That of Educator - , in Dr. Reed's words, *"... A fun part of my job is designing kids' concussion-related educational materials and programming, along with implementing education scholarship/evaluation programs to best determine the impact of these. Further, I have the great pleasure of delivering regular educational presentations/seminars to any and all stakeholder groups impacted by concussion (health care professionals, sports teams/organizations, schools etc.)..."* For example, Dr. Reed has co-presented a webinar and facilitated a 'live chat' on the topic of the role of OT with paediatric concussion to the OSOT membership. Both were well attended and received positive feedback - *"...Nick was a wonderful presenter and so knowledgeable on the topic. He was extremely engaging to the audience..."* (live chat participant).

📌 Author - Nick has recently authored and released an educational handbook for parents and kids to help them learn about concussion and to provide self-management strategies and tools (grounded in occupational therapy principles) to support recovery from a concussion. The handbook has received significant interest across stakeholder groups and according to Dr. Reed - the best part, is that it is available at no cost!

📌 Advocate - Nick has always believed that the use of an occupational lens is ideal during the management of concussion. According to Dr. Reed: *"Concussion can have a significant impact on all areas of a child/youth's life (not only sport participation) and including OT during the rehabilitative process truly allows for a different perspective and a more direct focus on exploring a variety of factors to help get kids back to what they need, want and love to do."*

Dr. Reed is also a social advocate – passionate about educating kids and parents about concussion and the importance of knowing how best to get kids back to life, school and play after a concussion. Recently Holland Bloorview and Nick's Concussion Centre have partnered with the Greater Toronto Hockey League (the largest minor hockey league in the world!) to do just this! In this project alone, Nick's advocacy for awareness and good post-concussion management will reach over 40,000 kids and their families!

Researcher, clinician, educator, author, & advocate....we think all of this is just... *awesome!*

Get to know Dr. Reed and how he started on the path to becoming an OT with this particular focus...

📌 Nick grew up in the Beaches neighbourhood in Toronto playing all sorts of sports, particularly lacrosse and basketball. He married his high school sweetheart and they now live across the street from their old high school, along with their two kids – a 4 year old daughter



and a 2 year old son. Life is busy; however Dr. Reed continues to make time for the things that he loves including coaching minor lacrosse in Toronto – which he has done for the past 13 years.

📌 He has always had an interest in health and sport; while an undergraduate kinesiology student at McMaster University, he attended a rehab graduate school information night. Though his goal was to learn more about becoming a PT, the session he attended began with a presentation about occupational therapy. At the time, Dr. Reed had little knowledge about the profession of OT however this session highlighted to him the consideration of many factors (person, environment, occupation) when helping individuals achieve optimal health and participation in life. From that moment on, he was driven to do all he could to unite sport with occupational therapy. That journey led him to the world of pediatric concussion where he has been, and continues to be, a trailblazer for the profession and the clients he serves.

📌 Nick's experiences as an OT student both in the classroom and in clinical environments inspired him to creatively apply his knowledge and skills towards a career helping kids and families dealing with concussion. During his doctoral studies, Dr. Reed was provided with the academic foundation and support to further explore his subject area of interest through conducting clinical research. Nick shares that all of his training opportunities, along with the support and mentorship he received throughout his academic studies provided him with the tools and confidence needed to enter into a career that allows him to apply his clinical skills, but to also continue to engage in meaningful research at the same time... *"...to me, this is the best of both worlds!"*

The future for OT in paediatric concussion care...

Dr. Reed is confident that despite limited involvement in the world of concussion management and research to date, occupational therapists are eager, willing and prepared to contribute to this field and help promote positive outcomes for kids and families dealing with concussion.

His vision is that all occupational therapists that want to be involved in the management of concussion, have the training, resources and support to do so.

He further hopes that his involvement in the field of pediatric concussion will inspire others to want to contribute to this field as well and that concussion rehabilitation becomes more widespread, with access to OT services following a concussion becoming readily available to those in need.

From a research perspective, there remains little evidence to support approaches to managing concussion specific to children and youth. Nick may be *just the researcher* to turn that around! It is Dr. Reed's hope that an occupational lens is incorporated into future research initiatives and that evidence-based interventions grounded in OT theory and principles become standard practice when approaching the management of concussion.

Parting words of wisdom...

"...Let's all continue to push the boundaries and be creative in how we apply our theories and training to new contexts and populations. There are a lot of people out there who do not know how occupational therapy can help them – they won't know until we get out there and tell them."



Let's all get out there in whatever capacity we can to advocate for this great profession in order to, at the end of the day, help as many clients as we can do the things they need, want and love to do..."

If you're inspired as we are and would like to connect with Dr. Reed -

✉ Email: nreed@hollandbloorview.ca

🐦 Twitter: @DrNickReed

🌐 Web: www.hollandbloorview.ca/concussion

✉ And here's a link to his handbook: www.hollandbloorview.ca/concussionhandbook

Thank you to Dr. Reed for all the ways he gives back and to the many others giving back to the profession in their own way each and every day... what an *awesome* profession lead by so many *awesome* OTs!



Acknowledging AWESOME ACTS in Occupational Therapy

Awesome: wonderful, amazing, cool, extremely impressive, inspiring admiration

Every day occupational therapists across Ontario are doing awesome things. They're delivering excellent client-centred care, designing programs that are delivering amazing outcomes, developing cool new promotions or solutions, sharing impressive resources or knowledge, undertaking dynamic entrepreneurial business development and *all* sorts of other inspiring activities that we think are just awesome! That's worth celebrating and that's why we are ***Acknowledging Awesome Acts in OT. Celebrate the "awesomeness" of our OT community!***

