

The Vagus Nerve in Pediatric Therapy: Practical, Play-Based Tools for Regulation, Communication, and Motor Learning



PRESENTER

Dr. Arianne Missimer,
PT, RD, LDN, IFMCP, CSC

Nationally known speaker and founder of The Movement Paradigm®



WHEN

Friday

December 18, 2026

8:00 AM—3:00 PM EST

Target Audience:

OTs, OTAs, PTs, PTAs, SLPs

Instruction Methods: Lecture, case studies, demonstration

Level: Intermediate

REFUNDS & CANCELLATIONS: A full refund less a \$75 dollars administrative fee per course will be given for cancellations received up to 3 days prior to the course. After that, no refunds will be given for cancellations. We reserve the right to cancel any course due to extenuating circumstances. If this event is canceled, you will be refunded the registration fee within 10 days. Please do not make non-refundable arrangements until you contact us &/or receive confirmation that the course will be held. We are not responsible for any expenses incurred by participants if the course must be canceled.



WHERE

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Conference**

**from the comfort of your
home/school/office**



FEE

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December 1, 2026

\$259 Register after
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This continuing education program is available to all physical therapists and physical therapist assistants in the state of NJ/NY on a non-discriminatory basis.



ACCREDITATION

6.0 contact hours

0.6 AOTA CEUs

7.5 NBCOT PDUs

0.6 ASHA CEUs

0.6 NY SLP CEUs

0.6 NY PT CEUs

***Application has been made to the
NJBPTE for CE Credit approval***

CE BROKER –#50-31070
for select states

Certificates will be awarded

-Theramoves offers credits listed for full attendance.

- ASHA partial credits will not be awarded for this webinar.

-Course evaluation, post-test, and learning assessment, to be completed online with a passing score of 70% within 1 week, are required to receive your certificate of completion.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Pediatric physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists often work with children who experience challenges with attention, communication, motor planning, feeding, endurance, emotional regulation, or therapeutic participation. This course explores the Vagus nerve and autonomic nervous system through a practical pediatric therapy lens, helping clinicians connect observable body-based signs with regulation, engagement, communication, and motor learning.

The course moves beyond the idea that regulation simply means calming down. Participants will examine how nervous system state may show up through breathing, voice quality, prosody, facial expression, eye contact variability, posture, motor output, feeding-related responses, fatigue, shutdown, or fluctuating arousal. The emphasis is on clinical observation and interdisciplinary reasoning, not diagnosis.

A primary focus of the course is the use of practical, play-based strategies that can be integrated into pediatric PT, OT, and SLP sessions. Strategies include vocal and prosodic activities, breath variability, movement-based regulation, sensory-vagal input, and oral-facial or feeding-adjacent approaches that remain within professional scope. Case examples help clinicians match intervention strategies to high arousal, low-arousal, shutdown, or fluctuating regulation states.

By the end of the course, participants will have a regulation-first framework and practical tools to support engagement, communication, movement, learning readiness, and therapeutic carryover.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this seminar, the participants will be able to:

1. Identify at least three primary functions of the vagus nerve related to arousal regulation, social engagement, communication, digestion, respiration, and motor readiness.
2. Differentiate between regulation and calm by describing how children may present in high-arousal, low-arousal, shutdown, or optimal learning states.
3. Recognize at least five observable clinical signs that may reflect nervous system state, including changes in breath, voice quality, prosody, facial expression, eye contact, posture, endurance, feeding-related responses, and motor output.
4. Explain how autonomic state may influence pediatric therapy outcomes related to attention, communication, feeding, posture, motor planning, endurance, and participation.
5. Select appropriate play-based regulation strategies based on a child's presenting nervous system state, including vocalization, breath variability, movement, sensory-vagal input, and oral-facial strategies.
6. Relate at least three vagus-informed, play-based tools within pediatric PT, OT, or SLP treatment sessions to support regulation, communication, and motor learning.
7. Modify therapeutic demands in real time to support children with high arousal, low arousal, or fluctuating regulation without increasing overwhelm or shutdown.
8. Use case-based clinical reasoning to design regulation-first treatment strategies that improve

AGENDA

8:00–8:15 AM

Welcome, Course Orientation, and Clinical Lens

8:15–9:05 AM

Foundations: The Vagus Nerve and Pediatric Regulation

9:05–9:55 AM

Regulation Is Not the Same as Calm

9:55–10:05 AM Break

10:05–11:00 AM

Reading the Body: Clinical Signs of Nervous System State and Vagal Tone

11:00 AM–12:00 PM

Play-Based Regulation Tools: Voice, Breath, Face, and Oral-Facial Inputs

12:00–12:45 PM Lunch

12:45–1:35 PM

Movement-Based Regulation and Motor Learning

1:35–1:45 PM Break

1:45–2:35 PM

Matching Strategies to State: High Arousal, Low Arousal, Shutdown, and Fluctuating Regulation

2:35–3:00 PM Case Integration and Key Takeaways

PRESENTER'S BIO

Dr. Missimer is the founder of The Movement Paradigm® and a recognized leader in integrative physical therapy and functional medicine. With over 20 years of experience, she brings together expertise in airway health, somatic regulation, nutrition, and movement science. A TEDx speaker, Muscle Nerds educator, and STRONG Fitness Magazine columnist, she delivers high-impact education designed to empower clinicians with whole-body, root-cause strategies.

DISCLOSURE

Financial: Dr. Arianne Missimer will receive a speaker's honorarium from TheraMoves Services for the presentation. Arianne is the author of *Rise Up: Journey of Healing Through Mindset Nutrition Movement* and the founder of The Movement Paradigm. Dr. Missimer has no non-financial relationships to disclose.

Please contact info@theramoves.com with any special needs requests within 2 weeks.



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