



WHAT IS Occupational Therapy?



EDUCATIONAL
HANDOUT

For Parents/
Caregivers

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WHAT IS Occupational Therapy?



Occupational Therapy Provides Children with the Tools to Grow!

HOW CAN AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST HELP MY CHILD?

- Occupational Therapists are highly trained healthcare professionals that evaluate and assist children that are having difficulty participating in meaningful activities or “occupations” that are needed to conduct their daily routines and live their life to the fullest.
- For a child this may include the development of life skills such as learning at school, playing, completing self-care tasks, relating to others, and fulfilling their role as a family member.
- In the schools, Occupational Therapists address the needs of students experiencing delays, disabilities, or health challenges through therapeutic intervention to promote skill advancement, the use of compensatory strategies, adaptations to the child’s equipment and environment, and/or modifying the curriculum or activity.
- Occupational Therapists also collaborate with teachers, parents and others to identify and modify barriers that restrict a child’s success and model strategies for others to use that will extend the benefits of direct intervention.

WHY WOULD MY CHILD BE REFERRED TO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY?

- Fine Motor Difficulties: Holding crayons, pencils and other small objects, stringing beads, using clothing fasteners, manipulating toys
- Eye-hand Coordination Difficulties: Scissor use, puzzles, ball skills
- Visual Motor Delays: Printing, drawing, forming shapes, coloring
- Visual Perceptual Delays: Sorting, matching, figure ground, scanning, letter reversals
- Self-Care Delays: Dressing, feeding, using utensils, tying, bathing & shampooing, grooming
- Sensory Processing Difficulties: Delays in adaptive responses to sights, sounds, movement, taste, touch
- Decreased Strength: Manipulating resistive materials, moving against gravity, sustaining body positions
- Decreased Range of Motion: Limits in moving arms, fingers, legs, head, or other body parts
- Social Difficulties: Interacting with others, following routines