



What is Occupational and Physical Therapy in School?

Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists in the educational setting focus specifically on assisting students in accessing and participating in their education. OTs and PTs use a variety of activities to help students develop skills, use compensatory strategies, and modify the equipment and/or the environment. Collaboration and education of school personnel is also done to best meet the needs of the students.

Below are examples of the activities/areas therapists can assist with in the educational setting.

Occupational Therapy

- Participation in the Classroom

- * Pre-requisite skills for handwriting and cutting tasks (arm and core strength, visual motor skills, finger dexterity, etc.)
- * Transitions (from one task to the next)
- * Accommodations to assist with skills needed for academic success (sensory processing, attention, emotional regulation)

- Mobility in School

- * Safety
- * Following routines
- * Carrying supplies (lunch tray, back pack, books, etc.)

- Daily Routine Skills

- * Putting on and taking off outdoor gear (boots, coat, etc.)
- * Fasteners
- * Restroom hygiene
- * Lunch and snack (eating with utensils & opening containers)

- Life Skills

- * Social skills
- * Job participation
- * Community interaction

Physical Therapy

- Participation in the Classroom

- * Sitting at a desk or in a chair
- * Transfers (sitting to stand, chair to floor, etc.)
- * Balance (sitting, standing, reaching, etc.)

- Mobility in School

- * Transitions
- * Safety
- * Stairs, managing doors, wheelchair mobility
- * Endurance and balance

- Daily Routine and Life Skills

- * Balance and coordination
- * Accessing and maneuvering in lunch room
- * Accessing and maneuvering on school bus
- * Community mobility
- * Job participation

- Playground and Physical Education Skills

- * Accessing playground equipment
- * Walking, running, jumping, skipping, hopping
- * Ball skills