

## **WHAT IS OT IN THE SCHOOLS AND WHAT WILL IT DO FOR MY CHILD?**

School-based occupational therapists (OT) and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTA) help students to fully access and be successful in the learning environment.

OTs and COTAs have a unique skill set that looks at the relationship between the student performance, and task demands in the educational environment.

The areas addressed by the OT practitioner in the educational environment can include the following:

- ❖ Environmental and/or classroom modifications
- ❖ Functional mobility
- ❖ Gross motor skills
- ❖ Fine motor skills
- ❖ Visual perceptual skills
- ❖ Life skills

## **WHAT IS THE SERVICE MODEL FOR SCHOOL-BASED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY?**

Occupational therapy services include any combination of direct (individual, classroom group, small group, push in or pull out) and indirect services (consultation, observation, staff training, program development, adaptations and

modifications) using an integrative team approach.

This includes working with:

- ❖ Students to improve their performance in a variety of learning environments (e.g., playgrounds, classrooms, lunchrooms, bathrooms, etc.)
- ❖ Parents to help them support their child's learning and participation in school
- ❖ Educators and other school support staff to plan and develop activities that include all students
- ❖ Para-educators to support children's success and promote safety within the school environment (e.g., physical and behavioral supports)
- ❖ Administrators to provide training for students, staff and parents, as well as to recommend equipment for schools and ways to modify existing buildings and curriculum to allow access for all.

## **WHEN CAN MY CHILD BE ELIGIBLE FOR OT SERVICES?**

In order for a child to be eligible to receive OT services under special education; an IEP team must determine that the child meets eligibility under one of the thirteen qualifying conditions and

requires special education and related services.

- ❖ OT is not a primary (qualifying) special education service
- ❖ OT services are determined by the IEP process using school-based OT assessment results
- ❖ OT is a related service therefore the IEP team will make a determination if it is a necessary service for a child with a disability to benefit from his or her special education program
- ❖ Outside recommendations and assessments are considered, but do not dictate the need or level of OT services

## **HOW DO I START THE PROCESS TO GET OT SERVICES FOR MY CHILD?**

Contact:

- ❖ Your child's IEP team case manager
- ❖ The principal of your child's school
- ❖ The special education director or coordinator for your child's school district



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