

# Philosophy

Supported by research and best practice, children learn best when skills are practiced frequently in the natural environments.



Therefore, training others involved with the student in how to incorporate therapeutic strategies is critical. As a result, the student's needs are addressed throughout the day and across learning environments. The focus is not to fix the child but to adapt tasks, expectations, and environments in order to facilitate the student's success within their educational setting.



Children use their sensory and motor skills to interact with and learn from the people and things in their world. Children learn best when developmentally appropriate activities are provided within meaningful relationships in their natural setting, with frequent opportunities to practice skills within daily routines.



At times, a child may require clinic or home health based interventions to satisfy their medical needs. School based OT and PT services may not meet a child's total therapy needs.

# Scope of Practice

Therapists working in educational settings develop therapeutic strategies and accommodations specific to the student's unique needs to maximize the student's optimal performance for learning, expressing knowledge, performing self care, developing recreation/leisure skills, promoting mobility, and fulfilling their student role.

## Therapists:



explain to school personnel, parents, and community members how individual impairments and limitations can affect the student's educational performance.



provide ongoing training and resource services to the school team regarding suggested activities and appropriate adaptive equipment with therapeutic value for the classroom and home.



incorporate self-regulation strategies to promote readiness for learning.



facilitate optimal posture and positioning for maximal participation and safety.



support student transition from educational to community settings.

# Service Determination

The strategies developed by the school-based OT and PT support the student's educational program. They are educationally related, integrated, and implemented by school personnel, family, student and therapist.

Factors considered include:



Physical environment;



Need of the student;



Professional experience of the educators;



Specific programs already in place; and



Student's functional level.

A student may perform poorly on a standardized assessment, yet because of their overall developmental level or existing accommodations that student may be functional in the educational environment.



# Birth to Three

Children begin learning from the time they are born. Children use their motor skills to interact with and learn from the people and things in the world around them. Consequently, any delay or difficulty in the development of an infant's sensory and motor skills impact all areas of learning.



Birth to three services are usually provided in the home or daycare which is the natural environment for children in this age group. Home visiting utilizes a family based approach to meet the child's



needs, and provides caregivers with information, strategies,

and supports that can be implemented in daily routines.

## Qualifications . . .

Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists who work in schools

- Possess a degree in Occupational or Physical Therapy from an approved and accredited program;
- PTs maintain current license from the MN Board of Physical Therapy; and
- OTs maintain current license from the MN Department of Health and maintain certification from the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy.

## MN Regions 5 & 7

Benton-Stearns Education District  
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose  
Elk River Area Schools  
Freshwater Education District  
Little Falls Community Schools  
Meeker-Wright Special Education Cooperative  
Mid-State Educational District  
Northland Community School  
Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative  
Rum River Special Education Cooperative  
Sherburne Northern Wright Special Education Cooperative  
St. Cloud Area School District  
St. Croix River Education District  
West Central Education District

### References

1. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Amendments of 1991, 105S:587-608.
2. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Amendments of 1997, 111S:37-157.
3. Goldstein D, Cohn E, Coster W. Enhancing Participation for Children with Disabilities: Application of the ICF Enablement Framework to Pediatric Physical Therapist Practice. *Pediatric Physical Therapy* 1004; 16:114-120.
4. Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy in Educational Settings: A Manual for Minnesota Practitioners 2002. MN Department of Children, Families & Learning.

## MN Regions 5 & 7

# Occupational Therapy & Physical Therapy

Occupational Therapy (OT) and



Physical Therapy (PT) are related services in educational settings

To receive OT or PT in schools, students must first qualify for special education and then secondly demonstrate needs as determined by the educational team.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act  
IDEA - Public Law 101-476**