

Role of Occupational Therapy with Children and Youth in School Practice



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Occupational Therapy (OT) Practitioners
promote functional abilities and
engagement in daily routines.

...the “occupation” of life
skills...

Areas of Occupation

- Education
- Leisure/Play
- Social Participation
- ADL/ IADL
- Work
- Rest and Sleep



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Occupational therapy practitioners have knowledge and skills in:

- Child Development
- Learning
- Physical Health
- Mental Health

...offering a holistic approach
to improving participation in
meaningful activities.

Supporting the needs of
diverse learners for
greater access, progress
and participation in both
curricular and
extracurricular activities.

Using...

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) such as:

- Response to Intervention
- Positive Behavior Support....

Occupational therapy
practitioners can provide
adaptations and modifications in
environments and tasks to
support *all children's* ability
to participate in their daily
routines in school.

Occupational therapy practitioners can also support school wide initiatives such as:

- Recess Promotion
- Childhood Obesity
- Backpack Awareness
- Bullying Prevention

...creating a healthy school environment conducive to learning.

Under Part B of IDEA

Services are provided
through the IEP to promote
academic success and social
participation...

...to access, progress, and
participate in the general
curriculum in the least
restrictive environment.

OT is designated as a related service under Part B of IDEA and is considered a pupil service under NCLB (ESEA).

A unifying term of "Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP)" has been recommended in legislation.

Definition of OT in Part B Regulation

Occupational therapy—

“ (i) Means services provided by a
qualified occupational therapist; and

(ii) Includes—

- A. Improving, developing, or restoring functions impaired or lost through illness, injury, or deprivation;
- B. Improving ability to perform tasks for independent functioning if functions are impaired or lost; and
- C. Preventing, through early intervention, initial or further impairment or loss of function. ”

(Pub. L. 108-446)

Through team collaboration, areas of need are prioritized and individualized goals are established to:

- promote school success
- reach outcomes

OT Practitioners use evidence based interventions to support outcomes related to:

- Classroom skills
- Playground and sports participation
- Self-help skills
- Social participation
- Mobility
- Social-emotional learning
- Assistive technology needs
- Sensory regulation
- Prevocational and transition needs

Occupational Therapy in Action

Examples of evidence-based service or support that a school occupational therapist might offer include:

Evaluation of student's strengths and abilities through observations, and other formal and informal methods



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Addressing performance patterns that impact participation:

- Classroom routines
- Self care management
- Learning skills
- Social engagement and play skills

Addressing skills (with motor, cognitive, sensory components) that impact academic participation:

- Coordination
- Flexibility
- Self-regulation
- Management of classroom sensory experiences
- Level of focus and alertness needed for learning



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Addressing skills with mental health components that impact social participation:

- Managing and expressing emotions
- Turn-taking skills
- Impulse control
- Friendship promotion



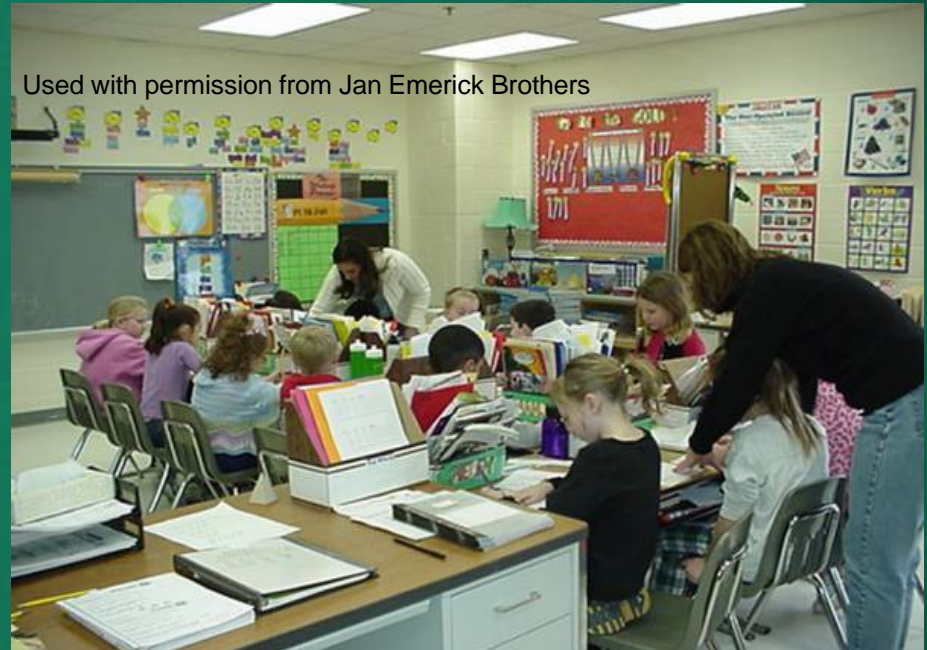
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Addressing student
needs for greater school
independence and
function.



In the classroom

- Seating/positioning and curricula modifications
- Literacy Promotion
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Assistive technology
- Classroom management strategies



Supporting differentiated instruction and State learning standards

Through the hallways

- Geographical orientation
- Locker management
- Self-care in bathroom



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In the lunchroom

- Promoting independence in mealtime skills
- Creating a positive social environment
- Organizing self and materials



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On the playground

- Social skills such as turn-taking
- Motor skills for engagement in activities such as donning coat or playing games during recess
- Self-advocacy skills to express needs and wants



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On the school bus

- Safety
- Seating needs
- Evacuation procedures



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Supporting transition plans and services to develop life skills

- Prevocational training
- Leisure activity analysis and coaching
- Community mobility and integration
- Self determination



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Occupational therapy practitioners offer a valuable contribution as part of the school team. They partner with parents, educators and others.



How can we help you?

- Consultation or collaboration
- Service delivery
- Training and professional development
- Participation in curriculum and program development

To learn more, contact
The American Occupational Therapy Association
online at www.aota.org
or call 301-652-AOTA (2682)

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