

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SUPPORT

What is Occupational Therapy?

- ✓ Occupational Therapy is a health care profession concerned with a student's ability to perform daily occupations (ie: tasks), including self-care (eg: dressing, feeding) productivity (eg: schoolwork) and leisure (eg: play).
- ✓ Occupational Therapists are trained to assess and treat occupational performance problems in the environments where these tasks are being performed (eg: classrooms, schools and playgrounds).
- ✓ Occupational Therapy is a determinant of health, well-being and helps give meaning to life.

Occupational Therapy with School Aged Children

- ✓ Occupational Therapists (OT's) work with children, parents, teachers and caregivers to enable children to participate fully in tasks and routines.
- ✓ School Aged Therapy is a Provincial Program that supports children and youth in the school, home and community settings.
- ✓ Support in the home setting may include home-based assessments, provision of appropriate medical equipment and caregiver training.

Role of Occupational Therapist

- ✓ OT's analyze the children's abilities, activity requirements and environments in which they do those tasks, including classrooms, playgrounds, and home settings.
- ✓ OT's determine how to increase the fit between the person, task and environment. When there is a good fit among these areas' children are successful in their participation and progress in their development.
- ✓ Active engagement in meaningful activities is important in positive health and well-being.

Who Might Benefit from OT?

Children who have:

- ✓ Physical difficulties, such as sensory or motor development disorders, that affect self-care, social interaction, or mobility.
- ✓ Cognitive difficulties that impact on their learning development, as well as ability to organize themselves, their belongings, time and thoughts.
- ✓ Social or cultural difficulties that impact on social participation, peer relationships, following routines and ability to transition between tasks or environments.

- ✓ Emotional difficulties affecting regulation of emotions and behaviour.

- ✓ Support transition into Kindergarten, new settings and/or adult swim programs.

What Can Occupational Therapists Do for School-Aged Children

Self-Care:

- ✓ Help children develop skills expected for their age, such as independent dressing, eating, hygiene and mobility.
- ✓ Prescribe equipment such as wheelchairs, bath and toileting aids.
- ✓ Educate caregivers and work with children to become independent.

Productivity:

- ✓ Educate parents and school staff about the sensory, motor, perceptual, social and behavioural characteristic of a specific child and the demands of the activities at school and home.
- ✓ Provide in-services to enhance capacity of teachers and educational assistants.
- ✓ Determine how environments might be changed to accommodate for a student's needs.
- ✓ Participate in the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- ✓ Recommend accommodations that include adapting existing materials and tools, including desks, seating, agendas, worksheets, writing implements and storage spaces.
- ✓ Introduce and prescribe technologies to address fine motor limitations.

What School-Aged Occupational Therapy May Include

- ✓ Screening and/or assessment to identify performance limitations, including motor, sensory, cognitive (eg: visual-motor, perception) and social-emotional self-regulation challenges.
- ✓ Consultation with school staff including interpretation of medical information and the implications for that student at school; in-service training to support school staff to carry out routines and strategies to enhance integration and inclusion of students with special needs.
- ✓ Recommendations to school staff to enhance fit between the person, occupation and environment. Areas may include sensory, motor, cognitive, social or emotional difficulties, which may be affecting access to the curriculum, school participation, self-care, social or physical play.
- ✓ Limited direct or group therapy. When more intense, 'direct' or ongoing OT support is required, families must access community-based OT support.

Access to Occupational Therapy Services

Referrals to School-Aged Therapy OT can be initiated by:

- ✓ School-based teams, which includes teachers and parents

Please contact your child's school or

- ✓ Your child's medical specialist (eg: Neurologist or Pediatrician)
- ✓ Early Intervention team when transitioning into Kindergarten.
- ✓ Other community service providers, such as MCFS's Child and Youth Special Needs social workers.

Contact Information

Your child's school or Inclusive Education Support at:

2557 Beverly St
Duncan, BC, V9L 2X3

Phone: 250-748-0321 Ext 286

Fax: 250-748-4617