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Occupational Therapy Strategies For Tourette Syndrome

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What Is Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy is skilled treatment that helps individuals achieve independence in all facets of their lives. Occupational therapy assists people in developing the "skills for the job of living" necessary for independent and satisfying lives.

■ American Occupational Therapy Association

In Plain English

- Occupational Therapists look at how a person occupies his time, across all areas of life.
- Self care
- Education
- Work
- Social Interaction
- Leisure
- What is keeping an individual from participating in all areas of life, as fully as possible?

Occupational Therapy Services

- Customized treatment programs to improve one's ability to perform daily activities
- Performance skills assessments and treatment
- Adaptive equipment recommendations and usage training
- Guidance to family members and caregivers

■ American Occupational Therapy Association

OT Special Interest Areas

Seven of Eleven Areas apply to TS

- Developmental Disabilities
- Home & Community Health
- Mental Health
- School System
- Sensory Integration
- Technology
- Work Programs

**School Based OT
Areas of Assessment and
Intervention**

- Activities of Daily Living
- Education
- Play
- Social Participation

Consumers Guide to Occupational Therapy
www.promoteot.org

IDEA 2004

- TOURETTE SYNDROME IS NOW INCLUDED UNDER THE "OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT" CATEGORY §300.8(c)(9)(i)
- THIS IS A CHANGE FROM CLASSIFICATION AS A BEHAVIORAL DISORDER TO A NEUROLOGICAL IMPAIRMENT
- THE CHANGE PROVIDES FOR IMPROVED ACCESS TO SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

IDEA 2004

- DEFINES OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AS SERVICES PROVIDED BY A QUALIFIED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST §300.34(c)(6)
- (NOTE THAT OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS ARE TRAINED IN MANY AREAS; YOU MAY HAVE TO SEARCH A BIT TO FIND ONE WHO HAS MORE TRAINING IN TOURETTE SYNDROME, SENSORY INTEGRATION, AND EXECUTIVE DYSFUNCTION)

**School Based OT Areas of
Assessment & Intervention**

- Education
 - Achieving in the learning environment

Consumers Guide to Occupational Therapy
www.promoteot.org

**School Based OT Areas of
Assessment & Intervention**

- Social Participation
 - Developing appropriate relationships
 - engaging in behavior that don't interfere with learning or social relationships

Consumers Guide to Occupational Therapy
www.promoteot.org

**School Based OT Areas of
Assessment & Intervention**

- Work
 - Developing interests and skills necessary for transition to community life after graduation

Consumers Guide to Occupational Therapy
www.promoteot.org

TS Impact On Role Performance

Role of Child/Student

- Classroom Performance
- Social Skills
- Homework
- Family Life

Occupational Therapy Intervention for Individuals With TS

- The BIG FIVE
 - Sensory Processing Dysfunction
 - Executive Dysfunction
 - Social/Emotional Skills
 - Dysgraphia
 - Assistive Technology

Occupational Therapy Intervention for Individuals With TS

- ADD/ADHD
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Anxiety Disorder
- Stress Management
- Depression
- Aggressive/Explosive Behavior
- Transition Planning
- Job Training
- Job Coach
- Independent Living Skills
- Sleep Problems

Sensory Processing Dysfunction

- Under/over reaction
- Easily distracted
- Activity level
- Social/emotional problems-poor self concept
- Transition difficulty
- Delays in academic performance
- Problems with motor coordination

Executive Skills

"The Cognitive Processes Required To Plan and Direct Activities"

Dawson, Peg, & Guare, Richard(2004).
Executive Skills in Children and Adolescents.
New York: Guilford Press

Thinking Skills Involved

- Planning
- Organizing
- Time Management
- Working Memory
- Metacognitive

Dawson & Guare

Executive Dysfunction

- Goal directed thinking skills
 - Plan
 - Organize
 - Time management
 - Working memory
 - Metacognitive
 - knowledge about your own thoughts and the factors that influence your thinking
- Behavior skills to reach goals
 - Response inhibition
 - Self regulation
 - Task initiation
 - Flexibility
 - Goal directed persistence

Dysgraphia

- Difficulty writing
- Executive Function Skills
- Grasp
- Tics
- OCD
- Eye/hand coordination
- Visual perception/Spatial
- Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology

- Anything that aids in performing task
Pencil grip, seating, computers, electronics
- Written work
 - Keyboard skills
 - Word processing skills
 - Word prediction, spell check
 - Voice activated
- Reading
 - Books on tapes
 - Computer programs

ADD/ADHD

- Sensory
 - Distractions
- OCD
 - Chicken or the egg?
 - Contributes to attention problems

Anxiety

- Explore cause
- OCD
- Develop anxiety reducing techniques
- Monitor progress

Depression

- Activity Level
- Develop Strengths
- Avocation
- Physical Activity

Sleep Problems

- Relaxation Techniques
- Sleep Routine
- Exercise Programs
- Sensory Aspect

Aggressive/Explosive Behavior

- Social Stories
- Stress Reduction
- Symptom Management
- Self Advocacy
- Accept Responsibility

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

- Obsession = thought creates stress
- Compulsion = action to reduce stress
 - Symmetry, Germs, Checking, Counting,
- Sensory aspect
- Explore options to reduce stress
- Creative solutions to deal with symptoms

Central Auditory Processing

- Sensory
- Attention
- OCD

Social/Emotional Skills

- 2/3 of Chronological Age
- Gap becomes more evident with age
- Social Stories
- Executive Skills
- Attention
- Impulsivity
- OCD

Occupational Therapy

- Unique skills to focus on students strengths, avocations and abilities
- Advocate for involvement in classes, extra curricular activities and therapy to develop skills necessary for success at next level
- Reinforce the positive
- Provide tools to overcome the negative
- Transitions are difficult for most individuals with TS
- Apprenticeship programs

Occupational Therapy Evaluation Process

- Interview
- Observe
- Test
- Creative Intervention

Interview

- Parents
 - Issues at home are usually worse
 - Sensory issues are usually a factor
- Teachers/aides
 - May report little if any problem
- School staff
 - Nurse, Cafeteria, Monitors

Observe

- Sensory overload areas (5)
 - bus, hall, lunch, art, music, gym
- Organizational skills
- Peer interaction
 - Sensory and/or OCD issues may impact
- Adult interaction
- Examples of lengthy assignments
- Homework/assignment book
- Transitions

Evaluation

- Sensory Profile Checklist
 - May not present as a Sensory child, misleading
- Assistive Technology Assessment
- Standard battery of tests
- Behavior Problems
 - TSA Functional Behavior Assessment

During the Evaluation

- Inability to follow directions
 - OCD, ADD, auditory or visual processing
- TS symptoms may not be observed
- Performance impacted by OCD/sensory
- Usually test well
 - Ideal conditions
 - One/One
 - Brief demands

Role of Occupational Therapist

- Coach and mediator
- Develop unique IEP
- Coordinate programs
- Empower child
- Encourage development of avocation
 - Goal setting
 - Transition planning
 - Job training

Intervention

- Classification
 - Other Health Impaired (OHI)
 - OT is a related service
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Needs
 - Avocation
 - Organizational Skills
- Assistive Technology
- Social/Emotional Skills
- Sensory Awareness
- Accept Responsibility
- Establish good rapport as mentor/resource
- Require support throughout schooling
- Delay in Social/Emotional Skills

Sample Goals

With OT assistance student will:

- Locate safe areas of school to reduce stress/tics
- Explore variety of activities to reduce stress
- With teacher and OT assistance, recognize need to take a break to reduce stress
- Develop an organizational plan for desk, locker, long term assignments, homework
- Develop social skills for age appropriate interaction with peers
- Explore a variety of assistive technology devices

Finding An Occupational Therapist

- **Please contact a State Occupational Therapy Association for assistance in locating an occupational therapist near you.** Each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico has an occupational therapy association. You can find the contact information in the [state association drop down menu](#) located at the bottom of AOTA's home page.
- www.aota.org

The **Tourette Syndrome Association** is a national, membership-driven, non-profit organization dedicated to serving all people with Tourette Syndrome (TS). We have joined with the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to launch extensive programs promoting awareness of TS in medical and educational settings.

Our efforts include a series of medical and education programs for physicians, allied professionals, educators & clinicians, and dissemination of these important resources.

Visit <http://tsa-usa.org> for additional material.

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