

Understanding Occupational Therapy

What is Occupational Therapy?

Occupational therapy is a client-centered health profession concerned with promoting health and well-being through occupation. The primary goal of OT is to enable people to participate in the activities of everyday life. Occupational therapists achieve this outcome by working with people and communities to enhance their ability to engage in the occupations they want to, need to, or are expected to do, or by modifying the occupation or the environment to better support their occupational engagement.

What is the definition of learning disabilities?

The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD) defines the term learning disability as: a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction. Even though a learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g. sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance) or environmental influences (e.g. cultural differences, insufficient / inappropriate instruction, psychogenic factors) it is not the direct result of those conditions or influences.

How would I know if my child has learning difficulties?

A few common signs of learning difficulties are:

- Poor organisational skills
- Memory difficulties
- Attention problems
- Visual perceptual difficulties or difficulties recalling spelling and writing letters or numbers correctly
- Handwriting challenges or Fine motor deficits
- Gross motor deficits
- Unable to perform some or all activities of daily living independently



Objective of OT and expected outcome of the therapy?

The objective of occupational therapy is to address the wide variety of difficulties, such as visual perceptual issues, attention problems, fine motor deficits and gross motor deficits. The expected outcome would be improvement in all these areas of learning difficulties.

References:

www.wits.ac.za www.wits.ac.za

theotpractice.co.uk

www.youthlivingskills.com.au