

# WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN!

## What is Occupational Therapy?



Soon, your child will be settled in their new classroom and starting an amazing year of learning and development. Besides the staff you see in the classroom, the team also includes Occupational Therapists (OT) and Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTA).

Don't worry, you are not alone if you are not exactly sure what occupational therapy (OT) is or why your child might benefit from it. Occupational therapy helps people of all ages and focuses on developing, restoring, and/or maintaining skills and independence. "Occupation" is anything that you do in a day, not just your job! Collaboration between the parents and classroom staff determines where help is needed. If you ever have questions about any of these things, please mention them to the classroom staff. The classroom staff implements OT strategies and recommendations on a daily basis; they are wonderful!

**In schools the Occupational Therapy Team provides in-school presentations, targeted groups and individualized intervention for the following:**

- **Fine motor skills**
- **Gross motor skills**
- **Visual perception and visual motor skills**



- **Sensory skills**
- **Self-Regulation**
- **Executive functioning skills**
- **Self-care skills**

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## OT Tips and Tricks at Home!



- Encourage your child to play outside and help around the house! For example, carrying items or pushing the laundry basket. This helps develop their **gross motor** and **fine motor** skills.



- Encourage your child to use their **senses** and name how they make them feel.
  - Make a sensory bin at home.
  - Use different materials while playing, like rice, shaving cream or sand.



- Using puzzles, sorting out objects, playing memory games, and playing eye spy are great for your child's **visual perceptual** and **visual motor** skills!



- Practice their **executive functioning** skills by starting to follow a kindergarten routine.
  - For example, zipping up their jacket, getting their lunch, and doing some writing activities.This will get your child use to the routine.



- Help develop your child's **pencil grasp** by:
  - Using broken crayons to color
  - Writing on vertical surfaces
  - Tearing paper into little pieces
  - Using stickers
  - Laying on their tummy while completing these activities



- Start practicing **writing** letters, numbers, and names.
  - Start out by tracing letters, then writing on paper.
  - Make it fun by using shaving cream or playdough.



- Start letting them practice with **scissors**.
  - Scissors should be held with the thumb in the top loop and the middle fingers in the bottom loop.
  - Get them to snip items like plastic straws, playdough, flowers, grass, and paper



**Most of All Make it Fun!!**