

Title:

Difference Between Physical Therapy And Occupational Therapy As Related Services In Education

Word Count:

304

Summary:

One common question asked by parents is what is the difference between physical therapy and occupational therapy.

Keywords:

physical therapy, occupational therapy, education, special education

Article Body:

One common question asked by parents is what is the difference between physical therapy and occupational therapy.

Physical Therapy (PT): emphasizes the acquisition of basic motor skills necessary for functional performance.

- Gross motor skills: activities that use large muscles
- Mobility skills: moving safely throughout the school environment, including entering and exiting rooms
- Postural control and alignment needed to perform school activities and for increasing independence

Occupational therapy (OT): emphasizes the acquisition of or compensation for functional performance.

- Fine motor skills: small, finely coordinated hand movements
- Visual perceptual skills: the ability to understand and interpret what is seen
- Visual motor skills: the ability to coordinate visual skills and motor skills
- Self care skills: feeding, dressing, hygiene, and toileting skills for increasing independence

Both physical and occupational therapists may address the following areas:

- Strength and endurance
- Body awareness
- Classroom positioning and adaptations
- Sensory motor skills necessary for participation in an educational program

Physical therapists and occupational therapists have similar training. Occupational therapists

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