Educational Occupational Therapy Manual: A District-Wide Resource

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Introduction/Ice Breaker/Group Activity

Objectives

- Identify and understand the need for an educational occupational therapy manual within a school setting and how to develop/modify/implement an educational occupational therapy manual within a school district
- Demonstrate the ability to identify how an occupational therapist can assist teachers in general education through the use of RtI (Response to Intervention) via collaboration and consultation with an occupational therapist
- Educate and empower all teachers and district staff through trainings, collaboration, and consultation on how an occupational therapist can provide strategies to support students foundational skills necessary for engagement in academic tasks.
Two main themes:

- Common Core Handwriting
- Response to Intervention (RtI)

Overview of the Problem

- Inappropriate referrals, large caseloads
- Misunderstandings related to Educational OT
- Need for teacher education on RtI interventions
- Maintaining a collaborative relationship between OT & teacher (Bayona et al., 2006; Villeneuve, 2009)
- Common Core expectation, but no guidelines (Villeneuve, 2009)
Common Core Handwriting

- No curriculum for handwriting
- Decreased instruction time
- Lack of specifications
- "Cookie-cutter" curriculum
- Practice handwriting 2x/week for 20-30 minutes (Hoy, et al., 2011)
- Improvements in spacing, sizing, and placement (Peterson & Nelson, 2003)
- Strategies for carryover

Literature Review & Evidence Based Practice

- Common core handwriting gap and RtI influence (Ohl, et al. 2013)
- Teachers benefit from specific guidelines (Cahill, et al. 2014)

Response to Intervention (RtI)

- Effectiveness of a 10-week tier 1 RtI program in improving the fine motor and visual motor skills in general education kindergarten students
- Quantitative pretest-posttest control-group design
- 30-minute lessons in collab with teacher
- OT implications
Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Effectiveness of a Handwriting Intervention With At-Risk Kindergarteners (Zylstra & Pfeiffer, 2016)
- Size Matters Handwriting Program (Moskowitz, 2009)
- Push-in vs. pull-out

Break

Educational Occupational Therapy Manual: A District-Wide Resource
Policies & Procedures - Take 1

Policies & Procedures - Take 2

Components of the Manual

- Contributions
- Purpose
- Mission Statement
- Goals
- OT in CA Public Schools
- Educational vs. Medical
- Guidelines to Determine Need for OT Referral
- Policies & Procedures
- OT-Educational Relevant Concerns
- Teacher Training
- Occupational Therapy
- Classroom Observation Form
- EROTA
- Teacher Resource
Contributions

Contributing Staff from Rialto Unified School District 2018-2019
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Contributing Staff from Fresno Unified School District 2014
Rosie Commons, OTR; Susan Kalpakoff, Special Education Manager; Losthongsanh Mouanoutoua, OTR; Jo Paulino, OTR; Natalie Turner, OTR

Recognition Given To:
Santa Clara County SELPA; Tulare County Office of Education; Sanoma & Ventura County, SELPA; American Occupational Therapy Association; Guidelines for Occupational Therapy in CA Schools; CDE

Purpose

To create a district wide resource on all things occupational therapy
Educate • Empower • Communicate

Mission Statement

To provide and implement policies and procedures that will meet the occupational therapy needs of students in a uniform and consistent manner through Rialto Unified School District in compliance with federal regulations, state laws, and professional standards of practice.
Occupational Therapy is available as “related services” (IDEA Part B) in a child’s IEP when the services is “required for a student with a disability to benefit from his or her special education program.” Educational necessary OT means that a student with a disability has a need for improvement in his or her functional skills related to his or her performance in the educational environment.

A student may have an educational need as well as a medical need; however, some motor difficulties may not directly impact educational progress and may not constitute educational need. Occupational Therapists use techniques that correct, facilitate, or adapt the student’s functional performance: postural stability, sensory regulation and processing, motor planning, fine motor, activities of daily living, social play/organization of behavior, and environmental adaptations/assistive devices.
Education law mandates that emphasis must be placed on the context of the child's learning and activity. The IEP team cannot consider a student's need for OT in isolation from an educational program. Therefore, the IEP team should no longer ask, "Does the student need OT in school?" The team should ask, "Does an OT knowledge and expertise provide a needed component of the student's program that will achieve identified educational outcomes?"
Let's Look at the Data!

Conclusion & Closing Remarks
References


References


References


There are primarily four ways a child can receive occupational therapy once a need has been identified.

- At a hospital or an inpatient clinic: served by medical model
- Outpatient Clinic: served by medical model
- Home Based Services: served by medical model
- School Based services: served by an educational model. There must be an educational need that can only be filled by skilled occupational therapy

Some children will receive services through both models. For some children, the frequency or intensity of OT they receive at school through the educational model will not meet all of the child’s OT needs, but will fulfill the educational need for the student to access their special education program.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Educational Model</th>
<th>Medical Model</th>
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<tr>
<td>Who Decides?</td>
<td>The IEP Educational Team (parents, educators, administrators, and OT) determine the student’s educational needs and what support is required by the related service for the student to access their education.</td>
<td>The Medical team determines focus, frequency and duration of therapy. Insurance coverage may be a determining factor.</td>
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<td>What?</td>
<td>Therapy focuses on adaptation and intervention to allow the student to participate, access their special education and school environment. Need for service is based on Assessment, classroom observations, records review and input from the student’s IEP team.</td>
<td>Therapy addresses medical conditions; works to get full potential realized. Need for service is primarily based on testing and clinical observations.</td>
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<td>Where?</td>
<td>On school grounds, playground classroom, lunch room and within the educational environment and school hours.</td>
<td>In the clinic, hospital or within the home.</td>
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<td>How?</td>
<td>The student’s educational needs are individually met. Services may include direct 1:1 treatment, small groups, staff training, program development, collaboration with staff and student integrated therapy or consultation with the teaching staff.</td>
<td>Direct 1:1 treatment to accomplish self care and functional activities of daily living goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eligibility?</td>
<td>Educational need as determined by the IEP team.</td>
<td>Medical needs as determined by medical professionals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost?</td>
<td>No cost to student or family</td>
<td>Fee for service payment by family, insurance or government assistance.</td>
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General Education
Rialto Unified School District - Occupational Therapy

General Education teacher has concerns related to educational occupational therapy

Classroom Concerns
Teacher fills out Educational Occupational Therapy Teacher Training Form.

Occupational Therapist will provide general strategies/training to teacher in areas of concerns.

Occupational Therapist will provide teacher with OT Teacher Strategies Handbook as an additional resource.

School Site Occupational Therapist will be available for additional questions or concerns.

Student-Specific Concerns (No IEP)
Occupational Therapist will provide general strategies/training to teacher in areas of concerns.

Occupational Therapist will provide teacher with OT Teacher Strategies Handbook as an additional resource.

Teacher will take data on implemented strategies over a 4-week period.

School Site Occupational Therapist will be available for ongoing questions or concerns.

If strategies are proven to be ineffective, OT will consult with school psychologist for next steps.
Special Education: Teacher Concerns
Rialto Unified School District – Occupational Therapy

*Special Education* Teacher has concerns related to educational occupational therapy

Classroom Concerns

Teacher fills out Educational Occupational Therapy Teacher Training Form.

Occupational Therapist will provide general strategies/training to teacher in areas of concerns.

Occupational Therapist will provide teacher with OT Teacher Strategies Handbook as an additional resource.

School Site Occupational Therapist will be available for teacher trainings and modeling group classroom strategies related to educational occupational therapy.

School Site Occupational Therapist will be available for additional questions or concerns.

Student-Specific Concerns (IEP - GenEd or Special Ed classroom)

Team will determine if the area of concern is related to educational occupational therapy.

(Refer to OT-ERC Questionnaire)

Occupational Therapist will provide general strategies/training to teacher in areas of concerns.

Occupational Therapist will provide teacher with OT Teacher Strategies Handbook as an additional resource.

Teacher will take data on implemented strategies over a 4-week period.

School Site Occupational Therapist will be available for ongoing questions or concerns.

If strategies are proven to be ineffective, team will fill out the ER-OTA (old EV-22) to begin the process for an occupational therapy assessment.
Special Education: Parent Concerns
Rialto Unified School District – Occupational Therapy

Parent-Related Concerns in Educational Relevant Areas of Occupational Therapy

Team discussion related to area of concern:
(Refer to OT-ERC Questionnaire)

Outcome of discussion

Team will determine if the area of concern is related to educational occupational therapy.
(Refer to OT-ERC Questionnaire)

Occupational Therapist will provide general strategies/training to teacher in areas of concerns.

Occupational Therapist will provide teacher with OT Teacher Strategies Handbook as an additional resource.

Teacher will take data on implemented strategies over a 4-week period.

School Site Occupational Therapist will be available for additional questions or concerns.

If strategies are proven to be ineffective, team will fill out the ER-OTA (old EV-22) to begin the process for an occupational therapy assessment.

If a parent wants to proceed with an OT assessment, complete the Educationally Relevant OT Assessment (ER-OTA) form.

The Educationally Relevant OT Assessment (ER-OTA) form must be completed and turned in via email to the school site OT by the Case Carrier, PSYCH, RSP, SLP, or teacher.

OT has 15 days to respond to parent with an Assessment Plan or PWN from date of received ER-OTA form.

**Assessment Plan:**
OT has 60 days from the date the signed AP was received by any district staff. Provide date and time stamp when received. IEP will be held to review the results of the assessment within this timeline.
Rialto Unified School District

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES & INTERVENTIONS
FOR STUDENTS HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH:

WRITING & CLASSROOM TOOL USE

If you see:

LETTER REVERSALS

Try this:

☐ Teaching letters in groups; EX: ‘c, d, g, o, q’ are the ‘magic c’ letters; ‘t, l, f, h, b’ are the ‘firepole’ letters

☐ Use different colors to visualize difference in strokes

☐ Trace letters using color-changing markers

☐ For right-handers with number reversals, use left as anchor on paper to show how numbers like 3 and 5 go around index and/or middle finger

POOR LETTER FORMATION

☐ Use adapted paper (raised line, only dotted middle and baselined, drop spaced) or graph paper underlays

☐ Use Handwriting Without Tears materials/strategies

☐ Tape letter formation models to desktop

☐ Practice accurate multi-sensory formation: in the air with ‘magic wand’; finger against ziplock bag filled with colored glue or hair gel; play-doh snakes; with foil rolls; dry erase/chalkboard; cookie sheet covered with thin layer of sand

☐ Trace over letter models with tracing paper

☐ Trace letter on student’s back

*Please check off strategies that have been tried.*
If you see:

AWKWARD GRASP ON WRITING UTENSIL

Try this:

- Try a very short pencil
- Try a variety of pencil grips (claw, grotto, pencil girths, and grasp styles)
- Write on slantboard
- Use rubber band on wrist and hook on end of pencil to pull down into web space

OFTEN DOES NOT PRESS HARD ENOUGH

Try this:

- Put sandpaper under writing paper
- Have student write with a squiggle pen
- Have student write with markers
- Try a #1 pencil (has softer lead)
- Give student a weighted pencil

ERASES OFTEN OR PRESSES TOO HARD

- Try variety of pens, mechanical pencils, fine point pens with no erasers
- Encourage structured error repair (EX: do not fix mistake until entire sentence is complete)
- Put something soft or textured under paper, like thin sheet of styrofoam, sandpaper, padded notebook, carpet square
- Allow for spelling errors
- Write on tracing or carbon paper
- Tape paper on wall and have student stand to write in vertical plane
- Have student hold small ball in writing hand while writing with ring and pinky finger

*Please check off strategies that have been tried.
If you see: POOR SPACING

Try this:
- Use graph paper - one letter or space per box
- Use popsicle stick spacers
- Use non-writing hand index finger as a spacer
- Highlight spaces in between words of text student is copying
- Highlight margins to increase visual impact of where writing begins and end
- Use a visual model
- Use an over-exaggerated spacing example

If you see: SLOW, LABORED, OR MESSY WRITING

Try this:
- Increase time allowed for completion of work
- Reduce amount of work
- Space work sessions with short breaks
- Set time limits for specific writing tasks
- Allow use of either manuscript or cursive writing
- Set mutually agreed upon exceptions for neatness
- Accept key work responses vs. complete sentences
- Reduce amount of copying from board; provide written version of board content
- Allow student to type or give answers orally
- Use appropriate height for chair and desk; if chair is too high, place prop under feet
- Use dycem or non-skid material under elbows

*Please check off strategies that have been tried.*
If you see:

CHOPPY, MESSY SCISSOR USE

Try this:

- Remind student to hold scissors in “thumb-up” position all the time - the scissors do not change direction; the paper being turned by the non-cutting hand is what turns
- Encourage student to cut as slowly as possible
- Pretend scissors are alligators that only like to ‘eat’ the line
- Use child-size Fiskar scissors

COLORING OUTSIDE LINES AND/OR NOT COLORING IN COMPLETELY

- Make outline thicker and/or darker
- Encourage child to use finger vs. arm movements to move crayon
- Encourage child to ‘make all the white disappear’
- Encourage child to watch crayon as it moves

SLOPPY FOLDS OR INCOMPLETE CREASES WHEN FOLDING PAPER

- Ensure that child understands what it means to match corners or edges
- Put dots on corners/places where paper needs to meet, and tell them to ‘make the dots kiss’
- Have child use side of pencil to smash the crease

*Please check off strategies that have been tried.