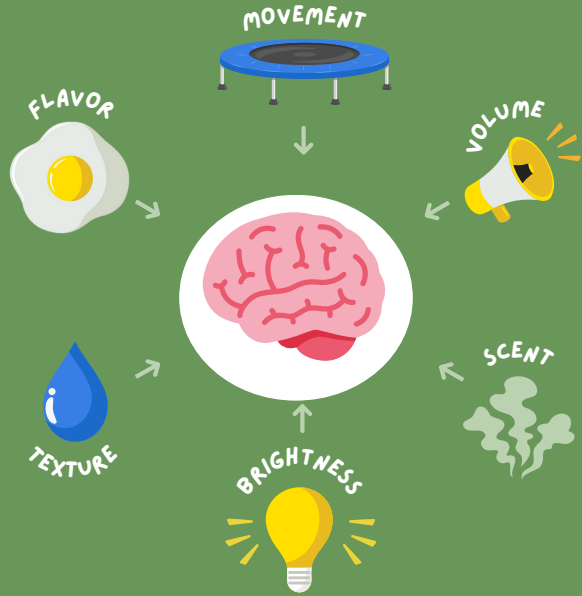


# WHAT MAKES UP A SENSORY EXPERIENCE?

A sensory experience occurs when your brain takes in stimuli, or information, from your environment! This is taken in through your five senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch, and includes input like:



## WHAT IS SENSORY DYSREGULATION?

When we take in all these sensations, we can become dysregulated. This occurs because the brain struggles to process too much, or too little, sensory information. As our nervous system struggles to understand its environment, we can begin to feel overwhelmed.

## O.T. IS HERE TO HELP

Occupational Therapy can help manage your child's sensory diet and teach positive coping mechanisms for experiences of dysregulation.

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

What is Occupational Therapy and how can it help my child?

## COMPILED BY

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## WITH SUPPORT FROM



**Children's Village**

3801 Kern Rd,  
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Special thanks to the providers  
who assisted in the process!

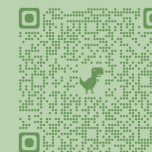


**University of Washington**

**LEND Program**

Facilitated by the IHDD  
1701 NE Columbia Rd,  
Seattle, WA 98195

## FOR AUDIO LEARNERS!



Follow QR code for information  
about Occupational Therapy in  
video format by the Children's  
Hospital of Chicago.

# WHAT IS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY?

## WHAT IS A CHILD'S OCCUPATION?

For adults, someone's occupation usually refers to their job or career. So what is a child's occupation? Well, an occupation is really anything that we are occupied by, or anything that takes up our time. For children this is most often play. It can also include daily tasks like tying shoes, sitting at the table for dinner, and socializing with other children. All of these tasks, and any other task that a child is expected to engage in daily, can be supported through O.T.

## WHAT DOES OT ADDRESS?

O.T. can work on anything that may be interfering with your child's ability to complete their daily tasks. Here are some areas that O.T. commonly addresses:

### SOCIAL SKILLS



### SENSORY PROCESSING



### COORDINATION



### FINE MOTOR SKILLS



### EATING



### VISUAL PROCESSING



To find out more about your child's specific needs, or to learn more about each area of skill, please consult your pediatrician or speak with your occupational therapist!

## O.T. UNDER 5

Pediatric occupational therapy for children under 5 years old typically involves a lot of play. This is for two reasons: first, play is a child's main occupation! Second, play can be an important part of making challenging activities like balancing and building core strength fun.



## SUPPORTS

To support your child's development, an occupational therapist might look at adaptations to the task or assistive equipment in order to achieve success. For example, they may provide pencil grips or weighted pencils in order to help your child write. To brush teeth, they may provide sensory or differently shaped toothbrushes. They can even recommend or provide appropriate tools to manage oral stimming, like chewy tubes. Depending on the task and where your child is struggling, they can provide the right tools to get the job done!



## BREAKING IT DOWN

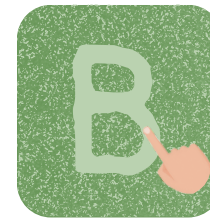
Breaking down tasks is particularly important when there are many layers to a skill. For example, with the task of writing, there are visual skills, fine motor skills, hand eye coordination and attention! Because of this, O.T. works to break down the skill, while incorporating motivating elements to make challenging skills fun! See below for an example of how O.T. might break down the task of handwriting:

### 1. VISUALIZING THE SKILL



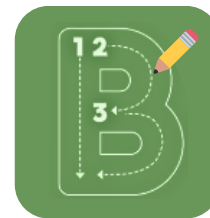
Tools like Roll N' Write alphabet letters help children to visualize the task of writing. They do this by dropping marbles in the direction of the strokes made when writing. This helps the child to visualize the movement.

### 2. PRACTICING WITH MOTIVATION



After visualizing the letters, children can practice creating the movements by drawing them in sensory sand, or in foods that they can eat! This created a fun experience and builds motivation and focus.

### 3. FINE TUNING THE SKILL



After visualizing an practicing with unique and fun techniques, they may be ready to practice writing on paper! This can be further supported with a variety of tools of tools like grips and weighted pencils.