



CFHD Occupational Therapy

Sensory Differences and Occupational Performance

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What do Occupational Therapists do?

- Focus on occupation.
- See beyond the diagnosis and limitations to focus on hopes and aspirations.
- Assess though activity to create practical, realistic and personal goals focused on activity to improve everyday living.



How we work with children?

SELF-CARE

Sleep
Getting Dressed
Eating and Drinking
Washing and Grooming
Using the Toilet
Brushing teeth
Organisation

Focus on Occupational Performance

PRODUCTIVITY

Recording Learning
(handwriting)

Fine motor skills (Scissor skills)

Engaging in P.E.

Organisational & planning skills

Concentration & attention

LEISURE

Play Hobbies Interests Sports

Devised from the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) (Polatajko, Townsend, & Craik, 2007)



Referral Criteria

CFHD Occupational Therapy can offer advice when a child is experiencing a cluster of 2 or more difficulties with Occupational Performance in everyday living skills (such as **Self-care**: dressing, washing, eating, toileting; **Productivity:** fine motor skills, schoolwork and accessing play and Leisure), which are relative to the level that would be expected for a child of their developmental age.



What are Sensory Differences?

Visual: Information that is seen.

Auditory: Information that is heard.

Oral: Smell.

Gustatory: Taste.

Tactile: Information processed through touch.

Proprioception: Information from the muscles and

joints.

Vestibular: Information in relation to head position and movement.

Interoception: awareness of the physiological processes within the body; such as thirst, hunger, heartbeat, temperature, pain.





Bundy and Lane's (2020) schematic representation of Sensory Integration

	Autonomic Li	imbic Re	ticul	ar Thalamu	IS	Cerebellum	Basal G	anglia Cortex	\
Occupational Engagement Challenges	Behavioral consequences	Indicators of poor sensory modulation		Inadequate CNS integration and processing of sensation		Indicators of poor sensory integration and praxis		Behavioral consequences	
	Sensory- related challenges with attention, regulation, affect, activity Withdrawal from, and avoidance of, sensory experiences Sensory seeking Poor self- efficacy, self-esteem	Over- responsivity • Aversive and defensive reactions Under- responsivity • Poor registration	Sensory reactivity	 ✓ Visual ✓ Vestibular ✓ Proprioception ✓ Tactile ✓ [Interoception] ✓ Auditory ✓ Olfactory ✓ Gustatory 	Sensory perception	Poor postural-ocular control Poor sensory discrimination Tactile Proprioception Vestibular Visual Auditory Poor body scheme	VBIS Somato- dyspraxia	Poor self- efficacy, self-esteem Clowning Avoidance of engagement in motor activities Poor gross, fine, and visual motor coordination Poor organization Sensory seeking	Occupational Engagement Challenges



CFHD OT Graduated Response

Getting Advice:

- Information via the CFHD website or other resources.
- Access to the Sensory Booklet and observation sheets.

Getting Help:

- A telephone consultation with targeted strategies.
- Access to an online workshop and plan.

Getting More Help:

- Access to a face-to-face clinic assessment.
- Further assessment available based on need.

Getting Risk Support:

Assessments for home safety and restrictive practices.



THRIVE Framework for system change (Wolpert et. al, 2019)



Supporting children with sensory differences within school

Play

The school environment

Sensory
experiences
that impact the
day

Sleep

Morning routine

Educational activities

Journey to school & navigating the school



Other support for children who struggle at the end of the school day

Sleep: Advice can be sought from a self-referral to the school nursing team (public health nursing), advice can be sought via Cerebra https://cerebra.org.uk/get-advice-support/sleep-advice-service/, support from the Learning Disability team.

Morning Routine: Support via the Children's Centre for parenting support https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/how-we-can-help/our-local-services/, Early Help.

Other sensory informed programmes:

- Alert Programme.
- Zones of Regulation.
- Information on the ASI website or Sensory Education Network.
- Complete a Sensory Audit for Schools (an example can be found at https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-12/SEND-Sensory-audit-for-schools-and-classrooms.pdf).

Emotional Regulation support: Mental Health Support Teams, Parental Minds resources https://www.parentalminds.org.uk/category/all-resources/



How to make a referral to Occupational Therapy

- Graduated response documents for each pathway.
- Download the request for service from our website:
 https://childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk/occupational-therapy/referrals/
- Please identify clearly any difficulties with Occupational Performance the child may have.
- Where there are sensory differences, please identify how these impact upon Occupational Performance.
- If we need further information, we may send you an OT specific Information Gathering Form.



References:

Bundy, A. C., & Lane, S. J. (2020). Sensory Integration: Theory and Practice (Vol. 3rd). Philadelphia:F.A. Davis.

Polatajko, H.J., Townsend, E.A. & Craik, J. (2007). Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E). In *Enabling Occupation II: Advancing an Occupational Therapy Vision of Health, Well-being, & Justice through Occupation*. E.A. Townsend & H.J. Polatajko, Eds. Ottawa, ON: CAOT Publications ACE. 22-36.

Wolpert, M., Harris, R., Hodges, S., Fuggle, P., James, R., Wiener, A., Munk, S. (2019). *THRIVE Framework for system change*. London: CAMHS Press.

