



WHEN AND WHY YOUR CHILD MIGHT BENEFIT FROM OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

WHO IS A PAEDIATRIC OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST (OT)?

- ✓ A paediatric Occupational Therapist (OT) is a professional who helps children develop important life skills, like dressing, using the toilet, playing, going to school, making friends and anything else they need to do in their daily lives.
- ✓ Paediatric OTs often work with kids who have Autism, ADHD, intellectual disabilities, developmental delays, cerebral palsy, sensory processing difficulties and other conditions.

HOW DO THEY HELP?

- ✓ **Daily tasks** - like getting dressed, using the toilet, eating, or playing. OTs look at what's making these hard for the child and find ways to encourage independence like dressing, eating, washing, and brushing their teeth.
- ✓ **Motor skills** - helping with fine motor skills (like holding a pencil or doing up buttons) and gross motor skills (like sitting, crawling, climbing and walking).
- ✓ **Support for disabilities** - for children with specific conditions, OTs help make everyday life more accessible. This could include using wheelchairs, assistive equipment, or making spaces safer with things like ramps.
- ✓ **Sensory needs** - helping kids who are sensitive to noise, light, touch, or movement by looking at meeting their specific sensory needs.
- ✓ **Social and emotional skills** - supporting children to learn to regulate their emotions, build friendships, and take part in group activities at home, school, or in the community.

AREAS THEY WORK ON

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|------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| ✓ Thinking | ✓ Sensory processing | ✓ Gross motor skills | ✓ Behaviour |
| ✓ Emotions | ✓ Social interactions | ✓ Fine motor skills | ✓ Play |

BEFORE GOING TO AN OT

- 1 Learn why your child might need an Occupational Therapist. Find out what goals your child wants to work on and how the OT can help.
 - 2 Book an appointment with the OT (seek help from your GP/ nurse). Check if the appointment is in person or via telehealth.
 - 3 Check the waitlist - how long you need to wait for the appointment.
 - 4 While you wait, write down any concerns, tasks your child struggles with, support they already get, and any reports from other professionals.
 - 5 Check the cost of your appointment and see if you can get help with the payment through Medicare, private health insurance, or NDIS.
 - 6 Find out where your Occupational Therapist is located - like a hospital, clinic, or if they can visit your home or your child's school.
 - 7 Check your OT is registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).
- ✓ You don't need a referral to see an Occupational Therapist, but your GP or health nurse can help if you're worried about your child's health or development.
- ✓ You could also go to Occupational Therapy Australia – [Find an OT](#).

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The Children's Health and Wellbeing Local is jointly funded by the Victorian Government and the Australian Government through the Head to Health Kids Initiative.