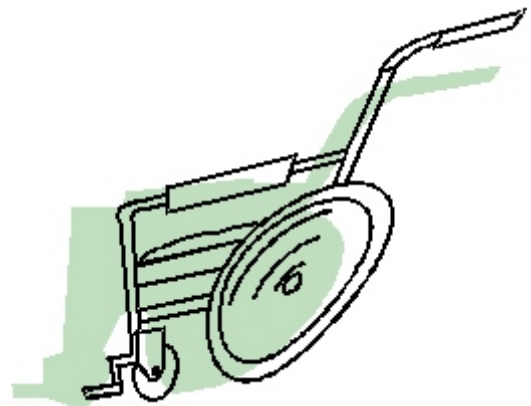
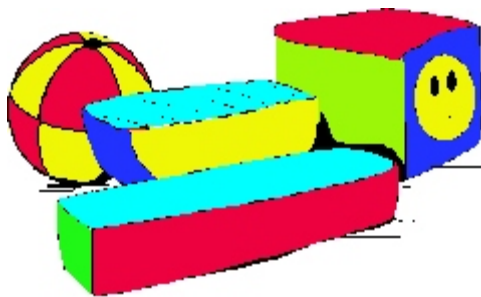




# ***Guide to School Based Physical Therapy***



***Your Therapy Source***

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# Important Information

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## Student Information

<b>Student's Name:</b>	
<b>Parents/Guardian Name:</b>	
<b>DOB of Student:</b>	
<b>Home Phone #:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	

## School Information

<b>Name of School:</b>	
<b>Teacher:</b>	
<b>Teacher's Assistant:</b>	
<b>School Phone #:</b>	

## Physical Therapy Information

<b>Physical Therapist:</b>	
<b>P.T. Phone #:</b>	
<b>P.T. e-mail:</b>	
<b>Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA):</b>	
<b>PTA Phone #:</b>	
<b>PTA e-mail:</b>	

## Medical Information

<b>Doctor's Name</b>	
<b>Phone #:</b>	
<b>Medical Alerts:</b>	

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# Frequently Asked Questions About Physical Therapy

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## *What is school based physical therapy (PT)?*

Physical therapy in the school is a related service that addresses functional skills in the educational environment such as:

- Walking or wheelchair skills
- Stair climbing
- Balance
- Coordination
- Sensory Awareness
- Self care skills
- Large motor skills
- Positioning
- Assistive technology



## *Why do children receive physical therapy in school?*

In 1975, Public Law 94-142 was passed which requires that all school aged children with a disability are entitled to special education and related services at no cost to the parents. Related services include occupational therapy, speech therapy, physical therapy and more.

In 1990, Congress reauthorized Public Law 94-142 and renamed it the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA.

## ***What is the difference between school based physical therapy and medically based physical therapy?***

School based physical therapy is provided when a student needs therapy services to function in an educational environment. School based physical therapy is required by federal and state laws. It is provided at no cost to the parents. Much like how a school nurse only addresses a student's medical needs at school, school based physical therapy only works on skills necessary for a student to function at school.

Medically based physical therapy focuses on a child's medical needs. This type of physical therapy is usually recommended by a doctor and is provided in a clinic, hospital or at home. Medically based physical therapy is usually paid for by insurance companies or Medicaid.

## ***What are some signs that would indicate that physical therapy may be necessary for a student?***

There are many signs that would indicate the necessity of physical therapy services for a student. Listed here are several, but not all, examples of what a student may have difficulties with:

- negotiating the school - walking patterns, stair climbing, opening/closing doors, up/down ramps, wheelchair skills, etc.
- sensory processing - dislikes touching different objects, craves movement, fearful of movement, poor body awareness, etc.
- gross motor skills (large motor skills) - jumping, skipping, hopping, etc.
- posture - does not sit properly, slumps on desk frequently, etc.
- self care skills - transferring on/off toilet, getting backpack on/off, etc.
- balance skills - falls frequently, stumbles when walking, etc.
- coordination skills - difficulties throwing, catching and kicking, etc.
- transition skills - on/off school bus, walking in classroom line, going from sitting to standing, etc.





## ***How is it determined if a student qualifies for physical therapy services?***

Each school district follows different steps to determine eligibility for school based physical therapy.

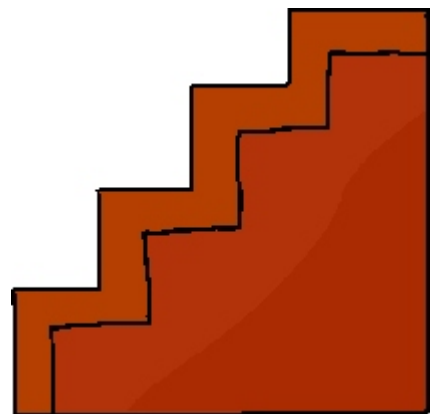
In general, once it is determined that the student may require physical therapy services, a physical therapy screening or evaluation would be completed. After the physical therapy evaluation is done, the results are discussed with the members of the special education team which includes the parents. If the team decides that the student would benefit from school based physical therapy, it will determine, along with the physical therapist, how often the student will receive services.

## ***Once it is determined that the student will receive physical therapy, what will happen next?***

Again, each school district follows different steps. In general though, physical therapy services will be delivered either on an individual or group basis. It can be provided as a direct service where the therapist has direct, face to face contact with the student. Physical therapy may also be offered as an indirect service where the therapist may provide instruction to other staff members or parents who interact with the student. It may be given on a daily, weekly or monthly schedule. Physical therapy services may be provided in: the classroom, a therapy room, playground, cafeteria, etc.

## ***What is the difference between a physical therapist and a physical therapy assistant?***

The physical therapist administers evaluations and provides physical therapy treatment sessions. A physical therapy assistant works under the supervision of the physical therapist and can not perform evaluations.



## ***What type of activities may occur during an physical therapy session?***

Listed here are some, but not all, examples of what may occur during an physical therapy session.

- strengthening exercises for the body
- stretching exercises
- instruction and practice of functional skills such as stair climbing, carrying books or backpack, open/close doors, etc.
- walking activities in the classroom, hallway, cafeteria, gym class, etc.
- assessment/ modification of adaptive equipment such as classroom desks and chairs, bathroom modifications, positioning equipment, etc.
- activities to improve the large motor skills necessary for physical education or recess
- coordination activities
- activities to improve sensory processing such as obstacle courses, swinging, jumping, etc.
- instruction and practice of wheelchair use
- activities to improve balance
- instruction to other staff that works with the student



## ***How will an physical therapist decide if a student continues to need services?***

Most physical therapists will complete progress reports during the school year in addition to an annual assessment to determine if a student continues to require school based physical therapy.

When a student makes progress, the amount of physical therapy that the student receives may be decreased. When a student reaches all of his/her physical therapy goals or the student has reached his/her highest expected functional level, physical therapy is usually discontinued.

## ***Is there anything that parents or teachers can do to help a student who receives physical therapy?***

Yes, you can assist the child who receives physical therapy in many ways such as:

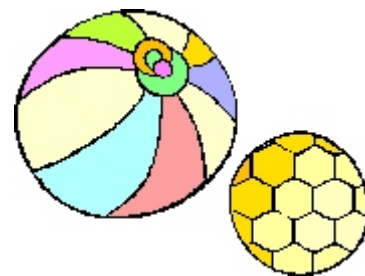
- communicate often with the therapist - ask any questions you may have regarding the student's treatment and progress
- ask the physical therapist for activities that can be carried out at home or in the classroom that will help support the child
- report your concerns regarding the child's functional skills at home and in the classroom to the physical therapist



## ***What is the difference between school based physical therapy and school based occupational therapy?***

Some of the areas addressed by physical and occupational therapists overlap. In general, physical therapists focus on:

- walking or wheelchair skills
- stair climbing
- playground skills
- balance
- coordination
- posture
- large motor skills for gym class and recess



Occupational therapists focus on:

- hand skills (handwriting, using small objects, etc.)
- self care (shoe tying, coat on/off, etc.)
- sensory skills
- organizational skills
- visual skills
- oral motor skills (eating and drinking)

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## **If you would like more information on physical therapy, contact the following resources.**

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American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)  
1111 North Fairfax Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-1488  
800-999-APTA  
[www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org)

US Department of Education  
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services  
400 Maryland Ave, SW  
Washington, DC 20202  
800-USA-LEARN  
[www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html)

**Contact your school's special education department or physical therapist with any questions.**





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# PHYSICAL THERAPY SERVICES

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

According to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for

\_\_\_\_\_, physical therapy services  
Student's Name

will be provided \_\_\_\_\_.  
Frequency and duration

**Check the appropriate box for this student:**

- Student does not require prescription for physical therapy.
- Student has prescription for physical therapy.
- Student needs to get prescription from doctor for physical therapy.

Should you have any questions regarding the amount or length of physical therapy services please contact the physical therapist.

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# GOALS FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal #1:**

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**Goal #2:**

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**Goal #3:**

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**Goal #4:**

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# PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRESS REPORT

*Dear Parent/ Guardian,*

*Please take the time to review the following physical therapy progress report on your child. One of the primary goals of the physical therapy department is to keep parents and guardians informed as to their child's progress towards their physical therapy goals. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact us anytime.*

<b>TREATMENT INTERVENTIONS</b>	Date ____	Date ____	Date ____	Date ____	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Strengthening exercises</b>					
<b>Range of motion (stretching)</b>					
<b>Walking activities</b>					
<b>Stair climbing skills</b>					
<b>Coordination skills</b>					
<b>Large motor skills</b>					
<b>Balance skills</b>					
<b>Ball skills</b>					
<b>Playground skills</b>					
<b>Postural exercises</b>					
<b>Adaptive equipment</b>					
<b>Staff instruction</b>					
<b>Other:</b>					

**KEY: D = decline noted; N = no progress noted; M = minimal progress noted; S = significant progress noted; A = goal achieved; N/A = not applicable**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of PT/ PTA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervising PT





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# PARENT/TEACHER GLOSSARY FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY TERMS

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**Adaptive Equipment:** Modified items such as classroom chairs, tables, feeding utensils, etc. to assist a student with a disability.

**Balance:** When the body is in a stable position.

**Coordination:** Skillful interaction of muscles working together to make purposeful movements.

**Duration:** Length of session or service.

**Developmental sequence:** Order of skills learned from birth (lying on back) to walking such as rolling, sitting, crawling, etc.

**Endurance:** The ability to sustain an activity for a certain period of time.

**Equilibrium:** Sensory system located within the inner ear that provides information regarding where the head is.

**Evaluation:** A complete assessment of a student's abilities in a certain area.

**Frequency:** Amount of sessions per day, week or month.

**Gait:** Walking pattern.

**Gross motor skills:** Skills that utilize the large muscles of the body such as the head, arms, legs and trunk. Examples of gross motor skills are crawling, walking, jumping, skipping, etc.

**High muscle tone:** An increased amount of tightness or tension in a resting muscle, also know as hypertonicity.

**Hypertonicity:** An increased amount of tightness or tension in a resting muscle, also known as high muscle tone.

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# PARENT/ TEACHER GLOSSARY FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY TERMS

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**Hypotonicity:** A decreased amount of tension or floppiness in a resting muscle, also known as low muscle tone.

**Low muscle tone:** A decreased amount of tension or floppiness in a resting muscle, also known as hypotonicity.

**Motor Planning:** The mind and body working together to complete a motor task.

**Muscle strength:** The total amount of pressure a muscle can exert.

**Muscle tone:** Amount of tension in muscles while at rest.

**Physical Therapy (PT):** Evaluation and treatment of students who require assistance with some of the following skills - posture, muscle strength, balance, coordination, negotiating the educational environment (i.e. walking, stair climbing, wheelchair skills, etc.) and gross motor (skills performed by the large muscles of the body). Physical therapy can be provided in a group or individualized setting.

**Range of motion:** Amount of flexibility in a joint.

**Screening:** A quick overview of a student's skills to determine if a full evaluation is necessary.

**Sensory processing:** The ability to organize external and internal information that the body receives from touching, hearing, seeing and motion.

**Transfer training:** Learning and practicing skills that require moving from one position to another position such as sitting to standing, classroom chair to wheelchair, etc.

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**To order booklets visit:**

**[www.YourTherapySource.com](http://www.YourTherapySource.com)**

**Online resource for school based therapy and special needs  
publications**

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**This booklet is for informational purposes only. Consult the school district and physical therapist regarding specific questions about physical therapy evaluations, services and procedures. This booklet may not be reproduced in any format.**