

Occupational Therapy (OT)

An Occupational Therapist provides support to children, young people and adults whose health or disability makes it hard for them to do the things they would like to do. OT's can identify strengths and difficulties, help with solutions and help individuals participate in activities.

Some of the areas Occupational Therapists can assist with:

- **Gross Motor Skills**
 - ↳ Movements and actions that use larger muscle groups and body parts, this includes: running, jumping, skipping, midline crossing, muscle tone, maintaining good posture and balance.
- **Fine Motor Skills**
 - ↳ Movements and actions that use smaller muscles and body parts and often require precision. This includes: holding a pen/pencil, using scissors or cutlery, brushing teeth, and using buttons and zippers.
- **Sensory Processing**
 - ↳ How we receive and process information from our environment and react to this information, including sights, sounds, smell, taste and touch. For some people, the way their body responds to sensory information can provide challenges in their concentration, focus, ability to engage in tasks and develop meaningful relationships.
- **Social Skills**
 - ↳ Occupational Therapists target self-regulation skills to better manage social situations. This involves learning about their emotions, meeting sensory needs and learning rules like 'turn-taking'.
- **Daily Living and Functional Life Skills**
 - ↳ The skills we utilise to physically care for ourselves, this includes activities like cooking and feeding ourselves, dressing, toileting and maintaining our personal hygiene. These are also the skills we utilise to live independently and access our community, like cleaning our homes, shopping for food, money handling and transport.
- **Sleep**
 - ↳ Identifying barriers and challenges to maintaining healthy sleep and developing different strategies and routines and trialing these to increase our sleep health.
- **Leisure or Play Skills**
 - ↳ Occupational Therapists recognise the importance of ALL kinds of meaningful activity, including leisure and play. Often this is how we learn best! We can work on many of the above goals through engaging in fun and motivating activities.

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Who can access Occupational Therapy?

Occupational Therapy can be effective in working with individuals of all ages.

What does OT at Hessel Group look like?

Our OT's strive to assist individuals to live an independent and meaningful life. We work with the clients and family to improve confidence, help maintain, regain or improve independence by using different techniques, changing your environment and using new equipment.

The first steps our OT's will take when starting therapy is to gather information about your needs and complete an individual assessment. This will assist in developing a personalised therapy plan that best meets your needs of the individual and works towards your goals.

Assessments help us to:

- Identify any strengths and areas the individual finds challenging
- What factors might be contributing to these challenges and how to minimise these
- Develop an individualised therapy plan to address these challenges and build skills
- Introduce and implement strategies with the individual and their support network

We then provide therapy and consultation around:

- Disability issues, including Autism Spectrum Disorder and Cerebral Palsy
- Mental health issues
- Activities of daily living, such as sleeping, dressing and toileting
- Fine motor skills, including coordination and strength
- Low muscle tone
- Gross motor skills and motor planning
- Participation in activities and everyday routines
- Sensory regulation
- Personal care issues
- Behavioural issues
- Relationship and attachment difficulties
- Mealtime management
- Auditory processing
- Social and play skills
- Sensory processing and praxis
- Attention and concentration
- Self-regulation and alertness
- Family issues
- Equipment prescriptions
- Home modifications
- School readiness skills and learning difficulties
- Development (infancy through to adulthood)

How long are sessions?

Therapy sessions are typically 1 hour in duration and can occur in our clinic, the client's home, educational facility or workplace. Sessions can occur as frequently as required, but in most cases, this is either weekly or fortnightly.