

Special points of interest:

- School-based physical therapists use therapeutic activities that may improve a student's ability to physically access his/her educational environment.
- Finding an appropriate activity involving physical movement can be challenging at times.



October is Physical Therapy Month

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Did you know that Physical Therapists work in schools?

The role of a school-based physical therapist is to provide a support service to the student's educational program and maximize function and independence in the school setting. School-based physical therapists use therapeutic activities that may improve a student's ability to physically access his/her educational environment.

School based physical therapists:

1. Use a comprehensive approach to evaluate and assess a child's needs in his/her educational environment.
2. Collaborate with team members, including students, parents, teachers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical education teachers, psychologists, social workers, and learning consultants.
3. Provide treatment, program consultation, and environmental modifications for students with disabilities to improve performance within the educational environment

Some of the areas school-based physical therapists assess and address include the following:

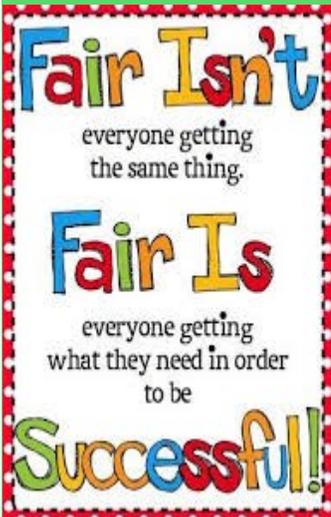
- Postural control
- Balance
- Strength and stability
- Motor control and coordination
- Endurance
- Functional mobility and accessibility within the educational environment
- Gross motor skills

As school therapists, we are often asked by parents what they can do for their child with regards to physical activities outside of the school setting. Finding an appropriate activity involving physical movement can be challenging at times.

Picking the most appropriate activity for your child:

Many people tend to gravitate toward group sports. While group sports provide great opportunities for socialization and teamwork, they are often a challenge for children who have decreased attention, difficulty understanding his/her role within a team, and gross motor delays. Group sports often require increased coordination, attention, and agility.

Examples: baseball, soccer, basketball, football, cheerleading, and lacrosse



Individualized sports that focus on improving the individual may be a better fit for some children. Individualized sports allow a child to still be part of a team at times, while improving his/her skills at their own pace. The examples listed below often improve a child's core strength, coordination, balance, and attention.

Examples: *karate, gymnastics, swimming, and yoga*

Lastly, some students may feel more comfortable participating in an adaptive program with peers that function at a similar level. Adaptive programs often have an instructor that will modify sports to accommodate for a child's specific needs or provide a peer to assist the child with the sport.

Examples:

Sports Unity Program (a free program through Marlton Recreation Council that offers soccer, street hockey, baseball, basketball, football, cheerleading, and track)

TOPSoccer (soccer in an inclusive environment)

Hippotherapy (therapeutic horseback riding)

**Please note that the activities listed are not sponsored by the Westampton School District and are to be used as a resource only.*

Some kids may feel more confident joining an individual sport or adaptive sport prior to participation in a group sport. This may allow them exposure to the sport and individualized practice to work on skills needed for other sports. You may want to try different sports and/or programs in order to find the best fit for your child. No matter what you choose, remember, the most important goal is for your child to feel successful and have fun!

Upcoming Events:

October 8, 2019:

RV Resource Fair

October 14, 2019:

School Closed—Columbus Day

October 31, 2019

Shortened Day

Happy Halloween!

Next Issue:

November 5, 2019

