



Ask OTIS: OT Intervention Plans for School-Based Practitioners

Q: When is it appropriate to have an OT intervention plan? If occupational therapy goals are included in a child's IEP, do I still need an OT intervention plan? If so, what should the intervention plan include?

The *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (OTPF)* describes the development of an intervention plan as one of the three substeps of the entire intervention process. The *OTPF* defines an intervention plan as "a plan that is developed based on the results of the evaluation process and describes selected occupational therapy approaches and types of interventions to reach the client's identified targeted outcomes." The intervention plan is not a student's IEP goals and objectives, but how OT services are going to assist a student in reaching his or her goals and objectives. The *OTPF* also provides the essential elements of an intervention plan. These include: 1) objective and measurable goals with a time frame, 2) occupational therapy intervention approach or approaches based on theory and evidence, and 3) mechanisms for service delivery (see *OTPF* p. 618).

Several other documents reference the need for therapists to develop intervention plans as a part of their professional documentation. The AOTA's *Guidelines for Documentation of Occupational Therapy* (2003) defines and describes intervention plans as a necessary component of professional documentation used in occupational therapy. WAC 246-847-170 (7) states that "occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants shall accurately record information and report information as required by facility standards and state and federal laws." Principle 4 of the NBCOT's *Certificant Code of Conduct* states that "Certificants shall comply with the laws, regulations, and standards governing professional practice in the jurisdictions where they provide occupational therapy services." Lastly, standard 5 of the AOTA's *Standards of Practice for Occupational Therapy* (1998) speaks entirely to intervention plans.

Although the use of intervention plans in school-based practice has been underutilized, they are none-the-less a required and critical tool for linking evaluation and practice.

References:

AOTA (2002). Occupational therapy practice framework: domain and process. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 56, 609–639.

AOTA (1998). Standards of Practice. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 52, 866-869

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OTIS (Occupational Therapists In Schools) is a standing committee for the Washington Occupational Therapy Association (WOTA) that was set up to help support therapists in school-based practice.