

Role of Occupational Therapy in Schools

Occupational therapy practitioners support a child's participation in activities throughout the school day, such as completing classroom assignments, socializing with peers during recess time, and eating in the cafeteria.

They are experts in:

- Activity and environmental analysis and modifications
- Offering assistive technology to increase participation
- Addressing sensory needs that impact self-regulation and learning
- Addressing fine motor skills related to academic participation
- Increasing independence in daily living skills needed for school and life transitions



For more information, contact:

Your occupational therapy practitioner

Name

E-mail address

AOTA® The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.
www.aota.org

References

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2007). *FAQ on Response to Intervention*. Retrieved September 15, 2011, from <http://www.aota.org/practitioners/practiceareas/pediatrics/faq/faq-response-to-intervention.aspx?ft=.pdf>

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2008). *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain & Process 2nd Edition*. Retrieved on September 15, 2011, from <http://www.aota.org/practitioners/official/guidelines/41089.aspx>

Clark, G. F., Brouwer, A., Schmidt, C., & Alexander, M. (2008). Response to Intervention (RtI) Model: Using the print tool to develop a collaborative plan. *OT Practice*, 13(14), 9–13.

For More Information:

IDEA Partnership RtI Collection
www.ideapartnership.org/

National Center on RtI
www.rti4success.org/

RtI Action Network
www.rtinetwork.org

Occupational Therapy

Response to Intervention



Occupational therapy practitioners support academic achievement and social participation of ALL students.

Occupational therapy practitioners provide service as a collaborative member of the team to students and on behalf of students through individual, group, whole classroom, and/or school-wide initiatives.

Response to Intervention (RtI) is:

“... a multi-tiered approach to **general education** that focuses on helping *all* students, identifies students who are at risk for academic or behavioral concerns, and provides targeted instruction and intervention strategies for students whose rate of progress is behind the classroom norm” (Clark, Brouwer, Schmidt, & Alexander, 2008, p. 9).

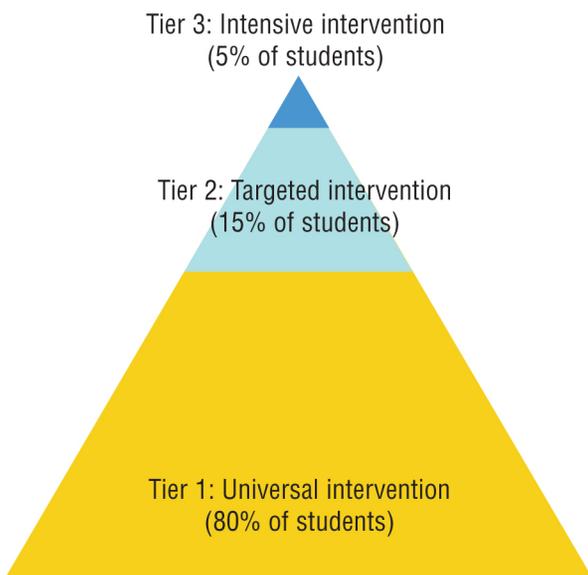


Tiered Interventions:

- Tier 1:** Universal screenings; inclusive practices such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Tier 2:** Targeted strategies recommended for educators to implement in small groups. Progress Monitoring
- Tier 3:** More intensive interventions and possible referral to special education

Examples of Occupational Therapy Support Under RtI:

- Tier 1**
 - Provide teacher and parent in-services about sensory processes that impact learning and behavior.
 - Support school-wide anti-bullying initiatives.
 - Offer classroom ergonomic strategies for optimal learning.
- Tier 2**
 - Recommend adaptive tools and strategies to increase classwork participation in small groups
 - Adapt playground equipment and activities to support specific children’s social play and participation.
- Tier 3**
 - Offer an additional visual-motor strategy to support an intensive instructional intervention for a struggling learner.
 - Administer additional assessments to identify barriers to learning for struggling students.



Source: IDEA Partnership Project (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc. 2006).

Recommended next steps:

- Check your state OT practice act for language about prevention and promotion activities.
- Share the AOTA resources:
 - **FAQ on RtI**
<http://www.aota.org/Practitioners/PracticeAreas/Pediatrics/Browse/School/RtI/FAQ-Response-to-Intervention.aspx?FT=.pdf>
 - **FAQ for educators—OT Helping All Students**
<http://www.aota.org/Practitioners/PracticeAreas/Pediatrics/Browse/School/RtI/FAQ.aspx?FT=.pdf>
 - **Transforming Caseload to Workload**
<http://www.aota.org/Practitioners/PracticeAreas/Pediatrics/Browse/School/RtI/38519.aspx?FT=.pdf>
 - **OT and Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**
<http://www.aota.org/Practitioners/PracticeAreas/Pediatrics/Browse/School/RtI/UDL.aspx?FT=.pdf>
 - **FAQ on School Mental Health**
<http://www.aota.org/Practitioners/PracticeAreas/Pediatrics/Browse/School/RtI/FAQSchoolMH.aspx?FT=.pdf>
 - **Fact Sheet on School Mental Health**
<http://www.aota.org/Practitioners/PracticeAreas/Pediatrics/Browse/School/RtI/School-MH.aspx?FT=.pdf>
- Review the RtI Collection from the IDEA Partnership www.ideapartnership.org.
- Include an OT in a curriculum committee or a building-level team to share expertise.
- Collaborate in a behavioral support team.
- Other:

AOTA CEonCD™

Response to Intervention (RtI) for At Risk Learners, provides an overview of core components of RtI, the role of occupational therapists at each tier, and case studies illustrating contributions by occupational therapists.
Earn .2 AOTA CEU (2 NBCOT PDUs/2 contact hours)
<http://store.aota.org/view/?SKU=4876>