

Children's Therapy and Family Resource Centre

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Physiotherapy for School-Aged Children

A Pediatric Physiotherapist works with children and adolescents to help them move to the best of their ability. Children learn about themselves and their environment through movement, and optimal physical development is vital for physical and mental growth, general health, and overall well being.



The goal of Physiotherapy for school aged children is to help the child obtain and maintain their highest level of functional independence at school, home, and the community.

Who Can Benefit?

There are many childhood conditions that can affect a child's physical abilities. These conditions can be congenital or acquired, short or long term, severe or minor. They may include:

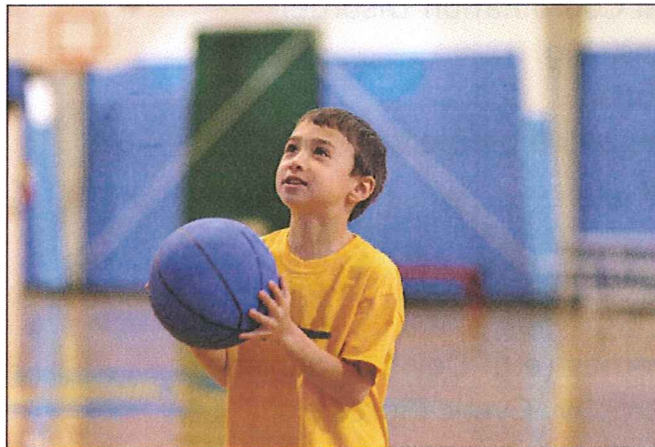
- Delayed Motor Development
- Neurological Conditions, e.g.
 - Cerebral Palsy, Spina Bifida, Brain Injury
 - Prematurity
 - Brachial Plexus Injury
 - Developmental Coordination Disorder
- Orthopedic Conditions, e.g.
 - Spinal Conditions
 - Knee, foot, and ankle problems
 - Post-operative
 - Amputations
 - Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Genetic Conditions, e.g.
 - Various syndromes (e.g. Down Syndrome)
 - Muscular Dystrophy, Cystic Fibrosis

How Can Physiotherapy Help?

Physiotherapists work with children and their families as well as with schools and community partners to restore and improve physical ability, prevent further disability, progress children toward targeted outcomes, promote integration, and build the capacity of families, schools, and communities to support the child.

What Can Physiotherapists Do with School-Aged Children?

- Promote inclusion within the school environment by recommending techniques and strategies that can be used within the child's daily routines
- Educate parents and school staff about the physical strengths and challenges of a specific child, and the physical demands of the environment
- Help children develop physical skills expected for their age by providing families and/or school staff with strategies and/or exercises
- Prescribe and adapt equipment to enhance mobility and optimal positioning such as wheelchairs, walkers, standing frames, classroom seating, etc
- Support families and schools in identifying and accessing community resources
- Provide in-service instruction to enhance teacher and support worker capacity
- Aid in the development of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Work with students, families, and teachers to develop transition plans into new schools and post-secondary programs
- Ensure accessibility for the child to all areas of the school environment
- Consult with community recreational facilities to develop inclusive programs
- Help children develop skills expected for their age to participate in gym, play, and recreation programs



“Helping Children Move”