

GETTING NEEDED SUPPORTS FOR YOUR CHILD

Parenting a child with Down Syndrome Is just like parenting a child without Down Syndrome. This means that children are children and all parents work to make the best decisions for their child. Young children with Down Syndrome may benefit from a variety of supports that in the educational world are referred to as “Related Services”. Related services can mean speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy and even behavioral supports. All of these services will require an evaluation from a trained professional who can help parents determine if such supports will be needed by an individual child. This section contains some great information that will get a parent started toward understanding each of these areas.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Physical therapy addresses motor skills and range of motion in the joints. Physical therapy requires a referral from a medical doctor who believes there is a need for such support. An evaluation is then done by a licensed physical therapist who will determine goals which can be achieved through physical therapy.

The links below will help a parent to understand some aspects of physical activity in young children.

***What is “W” Sitting?**

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/4ed150a5eff1d81e4b86f8c7ce120fc3?AccessKeyId=6052D933275682735349&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Occupational therapy (OT) works with a child’s fine motor skills such as writing, cutting and using the hands to engage with toys. Occupational therapy requires that an evaluation be done by a licensed occupational therapist. They will identify goals that can be worked on during OT sessions.

Here are some activities that parents can use at home to work on some of these skills with their child.

Fine Motor Skills

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/df0fb54269d741ea6c9b9796f6d64d89?AccessKeyId=6052D933275682735349&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

The Vertical Surface and Fine Motor Development

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/40c0f97c15ab1b77f8810cdd23deec8?AccessKeyId=6052D933275682735349&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

Scissor Skills

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/df0fb54269d741ea6c9b9796f6d64d89?AccessKeyId=6052D933275682735349&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

SPEECH THERAPY

Speech typically develops later than expected in children with Down Syndrome. Speech therapists can begin working with a child and their parents during the birth to three year timeframe. Speech therapy requires an evaluation be completed by a licensed speech-language pathologist.

Here are some resources for parents that can support understanding of the process of learning language and using it to communicate.

Language Development in Children with Down Syndrome – Reasons for Optimism

<https://library.down-syndrome.org/en-us/research-practice/01/1/language-development-down-syndrome-reasons-optimism>

Speech and Language Resource Guide for Parents of Young Children with Down Syndrome

<https://www.ndscenter.org/programs-resources/speech-and-language/>

SUPPORT WITH BEHAVIORAL DIFFICULTIES

All parents struggle with how to support their child behaving appropriately in different settings. Children who experience difficulty with speech, language and communication may also experience behavioral difficulties. Not being able to express yourself can be very frustrating.

Parents will always work to develop their own skills at redirecting misbehavior and teaching their child how to meet the behavioral expectations of different situations. Here are some great resources to get a parent started.

Backpack Connection Series <http://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Implementation/family.html>

Stubborn is as Stubborn Does

http://dsagsl.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Stubborn_Is1.doc

Behavior and Down Syndrome: A Practical Guide for Parents

<http://dsagsl.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Behavior-Guide-for-Down-Syndrome.pdf>

