



Jennie Lewin Kreger, OTR/L

CHILDREN WITH DYSGRAPHIA

And the Role of Occupational Therapy

Dysgraphia is the difficulty in the production of written language related to the mechanics of handwriting. Studies have shown that dysgraphia is most commonly manifested as problems with legibility and slow writing speed. Children with dysgraphia often require more time to complete handwriting assignments, erase more often, complain about fatigue or hand pain, and are often unwilling to write and do homework assignments.

What is the purpose of occupational therapy for children with dysgraphia?

At Gold Coast Pediatric Therapy, occupational therapy focuses on your child's participation in their "occupations," or purposeful activities, throughout the day. Handwriting is a central occupation of school-age children, and is often used as a measure by the school system to see how your child is learning and progressing.

Occupational therapy at Gold Coast Pediatric Therapy evaluates and addresses the underlying components that support your child's handwriting skills, such as muscle strength, endurance, coordination and motor control. Occupational therapy also addresses a broad range of issues in addition to the development of handwriting skills, such as proper computer use, proper backpack use and behavioral issues.

What does an occupational therapist do for children with dysgraphia?

- Evaluate your child's ability to complete age-appropriate tasks. Evaluations include clinical observation, standardized testing and a parental interview.
- Demonstrate proper posture while writing to support improved use of the arms, hands, head and eyes.
- Assess your child's level of physical strength and endurance.
- Analyze your child's fine motor skills, such as their ability to hold and use a pencil.
- Determine your child's eye-hand coordination skills, which affect their ability to write letters and shapes.
- Develop handwriting curriculums in collaboration with teachers and parents.
- Educate parents on activities to complete at home to support the development of handwriting skills.



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What can parents and families do to help children with dysgraphia?

- Encourage your child to participate in sports and games that promote coordination, strengthening and endurance, such as swimming, martial arts and playing ball.
- Teach your child the appropriate way to use silverware during meals to help develop hand grip.
- Promote handwritten letters to grandparents, friends and teachers. Put your child in charge of the day's "to-do" list. Have your child keep a journal. Encourage writing outside of school as well as in homework assignments.

How can I find occupational therapy for my child?

Gold Coast Pediatric Therapy is a premier private practice in central Boca Raton offering pediatric occupational therapy services. Jennie Lewin Kreger, the founding therapist, has over ten years of experience in pediatrics and occupational therapy. Her work has been published in peer-reviewed journals and textbooks, and she has traveled the world presenting to physicians and therapists.

Occupational therapy is a skilled health, rehabilitation and education service covered by private insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, worker's compensation, vocational programs, behavioral health programs, early intervention, and school programs. Preschool and school-age children and youth (to age 21) may be eligible for occupational therapy services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Contact Gold Coast Pediatric Therapy at (561) 368-9700 to schedule your free screening and learn more about our innovative treatment options.
