

Occupational Therapy Helps Autism



Background

Autism is a developmental disorder typically diagnosed between 15 months and 6 years of age, (Mishaal et al 2014) and typically affects social functioning through repetitive behaviors and delayed communication. Autism may also display adaptive, behavioral manifestations and at times cognitive difficulties. (Wiggins et al, 2015) The published DSM-5 in 2013 stated that autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) is the unified diagnosis of all autism disorders instead of the previous diagnoses of Asperger syndrome, autistic disorder and pervasive developmental disorder. However, the term Autism is used frequently to describe the different aspects of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Goals of Occupational Therapy with Autism:

Occupational therapy aims to enhance the participation in the performance of activities of daily living (e.g., feeding, dressing, grooming), instrumental activities of daily living (e.g., community mobility, safety issues), leisure, play, education, work, and social participation. The occupational therapist identifies the needs and goals, then prioritizes in collaboration with the patient and their family to design an effective therapeutic plan and provision of services. Such plan may include adapting the environment to minimize distractions, facilitating communication through computer software, or task analysis to break down the activity into sub-skills, that when combined will help in increasing overall functioning.

Intervention settings:

The intervention is provided by the occupational therapist in the settings where the patient typically engages in daily activities, such as preschool care center, school, home, worksite, adult day care, residential setting, and so forth. The occupational therapist may provide direct services; as a job coach; or as a consultant to family members, educators, team members, or employers.

The OT process:

The occupational therapist evaluates the patient to gain an understanding of the individual's strengths and challenges while engaging in daily activities (occupations), in order to develop a holistic treatment plan that may include developmental activities, sensory integration or sensory processing, and play activities that help patients maximize their ability to participate in daily activities at their environment. Moreover, the occupational therapist may provide strategies to help the individual transition from one setting or phase to another, identify safe methods of community mobility and develop or adapt work and other daily activities that are meaningful to enhance the individual's quality of life.

Authored by:

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Bachelor of Occupational Therapy,
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WELCOME Aboard!



Ms. Eman Abusha'Irah – Occupational Therapist

Ms. Abu Sha'irah is an Occupational Therapist who is registered with the Health Authority Abu Dhabi (HAAD). She obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Occupational Therapy from the Hashemite University in Jordan, and upgraded her professional managerial knowledge by completing Master's Degree in Business Administration from Abu Dhabi University. She has a deep understanding of patients with multi disabilities, but she also works with patients suffering from Down syndrome, learning difficulties, autistic children, cerebral palsy and patients with compromised functionality. Ms. Eman joined American Center for Psychiatry and Neurology and now seeing patients in Abu Dhabi Branch. [Read more...](#)



Ms. Shorouq Al Madani

Ms. Al Madani came to the American Center For Special Abilities from the University of Jordan Speech and Hearing Clinic where she worked as a Speech Therapist. She completed her B.Sc. in Speech and Hearing Science at the University of Jordan in June 2010 and her M.Sc. in Speech and Language Pathology at the University of Jordan in June 2015. In March 2013, Ms. Al Madani obtained her speech therapist license from Jordan Ministry of Health. Her clinical experience includes working with various degrees of speech and language disorders, such as: language delay, articulation disorders, phonological disorders, hearing impairments, stuttering, autism, ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), motor speech disorders (speech dysarthria and apraxia), and voice disorders. Ms. Shorouq joined American Center for Special Abilities and now seeing patients in Abu Dhabi Branch. [Read more...](#)



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