

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Fall 2025

Re: Occupational Therapists in the Classroom

Over the past several years, Five Counties Children's Centre has worked with our local school boards to provide occupational therapy support within the school setting. Occupational Therapists (OTs) are regulated health care professionals who work with children in many different settings and understand motor skills development, self-care and sensory processing. The role of the School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS) OT is to support students to manage their fine motor skills (printing & scissor use), self-care skills (putting on coat/shoes, zippers, opening food containers) and sensory needs as it relates to their participation within the school setting.

With the support of our school board partners, SBRS OTs will continue to implement a tiered model of service delivery throughout the 2025/2026 school year. Tiered Services offer a spectrum of OT supports and allow for increased partnership between the OT and the teaching team. This model allows the teaching team more access to the OT to provide universal, class-wide functional strategies. The type of OT universal support offered is time limited, may vary and will depend on the presenting needs of each classroom. The supports provided to the class may include:

- whole class activities to support fine motor development, executive functioning skills and emotional regulation
- trial of different writing tools and paper types that may support legible writing
- different types of scissors or paper to support scissor skills
- strategies for independently managing belongings
- flexible seating options to support posture and attention to task
- movement breaks to support participation.

The overall goal is to optimize all students' functional engagement within the classroom and the curriculum. As with all in-school programming, typical classroom-related risks may apply. As part of our service provision, we may include Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTA) or include OT student interns.

More individualized OT supports continue to be available to children with higher levels of need. If your child appears to require more support with regards to their functional abilities, school personnel will reach out to you to discuss their needs and suggest referral to the OT for more targeted supports. If your child is already receiving OT services, they will continue to receive OT support as appropriate.

Should you choose for your child **NOT** to participate in this school-based programming, please advise the **Principal by Friday, November 14th 2025**, and alternative activity options will be discussed. If you have any other questions or concerns regarding this new program, please reach out to your child's teacher, Principal, or Five Counties Children's Center. We look forward to providing supports in your school.

Veni Govender, Program Manager
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