

IS A CAREER AS A SCHOOL-BASED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTITIONER RIGHT FOR YOU?



WHAT IS A SCHOOL-BASED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTITIONER?

A school-based Occupational Therapy Practitioner (OTP) works with students who have physical, sensory, and/or learning challenges. An OTP focuses on both academic and daily school activities such as handwriting, organizing assignments, and using tools like scissors and keyboards. An OTP supports students so they can participate comfortably and as independently as possible in school.

WHAT DOES AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTITIONER DO IN SCHOOLS?



Work with students to:

- Complete classroom tasks such as holding a pencil or pen, using scissors or rulers, or typing on a keyboard.
- Complete daily tasks such as eating, tying shoes, buttoning and zipping clothes, managing assignments, and organizing a backpack.
- Handle things like noises and lights that may impact their ability to focus and participate.



Work with educators and families to:

- Suggest changes to a student's environment to enhance learning and interaction, such as using specialized seating, fidget tools, or standing desks.
- Stay updated on the latest tools and equipment such as specialized keyboards, utensils, writing tools, or software.
- Teach strategies that students need to complete tasks and participate in activities at school, home, and in the community.

YOU MIGHT ENJOY THIS CAREER FIELD IF YOU LIKE TO:

- Make a positive impact by helping kids and teens overcome challenges and reach their goals
- Have a hands-on job where you teach and show others how to develop new skills
- Learn how the body and mind work together, especially in movement, coordination, and strength
- Have fun at work by interacting with students through movement and creative activities

VOICES FROM THE FIELD: MEET AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTITIONER

“

I love that every child I work with is different. OT, in general, is an amazing, amazing field.

”

Catalina Tobon
Occupational Therapist
School District of Philadelphia

Scan or click the QR code
to watch the interview.



HOW TO BECOME AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTITIONER IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Earn a Bachelor's Degree in a related field like biology, psychology, health sciences, or kinesiology. Occupational therapy programs don't require a specific major.

Complete a Master's Degree or Professional Doctorate in Occupational Therapy at an accredited Pennsylvania Program listed on the [Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association](#) website.

Pass the [National Board for Certification in Occupation Therapy \(NBCOT\) Exam](#) after completing your degree. This certification is necessary to practice as an OT in Pennsylvania and across the United States.

Apply for Pennsylvania State Licensure from the [Pennsylvania State Board of Occupational Therapy](#). You'll need to submit your exam scores, proof of education, and other required documents.

