DESCRIPTION OF THE FIELD

Occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants help people across the lifespan participate in the things they want and need to do through the therapeutic use of everyday activities (occupations). Common occupational therapy interventions include helping children with disabilities to participate fully in school and social situations, helping people recovering from injury to regain skills, and providing support for older adults experiencing physical and cognitive changes. Occupational therapy services typically include:

- an individualized evaluation, during which the client/family and occupational therapist determine the person’s goals
- customized intervention to improve the person’s ability to perform daily activities and reach the goals
- an outcomes evaluation to ensure that the goals are being met and/or make changes to the intervention plan

Occupational therapy services may include comprehensive evaluations of the client’s home and other environments (e.g., workplace, school), recommendations for adaptive equipment and training in its use, and guidance and education for family members and caregivers. Occupational therapy practitioners have a holistic perspective, in which the focus is on adapting the environment to fit the person, and the person is an integral part of the therapy team. (Provided by the American Occupational Therapy Association)

CAREERS

Occupational Therapists can work in a variety of settings including:

- Hospitals (state, local, and private)
- Offices of physical, occupational and speech therapists, and audiologists
- Elementary and secondary schools (state, local, and private)
- Nursing care facilities (skilled nursing facilities)
- Home healthcare services

RESOURCES

For more information, please visit the following websites:

American Occupational Therapy Association
http://www.aota.org/

Occupational Outlook Handbook

Occupational Therapy Certification and Resources
http://www.nbcot.org/