

## **On-line Therapy Information**

When children are offered therapy services online, there are many questions about how this works. Here is some helpful information for you and some tips to help sessions go smoothly!

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. What does online therapy look like?**

Your child will log into the online therapy room at their scheduled time. Our provider will be ready in front of his/her computer remotely. This provider will be perfectly matched to support your child's specific areas of need, and trained to engage him or her in meaningful instructional activities, which will also be fun and enjoyable.

#### **2. Are therapy sessions really effective?**

In one word, yes! Online services are extremely effective. In fact, research studies show that therapy services such as speech therapy help children make progress on their goals at the same rate as services delivered onsite. Our team is trained and will provide the recipe for children's success by combining compassion with out-of-the-box thinking. Their extensive experience combined with our training program and resource library of evidenced-based activities combine to make therapy fun, functional, and effective.

#### **3. How do I know if my child is making progress?**

Our on-going documentation and data analysis allow us to consistently measure our child's progress. We believe that collaboration with parents is key to your child's progress. There are ongoing discussions about your child's progress. We also follow up with additional suggestions for activities throughout the week. From the moment your child logs on, we are continuously addressing goals and monitoring progress.

#### **4. What are the benefits of doing therapy on-line?**

There are many benefits to online therapy, which include:

- Flexible scheduling
- Decreased cost and time related to transportation
- Increased team communication
- Ability to complete therapeutic tasks in the natural environment
- Your child will have fun, while making therapeutic progress.

#### **5. What if my child does not want to participate in any of the activities?**

While we can't say this never happens, it is a rare occurrence. Our children are growing up in a digital environment which is second nature for them. We promote participation by making sure activities provide "just the right challenge" and are interesting. We also can weave in positive reinforcement through behavioral supports. Furthermore, we can control the online environment to promote each child's success.

## **6. Are there individuals who are not good candidates for on-line therapy?**

Our primary goal is to set our children up for success, which means empowering them to grow and learn, both in session and on their own. We take each individual children's abilities and needs into account when determining if online therapy is appropriate.

Some children with the following challenges are often better candidates for family support and parent training instead of online direct therapy: severely impacted attention span (needing redirection every minute or less), significantly impacted cognitive skills, and severe physical challenges with motor abilities limiting access to a computer and necessitating hands-on therapy. There are also some children with the above challenges that have therapy needs that are more focused on consulting and training families on how to help their child. We will support every child and their family in any way we can!

## **7. You say there is research that proves on-line therapy works. Where can I see this research?**

There are over 100 research studies to date on the use of telepractice to deliver therapy and educational support services, with that number growing. This innovative field has gotten a lot of attention from the research community because the potential to help more families is so great. On-line therapy services started over 15 years ago. Since then, research studies have shown progress on speech goals that are at least equal to in-person therapy (Theodoros, D., [Telepractice in Speech-Language Pathology: The Evidence, the Challenges, and the Future](#), 2011).

## **8. How are you different from other on-line service providers?**

It is our combination of passion, compassion and experience that has always set us apart from our competitors. Our team embraces a passion to always do what is right for each child, while showing compassion for our children and their struggles. Combine this with our well-established experience in the "science" of therapy and online instruction and we believe you will find us uniquely qualified to handle your needs.

Little Hands Occupational Therapy, Inc. offers comprehensive, multi-disciplinary services in order to support continuity of care. We also work hard to support our team with ongoing continuing education in order to make sure that we are at the forefront of this exciting path of hope and progress.

Little Hands Occupational Therapy, Inc. is not about trying to replace in-person services, but to make quality support available to more children. We will always do what's best for your child, helping you to choose the appropriate option for your family.

### **9. What kind of technology do I need to get started?**

An external webcam and headphones with a microphone are recommended to support quality interaction with your providers. You will need a high speed internet connection. We can help you identify whether your Internet connection is fast enough to enable smooth graphic, 3DS models, animation, and video encoders/streaming videos without delays and choppiness. Our system will prompt you to download Zoom and software upgrades as needed.

### **10. Is there anything else I need? Supplies?**

While our team already has many of the visuals and therapy activities, it will be helpful to have a pencil and paper in close proximity. On occasion a parent or caregiver will be asked to print a document ahead of time. We also use items that are commonly found around the classroom or house.

### **11. Does on-line therapy comply with industry requirements?**

Yes, ASHA was one of the first governing agencies to affirm the use of online therapy services to provide therapy. Since then, AOTA and APTA have also recognized the use of the online delivery model.

### **12. Are sessions monitored for quality?**

Yes, our leadership team supports each of our therapists by observing sessions periodically and with regular mentoring. This ensures the best quality of therapy for our clients and also helps our team to continue to grow and learn. Privacy is respected and families will always be asked if they are comfortable with another provider observing prior to the observation. Little Hands Occupational Therapy, Inc. also encourages collaboration and ongoing feedback to ensure every child's progress.

### **13. How is privacy and confidentiality ensured?**

Our online platform is a secure platform that complies with established FERPA and HIPAA guidelines. Our team is licensed and credentialed and goes through an extensive background check.

## **Quick Tips For Your First Session**

1. Identify your child's interests, strengths and triggers, and your concerns. Please talk with your children about how they get to "play with [insert therapist's name] today in a new way! You get to see them through the computer and play games together even though you are not in the same place!"
2. It is OK, you are not expected to be a tech wizard! The therapist will explain to you the basics and is used to giving clear directions. If you are camera shy, there are many ways

around this. When problems arise, the therapist can help support you through minor difficulties. For anything which is too problematic you and/or the therapist can call the Zoom Help Line. They are awesome!

3. Therapy does not work in a vacuum, and working as a team is the most effective path to progress. It is expected that you as a parent or caregiver will accompany the child to each session to assist with technology, ensure materials are available, to act as the therapist's hands when needed, and to observe what strategies are being utilized to provide follow through between sessions. The therapist will give clear directions during sessions and will often send information about required materials ahead of time.
4. Online therapy has been shown to be very successful, in part as a result of its collaborative process. Many families find that by attending/observing the sessions they better understand the role of the therapies their children receive and what they can do to help their child on a daily basis. This in turn brings up more questions, suggestions, thoughts, and ideas. You as parents will be empowered as you learn the skills and techniques that you can then implement on a daily basis to assist your child in improving strengths and overcoming challenges.