

What is School-Based Physical Therapy?

Physical Therapy is a related service provided to the students of Chicopee Public Schools to promote the motor development and the student's ability to participate in the daily routine and activities of the educational program. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), supports the provision of public education for all children ages 3-21 years. Under Part B of the IDEA, special education and related services are provided, as necessary, to meet a child's individual needs. The role of a physical therapist in a school system consists of, but is not limited to:

- Evaluate/screen students
- Staff training/education
- Promote safe navigation of environment
- Functional training
- Stretch and strengthen muscles
- Positioning
- Improving motor coordination/planning
- Provide and monitor adaptive equipment
- Facilitate skill acquisition

Common Reasons That May Warrant a PT Evaluation or Screen:

- Frequent falls/clumsiness
- Toe walking
- Low endurance
- Decreased strength
- Limited range of motion
- Difficulty on stairs
- Difficulty sitting unsupported
- Delayed skill acquisition
- Decreased safety with mobility
- Difficulty keeping up with peers

Direct vs. Indirect Services

A student can receive PT via direct or indirect services. With direct PT services, the therapist works directly with the student in small groups or on an individual basis to address the established goals. As the student develops the skills during PT sessions, it is increasingly incorporated into their daily routine. Indirect PT service consists of the physical therapist collaborating with a student's educational professionals to promote the achievement of the established goals.

* For more information or to schedule an evaluation, contact the student's teacher, guidance counsellor or the Chicopee Special Education Department

Community Resources

[Special Olympics](#)

E-mail: nwassel@chicopee.k12.ma.us

[Best Buddies Program](#)

E-mail: ademeo@chicopee.k12.ma.us

[Center for Human Development](#)

[Whole Children](#)

[Kehillah- JCC](#)

[Family Ties of Massachusetts](#)

Physical Therapy Staff

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