



## **Guidelines for Physical Therapy Referral**

### **Common diagnoses for Physical Therapy referral:**

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Cerebral Palsy                                      | Down Syndrome       |
| Developmental Delay                                 | Sensory Integration |
| Orthopedic Injuries                                 | Fine Motor Deficits |
| Torticollis   | Plagiocephaly       |
| Muscular Dystrophy                                  | Spina Bifida        |
| “Clumsy Child”- Developmental Coordination Disorder |                     |
| Sports Related Injuries                             |                     |

### **Indicators Associated with These Diagnoses:**

#### **Cerebral Palsy:**

Weak or Stiff Muscles  
Avoids using one or both arms or legs

#### **Plagiocephaly/Torticollis:**

Has flattening on one side of head or holds head to one side  
Cannot lift head up while lying on stomach

#### **Developmental Delay:**

Has not met two or more developmental milestones  
Appears floppy or stiff

#### **Sensory Integration:**

Walks by slapping feet on ground  
Toe Walking  
Appears fearful if moved  
Has poor balance  
Difficulty sitting still during class or paying attention  
Overly sensitive to touch  
Overly or under cautious with fast moving or spinning activities  
Difficulty orienting body effectively for dressing like putting arms in sleeves, fingers in mittens, toes in socks  
Avoids manipulating small objects or activities involving scissors, crayons, pencils and markers or uses incorrectly

## Guidelines for Physical Therapy Referral

### **“Clumsy Child”- Developmental Coordination Disorder**

- Cannot imitate movements
- Cannot jump with two feet
- Seems clumsy or awkward during movements
- Has poor balance
- Difficulty sitting still during class or paying attention
- Bumps into other kids or objects unintentionally
- Cannot skip or run
- Cannot catch a ball
- “Pops up” from sitting or lying and “plops down” to sitting or lying-poor control
- Feels heavy when moved
- Associated sensory integration issues (see above)

### **Fine Motor Deficits:**

- Has not establish a definite hand preference by preschool
- Holds crayons, pencils and markers with a fist grip
- Leans on forearms while coloring or eating or props self up with arms
- Cannot manipulate scissors by school age
- Early walking with little or no crawling

### **Sports Related Injuries:**

**Associated with Dance, Cheerleading, Football, Soccer, Volleyball, etc.**

- Mild to Moderate sprains or strains
- Overuse or improper body mechanics for sport
- Weakness or decreased range of motion required for sport



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