Occupational Therapy:

Occupational therapists identify sensory and motor difficulties and provide interventions to prevent and remediate deficits related to the child's

1. Sensory sensitivities
2. Effective self-regulation (wake– sleep cycles, alertness level, self-soothing)
3. Motor development & Praxis skills
4. Adaptive behavior
5. Sensory–perceptual skills

These interventions allow individuals to focus on successful occupational performance in areas essential for development, such as play, sleep, ADLs, mealtime routines, and socialization (Ayres, 2005; Schaff & Smith Roley, 2006).

What can Occupational Therapy do:

1. Identify and modify sensory and environmental barriers that limit performance and participation in everyday activities, as well as individual strengths and supports.
2. Help raise an individual's self-awareness of the impact of sensory and motor factors on everyday activities and real-life situations, and provide ways to counter sensory processing challenges.
3. Teach and model activities to support sensory, motor, and behavioral needs.
4. Identify and provide adaptive sensory and motor strategies and interventions using a variety of sensory approaches to facilitate full participation in daily routines and social interactions.
5. Provide education that reframes the understanding of the sensory-related concerns
6. Provide accommodation recommendations for the student to decrease any negative impact of sensory difficulties
7. Establish a "sensory diet" that incorporate sensory–motor activities throughout the day such as before, during, and after school; and environmental modifications that assist the student's school-related performance.

What is Sensory Regulation:

Sensory regulation is our body's ability to process environmental stimuli (noises, sights, touch, etc.) into meaningful information. This is an essential function for individuals to succeed in a world that is full of stimuli. Sometimes, an individual's body has difficulty regulating the amount of information it receives. The brain receives either too much or too little sensory information, making it difficult for the information to be processed it into anything meaningful. This condition is referred to as **Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)**.

Well-regulated and appropriately functioning sensory systems contribute to important outcomes in social-emotional, physical and motor, communication, self-care, cognitive, and adaptive skills development and maintenance. Deficits in sensory integration can pose challenges in performing activities of daily living (ADLs), in addition to development, learning, playing, working, socializing, and exhibiting appropriate behavior (Schaff & Smith Roley, 2006).

Sensory integration and modulation disorders often lead people to have extreme over reactions to what others consider mild stimuli, or to completely shut down and disengage. Differences in interpretation of stimuli can impact motor skills and coordination, further limiting engagement and participation.

Occupational Therapists are able to address the immediate impact of sensory processing dysfunction on daily activities and behavior, while Occupational Therapists with advanced training in sensory integration are able to provide intervention that targets the underlying neurobiological processes involved in sensory processing and integration to affect long-term outcomes.

Adolescents and young adults with a fear of movement, sensitivity to touch, poor motor planning, or decreased awareness of body position in space may have difficulties with sensory processing and/or sensory integration. Sensory integration problems may interfere with age-appropriate life activities such as learning to drive, making vocational choices, engaging in leisure activities, and developing independence and romantic relationships.

Sensory activities directed by the occupational therapist can be embedded into the classroom routine that can be carried out by the teacher, instructional aides, or parent volunteers. It also may include direct intervention that address the underlying sensory, motor, and praxis concerns