



Updates for Patients, families & friends

Why Home Practice Matters

Therapy is powerful but it's only one small piece of the week. There are 168 hours in a week, and your child may spend just one of those hours in a therapy session. Real, lasting progress happens when skills are practiced consistently at home and woven intentionally into everyday routines. During therapy, we assess strengths and challenges, teach strategies, provide dedicated practice time with direct feedback, adjust the plan as progress is made, and help build confidence. Therapy sessions are where new skills are introduced, refined, and supported in a structured environment designed for learning.



However, therapy cannot replace daily practice. Progress does not happen instantly – brain development requires repetition, consistency, and meaningful experiences over time. Neural pathways strengthen through frequent use. If skills aren't used outside of sessions, daily habits take over and progress can slow. Therapy also cannot “do the work alone.” Children learn best in natural environments – at home, on the playground, during mealtime, and through play – where there are multiple, meaningful opportunities to practice throughout the day. The formula is simple:

Therapy Session: Learn the strategy.

Home Practice: Use it daily.

Next Session: Build the next step.

Repeat – and progress grows.

When families and therapists partner together, small daily efforts compound into meaningful, lasting change that supports lifelong independence.



OVERVIEW:

- Why Home Practice Matters
- Big Feelings in Little Bodies: Understanding Behavior in Ages 2-4
- Building Balance & Confidence in the Pool
- Screen Time & the Developing Brain: Finding a Healthy Balance

Upcoming Events:

- 3/1: Martha, SLP 4 Year PB Anniversary
- 3/15: Jessica, PT Birthday, Brittney, OT Birthday
- 3/17: St. Patrick's Day- **wear green!**
- 3/18: Kelsey, OT 2 Year PB Anniversary
- 3/21: World Down Syndrome Day
 - On Friday 3/20 **Wear fun/colorful socks**
- 3/25: National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day- **wear green!**
- 3/26: World Epilepsy Day- **wear purple!**
- 3/28: Brittney, OT 1 Year PB Anniversary



Shout outs!

- The Progressive Beginnings team did a great job in every department, working around my busy schedule, relieving my many aches and pain and getting me back to walking normal again. Great experience from everyone.
- We LOVE Progressive Beginnings! We have been doing PT and now OT here for years. Lots of progress has been made and the variety of tools/toys has made therapy fun instead of a chore.



Two- to four-year-olds are in a season of enormous brain growth. Language is exploding, independence is emerging, and emotions are bigger than their ability to regulate them. What can look like “defiance” or “behavior problems” is often a nervous system that is still learning how to process frustration, transitions, and sensory input. At this age, children rely heavily on co-regulation. They borrow our {adult} calm before they can create their own. When we see frequent meltdowns, difficulty with transitions, aggression, or constant movement, it may signal challenges with emotional regulation, sensory processing, or impulse control – not simply “bad behavior.”



Occupational therapy can help by:

- Identifying sensory triggers
- Building body awareness and regulation skills
- Teaching caregivers strategies for smoother transitions
- Supporting development of play, attention, and communication

Early support matters. With the right tools and consistency, young children build the foundation for lifelong emotional resilience. Reach out to our clinic for support and schedule an evaluation at (920) 803-1617.

Falls are one of the leading causes of injury in adults — and balance changes often happen gradually. You may notice feeling unsteady on uneven ground, hesitating on stairs, or reaching

for furniture more often. The good news? Balance can improve at any age. Water reduces fear of falling while still requiring the body to respond to gentle shifts and resistance. Every movement in the pool activates core muscles and postural reactions, helping retrain stability and coordination. In the water, we can practice:

- Weight shifting and stepping
- Single-leg stance activities
- Trunk rotation and reaching
- Gait training with reduced joint load
- Directional changes and reaction time



Because water provides resistance in all directions, even simple movements become strengthening opportunities. If you’ve noticed decreased steadiness or concern about falls, aquatic therapy may be an excellent place to safely rebuild stability and confidence.

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Screen Time & the Developing Brain: Finding a Healthy Balance

Technology is woven into modern family life but in early childhood, the brain develops best through movement, hands-on play, and real-world interaction. Fast-paced screen content can overstimulate the developing nervous system, making it harder for young children to tolerate boredom, engage in imaginative play, sustain attention, or regulate emotions. We often see increased impulsivity, shortened attention span, sleep disruption, reduced frustration tolerance, and more intense meltdowns when screen time is excessive, unpredictable, or used as the primary calming strategy. Early childhood is when foundational skills for executive functioning, language, motor development, and social interaction are rapidly forming. These skills grow strongest through back-and-forth conversation, problem-solving during play,



physical exploration, and shared experiences with caregivers not passive viewing. This doesn’t mean screens are “bad.” It means balance is essential.

Helpful guidelines:

- Prioritize active, face-to-face play first
- Keep screens predictable and time-limited
- Avoid screens before bedtime
- Co-view when possible and talk about what you’re watching
- Encourage independent, imaginative play daily

Young brains thrive on movement, connection, repetition, and real-life sensory experiences. The more opportunities children have to climb, build, pretend, and interact, the stronger their regulation, attention, and social skills become.

Small, consistent shifts can make a big developmental difference.