



Resources for students
from The American
Occupational Therapy Association

Your career in Occupational Therapy

Consider Becoming an Occupational Therapy Assistant

Young or old, we all have a job to do—the job of living. Learning, growing, playing, working, managing our homes, and caring for our families are among the “occupations” of life.

Unfortunately, physical, emotional, or other challenges often prevent people from fully participating in the job of living. Disease, injury, depression, or developmental problems can make it difficult for people to do everyday tasks or be active and independent.

Occupational therapy—a vibrant, growing profession—makes it possible for people to achieve independence and to enjoy life to its fullest. By choosing a career as an occupational therapy assistant, you will make a difference! You will be able to improve the lives of people, from newborns to the very old.

Students today can look forward to dynamic careers working in multiple settings with people of all ages. And the employment outlook for occupational therapy assistants is bright! Recent information published by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos166.htm>) has projected that the job outlook for occupational therapy assistants will continue to improve steadily for the foreseeable future. Specifically, it states that “employment of occupational therapy assistants....is expected to grow much faster

than the average for all occupations through 2014,” meaning that employment is expected to increase by 27% or more.

One of the greatest advantages of a career as an occupational therapy assistant is the wide variety of opportunities available to graduates. Many occupational therapy assistants choose to help children thrive in the “occupations” of childhood—learning, playing, and growing. Some work in schools with students who have learning disabilities, behavioral problems, cerebral palsy, or Down syndrome.

Occupational therapy assistants also work with individuals in their homes, community centers, rehabilitation hospitals, and nursing homes. In these settings, they help people with traumatic injuries, stroke, Alzheimer’s disease, or mental health problems learn to live productive lives through the use of meaningful occupations.

If you are looking for a challenging career and have a desire to learn, achieve, and give your best to society, a career as an occupational therapy assistant is for you!

If you have specific questions about a career in occupational therapy, please contact educate@aota.org.

Visit www.aota.org for more information about the profession and the activities of the American Occupational Therapy Association.



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