



Related Services / Classroom Support Staff

John V. Leigh School's Tiger Tots program provides a wide array of special education services for children who are identified as eligible. The related service team is highly collaborative with each other and with the dually certified special education teacher. The shared goal is to meet the child where they are developmentally and provide school-based therapeutic services to facilitate achievement of developmentally appropriate milestones.

Problem Solving/Evaluation: Related service team members are available to problem solve with the teachers for any students who are being monitored in the program. They are also responsible for evaluating students who are suspected of presenting with significantly delayed skills. Following evaluation, the team, including the parent/guardian, will determine eligibility for services, develop developmentally appropriate goals based on the child's needs, and implement an Individualized Education Program (IEP) using evidence-based methods and techniques.

Service Delivery: Services are typically provided within the context of the classroom setting in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Service providers "push-in" to the classroom to deliver instruction to individuals, small groups, or the whole group. On occasion, students may be "pulled out" of the classroom and provided therapy in a separate setting on a group or individual basis. All service delivery decisions are made as a team including the parent/guardian.

Instructional Approach: Service providers at the preschool level often work on individualized goals by using a child-directed approach in which the clinician follows the child's lead to support their skill development. Activities are often play-based in nature to help facilitate greater engagement and motivation to participate in activities with the clinician.

Speech-Language Therapy: Speech-Language Pathologists work on improving a child's play, pragmatic (social use of language), receptive (comprehension) and expressive language skills. The speech-language pathologist conducts once weekly whole group lessons focusing on the class' theme of the month. Oftentimes, activities include crafts, online interactive games, and cooking activities to facilitate various speech and language skills.

Social Work: Social workers aim to improve a child's social and emotional skills. These skills include a child's ability to regulate their emotions, how they relate to others and themselves, in addition to a child's self-help skills and ability to independently complete tasks. The social worker engages in a weekly whole group lesson where all students in the classroom have the opportunity to engage in various activities improving and learning about their social emotional skills. Lesson activities have included: feeling, safe/unsafe choices, and friendship skills.

Occupational Therapy: Occupational Therapists work to improve a child's fine motor skills in addition to a child's sensory regulation. Fine motor skills refer to the skills necessary to make small movements using our fingers, hands and wrists (Ex: Cutting, copying, stacking). Sensory regulation refers to the ability to regulate one's body and emotions through the use of various movement or tactile-based experiences. Some examples of meeting sensory needs in the classroom include movement (i.e., swinging, jumping), touch (i.e., exploring textures), and sound (i.e., use of headphones or preferred music).

Physical Therapy: Physical Therapists work to improve a child's gross motor skills, that is, a child's ability to navigate their environment. Oftentimes, physical therapists work with children who have challenges walking, running, skipping, etc.

School Psychologist: The school psychologist collaborates with the preschool team on problem solving and evaluative cases. The school psychologist assesses skills involving cognition (i.e., thinking, reasoning, playing, attending) and early behavioral/atypical behavioral development.