

HCDS Therapy Expectations

We understand that many families feel overwhelmed by the prospect of starting therapy – there’s so much to learn and you may not know what to expect. If your family chooses to partner with us for therapy, here is a list of what you can expect from our services.

Clinic:

- Most of our therapy sessions take place at our clinic, especially for our early learners (ages 2-5). Conducting sessions at the clinic allows us to control more aspects of the environment (which leads to more effective teaching) and allows us to maximize therapy time (by eliminating time spent driving across town to appointments). All this translates to more opportunities for your child to learn and progress.
- For some of our mid-level learners (ages 5-8), we may also offer social opportunities at the clinic. This could include pairing your child with a peer for part of their session, joining a social group, “Kindergarten Boot Camp” to prepare for school, or holiday parties/activities.
- By the time they reach the transitional learner stage (ages 8-10), most kids have “outgrown” clinic sessions. At this point, we typically switch to social sessions only, look at providing support in other settings, or begin fading services.

School:

- We do not typically offer school support, although we may do so occasionally, if that’s an area in which your child is really struggling. However, this type of support is determined on a case-by-case basis, as we have limited staff availability.
- If we do provide school support, it will be short-term. We may schedule a meeting with you and your child’s teacher, accompany you to an IEP meeting, conduct an in-class observation and provide suggestions, or do staff training. Unfortunately, we do not have the staff availability to provide in-school support on an ongoing basis (and many insurance providers will not cover school support), so our goal is to get the staff responding well and fade ourselves out.

Home:

- We may also offer occasional home sessions, if there is a particular part of your home routine that’s a problem. However, this type of support is determined on a case-by-case basis, as we have limited staff availability.
- If we do provide home support, it will be short-term. We may come at specific times to help you with daily routines (e.g., bath time, feeding, bedtime), set up new home procedures (e.g., starting a new bedtime routine, implementing a visual schedule or reward chart). The goal of these sessions is not to do a typical therapy session with your child, but rather to give you the training, support, and feedback you need to implement goals and respond to behaviors at home, so caregivers are required to be present.

- While we do our best to accommodate our families' needs, please be mindful that our therapists have their own families to care for and spend time with, so they may not always be available on weekends, on holidays, or at odd hours.

Parent Involvement:

- Regardless of where sessions take place parent involvement is a crucial aspect of therapy! We love working with parents, grandparents, teachers, and other caregivers to help their kids be successful.
- Therapy is a journey, and we expect parents to participate in each step. This may include helping us to create goals for your child, sitting in to observe sessions, or training you to use communication tools, etc. Your lead therapist will work with you to create parent goals and a schedule based on your child's needs.
- Feel free to ask questions or mention any concerns you have. We'd be happy to explain to you what we're doing and why we're doing it. Consistent expectations are essential for your child to learn, so we want everyone to be comfortable and on the same page.

Progress:

- During our therapy journey together, we will periodically assess your child's skills. This starts with our initial assessment, in which we meet you and your child, discuss your reasons for seeking therapy, and set preliminary goals. We will also reassess your child's skills when they are due for a new insurance authorization. These assessments are typically done during regular therapy sessions and allow us to check your child's progress and update their program goals. Re-assessments typically occur every 6-12 months based on the child's rate of acquiring new skills.
- When your child is ready to transition from early learner to mid-level learner (about age 5) or from mid-level to transitional learner (about age 8), we will conduct a more thorough re-evaluation. At this point, we will meet with you to discuss the next steps in your child's services and adjust our goals accordingly.
- We understand that it may be intimidating to think about long-term goals or your child graduating from therapy. However, it's an important – and exciting! – part of the process. We love sharing your child's progress with you, so you can see how much they've learned and grown. When we get closer to graduation time, we will help you prepare for that transition, too. As much as we'd love to keep all of our clients forever, we're always extremely proud to watch them move on to bigger and better things.