

SEVERITY RATING SCALES: INDICATORS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Introduction

The purpose of these severity rating scales is to provide a tool to assist teachers in identifying the degree of impact a particular challenge has on a student. These severity rating scales are not exhaustive, and only cover some of the most common areas of concern.

This document includes severity rating scales for the following broad categories:

- Fine Motor Skills
- Sensory Regulation
- Visual Motor Integration Skills

How to Use This Document

- There is a separate severity rating scale for each category mentioned above.
- These scales
 - can be used to determine the level of impact a student is experiencing in a particular area;
 - are meant as a starting point, when concerns are noted, and services are being considered;
 - can be used to discuss appropriate services;
 - are designed so that each one can be used on its own, while recognizing that students may be impacted in more than one area.
- If moderate to severe concerns are identified on any of the scales, the concerns may be taken forward for discussion with additional school or jurisdiction personnel as per the school authority protocol.

Note: These scales are not meant to be used as a classroom screening tool.

FINE MOTOR SKILL SEVERITY RATING SCALE

DEFINITION: Fine motor skills are the movements and activities that require the coordination of small muscles to make precise movements including writing, daily life skills, catching and cutting.

NOTE: A formal assessment is NOT required to determine severity. However, if a formal assessment has already been completed within the last 6 months, that data would be used to help determine severity and possible service options.

NOTE: Teacher must review student record when concerns are identified for information about previous assessments, supports, and/or strategies which may still be applicable. If possible, consultation with previous teacher is encouraged.

NOTE: Most school authorities have school-based and/or jurisdiction based staff whose role is to support learning needs. These roles have varying titles across school jurisdictions (LST, SSF, LAT, LIFT, IEF, IC, SSC, Learning Coach, Central Coordinator). For the purpose of this document, this role is referred to as “Learning Support Facilitator” whether the role is being filled by a teacher, an administrator or a jurisdiction level coordinator.

	<u>No Apparent Problem</u>	<u>Mild</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Severe</u>
Description of Fine Motor Skills	<p>The student's fine motor skills are within the expected performance range for their age. The student is able to keep up with their classmates and their quality of work is functional for the classroom.</p>	<p>Student demonstrates functional performance most of the time with minimal or no assistance.</p> <p>Mildly decreased control for fine motor tasks compared to peers despite good effort. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cutting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Somewhat messy/choppy • Coloring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Less controlled, larger strokes and less accurate • Drawing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Slightly disorganized or less detailed • Writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May struggle with a few letter formations (i.e. letter formations that contain diagonals) ○ Printing is a little slower ○ Printing is legible at least 75% of the time ○ Letters may be a little too large for the lines • Appears slower and more awkward than peers when doing up buttons and zippers 	<p>Student requires more prompts/cues, explanations, progress checks and physical assistance than the majority of the class. Student's fine motor skills appear at least 1 grade level behind.</p> <p>Moderately decreased control for most fine motor tasks, compared to peers despite good effort. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cutting • Coloring • Drawing • Writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forms many letters incorrectly ○ Printing is noticeably slower ○ Printing is legible at least 50% of the time ○ Letters are consistently too large for the lines • Unable to do up buttons or zippers beyond age 8 • Moderately decreased endurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ frequently complains of hand fatigue ○ occasionally switches hands due to fatigue ○ needs breaks during longer fine motor tasks 	<p>Student requires significant modifications, accommodations or physical assistance to complete most fine motor tasks. Student's fine motor skills appear at least 2 grade levels behind.</p> <p>Severely decreased control for most fine motor tasks compared to peers, despite good effort. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cutting • Coloring • Drawing • Writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Many distortions in letter formations ○ Printing is markedly slower and more laborious ○ Printing is legible less than 50% of the time ○ Letters are consistently too large for the lines • Unable to do up buttons or zippers beyond age 8 • Severely decreased endurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ frequently complains of hand fatigue ○ often switches hands due to fatigue ○ needs frequent breaks during all fine motor tasks ○ may be unable to complete tasks due to hand fatigue

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mildly decreased endurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ occasionally complains of hand fatigue <p>Developmental Progression</p>		
Impact on Education	*Acquisition of academic, social and/or functional skills is not affected.	<p>*Acquisition of academic and/or functional skills may be affected.</p> <p>*Student's fine motor skills minimally interfere with their daily functioning (i.e., frustrated by their own slower rate of completing written work, work is legible, but completed at a slower rate)</p> <p>*May need some modifications or accommodations (i.e. using a pencil gripper, color coded paper, slanted writing surface)</p> <p>*Occasional support is required for fine motor task completion (i.e. cues for pencil grasp, letter formations)</p>	<p>*Acquisition of academic and/or functional skills is often affected</p> <p>*Student's fine motor skills moderately interfere with their daily functioning (i.e. unable to complete written work in a legible and timely manner within the classroom setting, students work is unable to be marked for content due to poor legibility)</p> <p>*Requires some modifications or accommodations (i.e. using a pencil gripper, color coded paper, slant board)</p> <p>*Frequent support is required for fine motor task completion (i.e. cues for pencil grasp, letter formations)</p>	<p>*Acquisition of academic and/or functional skills is impaired.</p> <p>*Student's fine motor skills significantly interfere with their daily classroom functioning (assistive tech needed for written output, students work is unable to be marked for content due to poor legibility, etc.)</p> <p>*Modifications or accommodations needed for most if not all fine motor tasks (i.e. using a pencil gripper, color coded paper, slant board, assistive tech, writing accommodations, seating supports)</p> <p>*The student is unable to complete fine motor tasks without support (i.e. adapted scissors, adapted writing tools, adult assistance, modified tasks)</p>
Identification of Needs		<p>*Concerns identified by teacher and confirmed by reference to developmental guide.</p> <p>Developmental Progression</p> <p>* Teacher to confirm that concern is shared by parent/guardian.</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with "Learning Support Facilitator" and/or other school personnel.</p>	<p>* Concerns identified by teacher.</p> <p>* Teacher to confirm that concern is shared by parent/guardian.</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with "Learning Support Facilitator" and other school personnel.</p> <p>* Classroom teacher and/or "Learning Support Facilitator" may discuss identification of needs with OT (if available) according to school authority process.</p>	<p>* Concerns identified by teacher.</p> <p>* Teacher to confirm that concern is shared by parent/guardian.</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with "Learning Support Facilitator" and other school personnel.</p> <p>* Classroom teacher and/or "Learning Support Facilitator" may discuss identification of needs with OT (if available) according to school authority process.</p>
Addressing Needs		<p>* Teacher may access available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD/ARPCD website OT Universal Strategies</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with "Learning Support Facilitator" and/or other school personnel.</p>	<p>*Teacher may access available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD website OT Universal Strategies</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with "Learning Support Facilitator" and other school personnel.</p> <p>*Consultative, targeted or individual supports may be available from an OT depending upon school jurisdiction process.</p>	<p>*Teacher may access available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD website OT Universal Strategies</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with "Learning Support Facilitator" and other school personnel.</p> <p>*Consultative, targeted or individual supports may be available from an OT depending upon school jurisdiction process.</p>

SENSORY REGULATION SEVERITY RATING SCALE

DEFINITION: Sensory Processing Disorder is a condition in which the brain has trouble efficiently registering, processing, organizing and responding to information that comes in through the senses.

NOTE: A formal assessment is NOT required to determine severity. However, if a formal assessment has already been completed within the last 6 months, that data would be used to help determine severity and service options.

NOTE: Teacher must review student record when concerns are identified for information about previous assessments, supports, and/or strategies which may still be applicable. If possible, consultation with previous teacher is encouraged.

NOTE: Most school authorities have school-based and/or jurisdiction based staff whose role is to support learning needs. These roles have varying titles across school jurisdictions (LST, SSF, LAT, LIFT, IEF, IC, SSC, Learning Coach, Central Coordinator). For the purpose of this document, this role is referred to as “Learning Support Facilitator” whether the role is being filled by a teacher, an administrator or a jurisdiction level coordinator.

	<u>No Apparent Problem</u>	<u>Mild</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Severe</u>
Description of Sensory Regulation concerns	<p>*No sensory concerns, functional within the school setting.</p>	<p>*Student is able to effectively register process, organize and respond to sensory inputs within the school setting.</p> <p>*May need minimal sensory supports within the regular classroom routine.</p> <p>*Student is able to function and successfully participate in their school routine, with classroom supports (i.e. movement breaks, alternative seating options, headphones, etc.).</p> <p>*Student may need more support in specific isolated situations, such as a fire drill or on a field trip, but otherwise minimal to no supports are needed.</p>	<p>*Notable difficulties in registering, processing, organizing and responding appropriately to sensory inputs within the school setting.</p> <p>*Requires frequent sensory supports to keep on task and to assist with sensory regulation. Difficulties participating in school routine due to sensory regulation (i.e. covers ears and is notably upset during assemblies, noisy class times, when using the washroom, gym etc.)</p> <p>*Tries to participate in classroom activities, but sensory regulation difficulties impact their success (i.e. need to move, receive bumping crashing input, make noise, limit noise, touch things, spin etc.)</p> <p>*Student is noticeably avoiding school activities, not out of general task avoidance, but due to the sensory experience connected with that activity (i.e. refuses to participate in tag like games in gym because of sensory input involved, such as unexpected, unpredictable touch etc.)</p>	<p>*Student is not able to independently, or functionally complete the school routine.</p> <p>*Requires consistent sensory supports to keep on task and to assist with sensory regulation (i.e. refuses to participate in activities, to use the washroom, to be in a busy hall where they might be bumped or they need constant movement and bumping crashing input).</p> <p>*Tries to participate in classroom activities, but their need for sensory input severely impacts their success (i.e. need to move, receive bumping/crashing input, make noise, limit noise, touch things, spin, etc.)</p> <p>*Student frequently becomes overwhelmed and very upset within the school setting in response to sensory inputs</p> <p>*Student is unable to learn within the classroom setting due to sensory regulation difficulties.</p>

			*Student has difficulty with social interactions within the school setting, due to sensory regulation difficulties.	*Sensory Regulation difficulties are severely impacting social relations at school.
Impact on Education	Does not interfere with classroom functioning. Acquisition of academic, social and/or functional skills is not affected.	<p>*Minimally interferes with school functioning.</p> <p>*Due to sensory regulation difficulties the student may experience some difficulty with school functioning and learning academic, social, and/or functional skills but can successfully function most of the time.</p>	<p>*Frequently interferes with school functioning.</p> <p>*Due to sensory regulation difficulties, the student experiences moderate difficulty with school functioning and learning academic, social, and/or functional skills, for the majority of the school day.</p>	<p>*Significantly interferes with and/or prevents school functioning.</p> <p>*Due to sensory regulation difficulties the student experiences significant difficulties with school functioning and learning academic, social, and/or functional skills for most of, if not all of their school day.</p>
Identification of Needs		<p>*Concerns identified by teacher observation and screening.</p> <p>* Teacher to confirm that concern is shared by parent/guardian.</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with “Learning Support Facilitator” and/or other school personnel.</p>	<p>* Concerns identified by teacher observation and screening.</p> <p>* Teacher to confirm that concern is shared by parent/guardian.</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with “Learning Support Facilitator” and other school personnel.</p> <p>* Classroom teacher and/or “Learning Support Facilitator” may discuss identification of needs with OT (if available) according to school authority process.</p>	<p>* Concerns identified by teacher observation and screening.</p> <p>* Teacher to confirm that concern is shared by parent/guardian.</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with “Learning Support Facilitator” and other school personnel.</p> <p>* Classroom teacher and/or “Learning Support Facilitator” may discuss identification of needs with OT (if available) according to school authority process.</p>
Addressing Needs		<p>* Teacher may access available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD/ARPDC website- OT Toolbox for Schools.</p> <p>OT Universal Strategies</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with “Learning Support Facilitator” and/or other school personnel.</p>	<p>*Teacher may access available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD/ARPDC website – OT Toolbox for Schools. OT Universal Strategies</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with “Learning Support Facilitator” and other school personnel.</p> <p>*Consultative, targeted or individual supports may be available from an OT depending upon school jurisdiction process.</p>	<p>*Teacher accesses available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD/ARPDC website- OT Toolbox for Schools. OT Universal Strategies</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with “Learning Support Facilitator” and other school personnel.</p> <p>*Consultative, targeted or individual supports may be available from an OT depending upon school jurisdiction process.</p>

VISUAL MOTOR INTEGRATION SKILLS SEVERITY RATING SCALE

DEFINITION: Visual motor integration is the ability to correctly perceive visual information, process it, and move your hands or body accordingly (copying/printing). It relies upon an organized and efficient connection between the visual and motor systems.

NOTE: A formal assessment is **NOT** required to determine severity. However, if a formal assessment has already been completed within the last 6 months, that data would be used to help determine severity and service options.

NOTE: Teacher must review student record when concerns are identified for information about previous assessments, supports, and/or strategies which may still be applicable. If possible, consultation with previous teacher is encouraged.

NOTE: Most school authorities have school-based and/or jurisdiction based staff whose role is to support learning needs. These roles have varying titles across school jurisdictions (LST, SSF, LAT, LIFT, IEF, IC, SSC, Learning Coach, Central Coordinator). For the purpose of this document, this role is referred to as “Learning Support Facilitator” whether the role is being filled by a teacher, an administrator or a jurisdiction level coordinator.

	<u>No Apparent Problem</u>	<u>Mild</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Severe</u>
Description of Visual Motor Integration Concerns	No school based concerns.	<p>*Noticeable and inconsistent functioning difficulties in one or more of these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copying from board (<i>slightly slower</i> than peers, with some errors) • Letter formations (<i>may use</i> incorrect letter formation patterns but most letters are recognizable) • Written organization (<i>inconsistent</i> line use and spacing when printing but printing is generally legible) • Drawing (drawings may appear <i>slightly immature</i> for age) <p>*Difficulties are not primarily due to decreased cognition, delays in reading/spelling or language difficulties (i.e., ESL, language comprehension) or visual acuity issues.</p>	<p>* Noticeable and persistent difficulties in all of these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copying from board (<i>significantly slower</i> than peers, misses or omits letters/words) • Letter formations (<i>uses many</i> incorrect letter formation patterns and letters may contain distortions that make them hard to read) • Written organization (<i>persistent poor</i> line use and spacing making printing effortful to read) • Drawing (drawings are <i>noticeably immature</i> for age, less well organized and contain less detail than peers) <p>*Difficulties are not primarily due to decreased cognition, delays in reading/spelling or language difficulties (i.e., ESL, language comprehension) or visual acuity issues.</p>	<p>* Noticeable, consistent, and extreme difficulties in all of these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copying from board (<i>unable to complete</i> copying tasks without significant adult support) • Letter formations (difficulty recalling letter formation patterns from memory, <i>letters very poorly formed</i> with many distortions; letters may be unrecognizable) • Written organization (appears to <i>lack any awareness of</i> correct line use or spacing; printing is virtually illegible) • Drawing (drawings are <i>extremely immature</i> for age; lack organization and detail; drawings may be unrecognizable) <p>*Difficulties are not primarily due to decreased cognition, delays in reading/spelling or language difficulties (i.e., ESL, language comprehension) or visual acuity issues.</p>
Impact on Education		<p>*Minimal impact on social, emotional, and/or academic functioning.</p> <p>*The visual motor integration difficulties are <i>mildly</i> interfering with school functioning.</p>	<p>*Frequently Interferes with social, emotional, and/or academic functioning.</p> <p>*The visual motor integration difficulties <i>moderately</i> interfere with school functioning.</p>	<p>*Significantly limits social, emotional, and/or academic functioning</p> <p>*The visual motor integration difficulty <i>impairs</i> school functioning.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have some difficulty keeping up with written work • May write slightly less than peers • May appear “careless”, “sloppy”, “lazy” in their work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • References the original more when copying, or loses their place to the point that they are often unable to complete the work within the allotted time. • Frequently ends up with incomplete class work. (More work is sent home than the majority of the class) • Spends extra energy focusing on letter formation and printing mechanics so that speed and content suffers OR they give NO attention to mechanics and work is very difficult to read • There is a noticeable difference between what the student can tell you verbally or on a multiple choice test compared to what they can put into writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is unable to complete copying tasks without constant adult support and/or significant accommodations • Student’s rate of printing is extremely slow due to significant difficulties recalling correct formations and organizing their written work • Student’s legibility is extremely poor, typically requiring alternative methods of written expression • Difficulty with written output severely limits student ability to “show what they know”. Grades are impacted unless accommodations are provided.
Identification of Needs		<p>*Concerns identified by teacher observation.</p> <p>* Teacher to confirm that concern is shared by parent/guardian.</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with “Learning Support Facilitator” and/or other school personnel.</p>	<p>*Concerns identified by teacher observation.</p> <p>* Teacher to confirm that concern is shared by parent/guardian.</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with “Learning Support Facilitator” and other school personnel.</p> <p>* Classroom teacher and/or “Learning Support Facilitator” may discuss identification of needs with OT (if available) according to school authority process.</p>	<p>*Concerns identified by teacher observation.</p> <p>* Teacher to confirm that concern is shared by parent/guardian.</p> <p>* Teacher may consult with “Learning Support Facilitator” and other school personnel..</p> <p>* Classroom teacher and/or “Learning Support Facilitator” may discuss identification of needs with OT (if available) according to school authority process.</p>
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