

Interventions to improve functional outcomes in cerebral palsy

KEY STEPS TO EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION

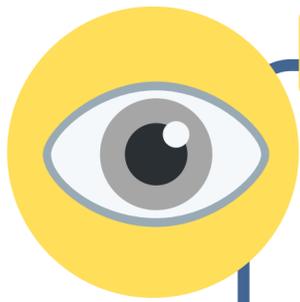
Guidelines for clinicians working with children and young people with CP

When a child or young person with cerebral palsy has a functional goal, there are a number of steps that are recommended for clinicians to carry out in order to maximise outcomes.



SET CLIENT CENTRED GOALS

The first step in best practice intervention is to set goals that are meaningful to the child. Goals should be related to real life activities. Goals should be realistic and achievable within a short timeframe (they may work towards longer term goals). Direct practice of these goals should then be the focus of the intervention, rather than attempting to address underlying impairments or skills.



OBSERVE CHILD CARRYING OUT GOAL

Clinicians should observe the child attempting the goal to determine factors limiting goal achievement. This may include a discussion about when and where the child needs to or wants to participate in the activity. There may be aspects of how the child is carrying out the task, or components of the task or environment that can be addressed to facilitate goal achievement.



PRACTISE THE WHOLE GOAL

Therapy is most likely to lead to goal achievement when the focus of the intervention is direct practise of the goal, rather than addressing underlying impairments. If practice of the whole goal is not possible, part task practise can be undertaken in order to work towards practise of the whole goal.



PRACTICE IN REAL LIFE SETTINGS

Practise of the goals should occur within the child's home and/or community as there are important factors within different contexts that impact on our ability to carry out a task. This is likely to lead to the child being more confident and capable of carrying out the goal outside of the clinical setting. When practice within the child's environment is not possible, practice should occur within a setting, and using resources, that simulates the child's real life as much as possible.



PLAN FOR ENOUGH PRACTICE

Research tells us that we need to practise a task many times in order to be proficient and confident. Once the child has an agreed strategy for carrying out their goal, clinicians and families should make a plan for when and where practice can happen, to ensure enough practice is undertaken for the child to achieve their goal. A home program, which reflects the child's goals and agreed plan can support this process.