

CLUBHOUSE

PAEDIATRIC & ADOLESCENT OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

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NAME: Tamsin Colley
DATE OF BIRTH: 10th September 2002
AGE AT ASSESSMENT: 2 years 6 months
CONTACT NUMBER: 9311-7142
DATE OF ASSESSMENT: 21/5/05

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSESSMENT REPORT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Tamsin is a 2 year 6 month old girl who had a low grade (JPA) cerebellar tumour removed 12 months ago. Surgery involved a full resection of the tumour and there has been no regrowth. Following surgery Tamsin has made many gains, however continues to have some balance and speech difficulties. She receives regular physiotherapy and speech therapy through Sydney Children's Hospital. She has not received occupational therapy over more recent months.

Tamsin attends preschool/daycare 2 days per week. She receives carer assistance which has been funded through the special needs support scheme.

Tamsin's mother was eager to obtain a profile of the development of her fine motor skills, in particular:

- ⇒ Identifying hand dominance
- ⇒ Bilateral hand skills
- ⇒ Development of pencil grip
- ⇒ Development of drawing, colouring and cutting skills

STRUCTURE OF ASSESSMENT:

Tamsin attended the assessment with her mother and was assessed in a 1:1 assessment environment. The following assessment tools were used to obtain a profile of her development.

1. Peabody Developmental Motor Scales – Fine Motor Component
2. Fine Motor Skills Screening
3. Clinical observations during play
4. Parent Discussion

OUTCOMES OF ASSESSMENT:

Tamsin was a delightful girl to assess. She sat at the table to complete tasks for 30-40 minutes. She was eager to attempt and complete tasks asked of her. Overall, her fine motor skills were assessed to be low average for her age. The following observations were made in relation to tasks expected for her age:

- **Not yet established a hand preference.** It is likely that Tamsin would have assumed a right hand preference based on family history and parent report. As a result of her tumour she demonstrates decreased strength and control in her right upper limb and tonal changes observed with posturing of her right upper limb. At today's assessment Tamsin consistently used her left hand to initiate grasp of objects and would cross midline to obtain objects positioned on her right side. She was able to grasp and release objects with both her left and right hand, however the quality when using her right hand was impaired. It will be important to observe her hand use over the next few months to determine whether she is establishing a preference for one hand. Observing her when she uses cutlery, her toothbrush, a comb, as well as tools such as pencils, scissors, paintbrushes can assist in this process. Whilst it is still appropriate that Tamsin engage in bilateral play she will need to develop a hand dominance to allow for skilled hand use for tasks such as writing and cutting. It will be important to determine whether she is accurate enough with her right hand when completing age expected tasks or whether use of her left hand would be preferred. If she assumes a left hand preference it will be important to monitor Tamsin's overall upper limb skills so that she does not develop a learned non use of her right upper limb as tasks become more challenging.
- **Immature grasp of the pencil.** Tamsin's grasp of crayon's and large pencils is immature for her age, however her grasp appeared more developed with the left hand. She used a digital grasping pattern to hold the crayons with her left hand and a fist grip of the crayon with her right hand.
- **Grasp and release patterns for blocks and small objects were appropriate for her age, however precision and speed were reduced on her right side.** She was able to manipulate blocks and small objects with both hands. She was less accurate with right hand, demonstrating some overshooting when attempting to place small objects in a container. She placed blocks on top of each other to make a tower and was able to copy other structured block patterns for her age. She tended to use her left hand primarily to complete these tasks.
- **Age appropriate copying skills .** Tamsin was able to copy vertical and horizontal lines, a circle and a cross. She also made a good attempt at copying a square. She used the crayon in her left hand for all copying tasks.

- **Attempted free drawing.** Tamsin was able to draw a picture of a person, requiring minimal prompts to add some body parts. She drew a head, body and positioned legs and arms appropriately for her age. She completed facial features.
- **Able to use scissors (with assistance to hold and manipulate paper) to snip paper.** Tamsin appeared to enjoy snipping the paper. She attempted to cut using her left hand. She has had limited exposure to cutting, which is expected for her age.
- **Spontaneously counted to 10 with 1:1 correspondence upto 4**
- **Able to accurately name colours.**
- **Able to identify shapes expected for her age including circle, square and cross.**

SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Tamsin attempted all tasks asked of her at the time of the assessment. Based on assessment results she is demonstrating:

- Low average fine motor skills
- Age appropriate copying skills
- Developing drawing skills for her age

However, as discussed at the time of the assessment the following area will need to be further developed:

- Establishment of hand preference/dominance
- Development of pencil grasp
- Development of scissor skills.

The following areas would be seen as priority goal areas to focus on in general play with Tamsin. They could also be a focus at preschool.

- Goal 1: Establish hand preference.
 Goal 2: Facilitate the development of bilateral hand skills.
 Goal 3: Facilitate the development of pencil grasp.
 Goal 4: Facilitate the development of pencil and scissor skills appropriate for age.

I would recommend that Tamsin be regularly monitored in occupational therapy to track her development. Whilst she is completing tasks expected for her age at this point, the quality of her task completion needs to be monitored given her right upper limb difficulties.

I would be happy to review her progress on request. If there are any questions regarding this report please contact me on 9604-9296.

Sharon Duff
Occupational Therapist

c.c. Occupational Therapy File

ACTIVITIES FOR HOME

The following are some ideas aimed at addressing fine motor skill development. Activities outlined address:

- Bilateral hand use
- Identifying hand preference
- Developing in hand manipulation skills
- Developing age appropriate pencil grasp
- Facilitating drawing and cutting skills for age

Games involving both hands

It will be important to encourage Tamsin to use both her hands in activities so that she does not develop a learned non use of her right upper limb as tasks become more challenging. Activities that can be completed with either hand should be encouraged. With tasks such as drawing and writing it will be important to identify a hand preference so that specialisation can occur with that hand. Activities might include:

- stacking blocks, cups,
- placing objects into different sized containers (jars, bottles, cups, pots)
- wind up toys
- unscrewing different sized lids
- turning keys, doorknobs
- unwrapping and wrapping small objects
- threading large and small beads, macaroni, fruitloops, using a pipe cleaner so that it is easier to control
- hammering toys
- playing in the sandpit/bath- tipping and pouring into containers
- playdough- rolling, pinching and poking

Fine Motor Manipulation:

These activities are aimed at encouraging finger manipulation, which is required to operate the pencil with dynamic finger control. Efficient pencil control requires efficient finger position, finger movement to control to direct the pencil and adequate finger strength to operate a pencil over a period of time. Therefore some activities require both manipulation and a strength (resistive) component. In hand manipulation skills are not fully developed until 5 years of age, however encouraging Tamsin to complete activities with greater finger control will be beneficial.

- pushing, poking, pinching, rolling with fingers in playdough, clay
- tearing paper with fingers
- squeezing pegs on and off the side of a container (this could be made into a race and timed)
- stringing small beads, buttons with cotton, pasta with pipe cleaners

Identifying hand preference:

It will be important over the next 6 months to identify which hand Tamsin is likely to use for specialised tool use eg. writing and cutting. Objects should be presented to Tamsin in her midline so that she can make a choice about which hand to use. Her use of hand should be noted. If she is using a pencil/texta she should be encouraged to complete the task with the hand that she started with as opposed to swapping mid task (it will be important to monitor if she finds the task challenging with her right hand or whether she swaps due to fatigue).

Developing pencil skills:

Holding the pencil the correct way:

- Using larger barrelled texta's/crayons so that finger positioning is easier, placing stickers on the shaft to show where fingers need to be positioned.
- At this stage, encouraging her index and middle finger to be opposed to her thumb would be ideal, however achieving a digital grasping pattern

over a fistful grasping pattern could be the first step to achieving a more developmentally appropriate grasp.

Encouraging drawing skills:

- Drawing with crayons, pastas, pencils onto paper. The paper may be placed on the table, floor or even taped to the wall/fence.
- Painting with thick and thin paintbrushes
- Drawing with chalk on a blackboard or on a cement path – using 'chunky' chalk will also assist with finger position when holding the chalk.

Developing scissor skills:

- Try using spring loaded scissors
- If Tamsin is using her left hand for cutting she will need to use left handed scissors
- Using thicker cutting mediums (eg. thin cardboard) can allow greater concentration on the cutting hand as the paper does not move around excessively. This will be particularly beneficial if she is cutting with her left hand and needing to stabilise the with her right hand.
- Snipping and cutting shapes in playdough is easier than cutting paper whilst learning.