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EDITORIAL ARTICLE

The Three Crucial Factors of Educational Therapy

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There are three crucial factors to know and understand what Educational Therapy (EdTx) – recognized by the World Health Organization in 1986 and classified under the Procedural Code 93:82 – can offer to clients with special needs. These three factors are summarized as follows:

1. Identify the bottom line of EdTx especially what it can offer
2. Offer specific solutions to address academic and socio-emotional needs via EdTx
3. Authorize diagnostic assessment to provide appropriate support services and advocate for the rights of individuals with special needs.

Factor 1: The Bottom Line of Educational Therapy

The bottom line of educational therapy is to provide individualized support to students who struggle with learning or behavioral issues, helping them build skills and strategies to succeed academically and socially. Unlike traditional tutoring, which focuses primarily on subject content, educational therapy addresses underlying learning challenges (such as attention, memory, processing, or emotional regulation) and works on developing self-awareness, resilience, and coping skills. The goal is to enable students to become more independent, confident, and engaged learners by addressing both cognitive and emotional aspects of learning.

Factor 2: EdTx Solutions to address Academic and Socio-Emotional Needs

Educational Therapy (EdTx) provides personalized support to help students overcome learning challenges by addressing both academic and emotional needs. This specialized therapy is designed to support the whole child, adapting to their unique needs, which can make a big difference for students with learning and attention differences.

Here are some specific solutions offered:

1. Individualized learning strategies: Therapists assess each student's strengths and weaknesses and tailor strategies to suit their unique learning style. This can involve multisensory approaches for reading, math, and writing that go beyond traditional teaching methods.
2. Executive functioning support: Skills like time management, organization, planning, and self-regulation are crucial for academic success. Educational therapy teaches these skills through tools like planners, checklists, and routines, helping students stay on track and reduce anxiety.
3. Behavioral and emotional support: For students with ADHD or behavioral challenges, therapists work on self-monitoring, impulse control, and coping strategies to handle frustration. They may also teach social skills to improve peer interactions.
4. Skill remediation: For students with specific learning disabilities, therapists may focus on skill-building in areas like reading (decoding, comprehension), writing (grammar, structure), or math (problem-solving, number sense) to bridge gaps in foundational skills.
5. Adaptive techniques for focus: In cases where students may struggle with focus or sensory sensitivities, therapists often incorporate movement breaks, fidget tools, or sensory accommodations to improve engagement and attention.
6. Collaboration with teachers, tutors and families: Educational therapists work closely with teachers (as well as private tutors) and parents, helping to align strategies across school and home. They may suggest classroom modifications or share techniques to support the child in various environments.

Factor 3: Authorization of Diagnostic Assessment and Advocacy for the Rights of Individuals with Special Needs

Educational Therapy (EdTx) equips advocates with specialized knowledge and practical skills that make them credible and effective in advocating for individuals with special needs. Below is how:

1. Understanding of learning challenges: Educational therapists are trained to understand the cognitive, social, and emotional challenges that individuals with special needs face. This knowledge allows them to recognize and articulate specific needs, which can strengthen advocacy efforts.
2. Individualized intervention skills: Educational therapists are skilled in creating personalized strategies that address unique learning and behavioral challenges. This expertise allows them to make concrete recommendations for accommodations and interventions that benefit individuals, making their advocacy grounded in practical experience.
3. Collaboration with other professionals: Educational therapists often work alongside teachers, psychologists, speech therapists, and parents. This multidisciplinary experience helps them understand the roles and perspectives of various professionals involved in supporting individuals with special needs, which is crucial for advocating effectively in educational or therapeutic settings.

4. Evidence-based practices: Educational therapy is grounded in research and evidence-based practices, which lends authority to advocates. When advocating for specific approaches, an educational therapist can back their recommendations with proven strategies, adding weight to their advocacy.
5. Empathy and experience in handling behaviors: Through direct work with individuals facing learning or behavioral challenges, educational therapists develop empathy and firsthand experience, helping them relate to the needs and struggles of their clients on a deeper level. This personal connection enhances their ability to advocate passionately and knowledgeably.

Overall, the combination of expertise, experience, and empathy that educational therapy provides makes these professionals authoritative voices when advocating for appropriate accommodations and support for individuals with special needs.

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