



## FREQUENTLY USED TERMS AND ACRONYMS:

Abduction	The outward movement of a limb away from the body.
Adaptive Equipment	Equipment offering special support which is adapted to the child's special needs (corner chair, prone stander).
Adduction	The inward movement of a limb toward the body.
Advocacy	The act of supporting or promoting a cause. Speaking out.
AFO	A short leg brace worn inside the shoe which extends up to the calf.
Ambulatory	Having the ability to walk.
Assessment	Process for evaluating the child's strengths and weaknesses and to determine his current level of functioning.
Attention span	The amount of time one is able to concentrate on a task. Also called "attending".
Audiometry	The testing of hearing.
Augmentative Communication	The use of nonspeech techniques such as signs, gestures, or pictures to supplement a child's speech abilities.
BMT	Behavior Modification Program
Behavior Program	A program written by the team that addresses the student's challenging behaviors.
Cause and Effect	The concept that actions create reactions.
CSE	Committee on Special Education
CPSE	Committee on Preschool Special Educations.
Cerebral Palsy	A condition caused by a nonprogressive defect of the brain.

Clonus	Rapid, rhythmic movements which results from spastic muscles.
Cognition	The ability to know and understand the environment.
Conductive Hearing Loss	A loss of hearing due to ear infection, middle ear disease, or autonomic abnormalities.
Congenital	Present at or before birth.
Contraction	Momentary tightening of the muscle
Cue	A stimulus that requires nonlinguistic comprehension and forewarns the student of an impending event or activity.
Developmentally Delayed	Having development that is slower than normal
Developmental Disability	A handicap or impairment beginning before the age of 18 which may be expected to continue indefinitely and which causes a substantial disability.
Early Intervention	The specialized way of interacting with infants to minimize the effects of conditions that can delay early development.
Echolalia	A parrot-like repetition of phrases or words used or heard (immediate echolalia or delayed echolalia).
Environmental Cue/ Sensory Cue	A cue taken directly from the environment to warn the student that an activity will occur or an action is anticipated. Stimulus can be tactile, olfactory, or visual.
Epilepsy	A recurrent condition in which abnormal electrical discharges in the brain cause seizures.
Equilibrium	Balance.
Etiology	The study of the cause of a disease.
Expressive Language	The ability to use gestures, words, and written symbols to communicate.
Extension	Limbs of trunk becoming straight or extended. The opposite of flexion.

Facilitated Communication	A method of training people in the use of augmentative communication aids which involves the communication partner or facilitator providing physical assistance to aid the user. Basic elements of this training include: physical support, initial training/introduction, maintaining focus, providing emotional support or encouragement, generalizing and fading.
Fine Motor	Relating to the use of the small muscles of the body such as those in the face, hands, fingers, and toes.
Flexion	The bending of joints.
Gag reflex	A reflex that causes a child to gag or choke when palate or tongue is touched.
Gross motor	Relating to the use of the large muscles of the body such as those in the legs, arms, and abdomen.
Hyperactivity	A specific nervous-system-based difficulty which makes it hard for a person to control motor behavior and results in restlessness, fidgeting and overactive movements.
Hypertonia	An increased tension or spasticity of the muscles. High tone.
Hypotonia	A decreased tension of a muscle. Low tone.
IEP	Individualized Education Program. The written plan that describes what services the local education agency has promised to provide the child.
Imitation	The ability to observe the action of others and to copy them in one's own actions. Also known as "modeling".
Interdisciplinary Team	A team of professionals from different fields of expertise who evaluate the child and then develop a comprehensive summary report of his or her strengths and needs.
Involuntary Movements	Uncontrolled movements.
Lower extremities	The legs.
Intellectual Disability	Below normal mental function. Children who are intellectually challenged learn more slowly than other children, but "intellectual disability" itself does not indicate a specific level of mental ability. The level of mental function may not be identifiable until much later in life.

Muscle tone	The amount of tension or resistance to movement in a muscle.
Multiply-handicapped	Having more than one handicap.
OT	Occupational Therapist. A therapist who specializes in improving the development of fine motor and adaptive skills.
Palmar grasp	Using only fingers, not the thumb to grasp an object in the palm of the hand.
Photo cue	A photograph that represents an activity, person, or event that is about to occur.
Pincer grasp	The use of the thumb and forefinger to grasp small objects.
Primitive Reflexes	Early reflexes that usually disappear after about 6 months of age.
Prompt	Input that encourages a child to perform a movement or activity.
Prone	Lying on the stomach.
Proprioceptive	Information arising from the body, especially from muscles, joints, ligaments, and receptors associated with bones. Many of the proprioceptive sensations either do not reach consciousness or, like vestibular information, comes to awareness only when attention is deliberately focused on them. Plays an important part in sensory integration.
PT	Physical Therapist. A therapist who works with motor skills
Range of Motion	The degree of movement present in a joint.
Receptive language	The ability to understand spoken and written communications as well as gestures.
Reciprocal motion	The alternate movement of arms and legs.
Recreation Therapist	Professional who teaches recreation-type activities (therapeutic swimming, music, movement, etc.).
Reflex	An involuntary movement in response to stimulation such as touch, pressure or joint movement.

Reinforcement	Providing a pleasant consequence (positive reinforcement) or removing an unpleasant consequence (negative reinforcement) after a behavior in order to increase or maintain that behavior.
Respite care	Skilled adult or child care and supervision that can be provided in the family's home or the home of a care provider. Respite care may be available for several hours per week or for overnight stays.
Scoliosis	Curvature of the spine.
Seizure	Involuntary movement or changes in consciousness or behavior brought on by abnormal bursts of electrical activity in the brain.
Self-help	Relating to skills such as eating, dressing, bathing, and cleaning which enable a person to care for himself.
Sensory Integration	The ability of the central nervous system to process and learn from sensations such as touch, sound, light, smell and movement.
ST/SP	Speech Therapist/Speech Pathologist who works to improve speech and language skills as well as oral motor abilities.
Subluxation	Partial dislocation
Tactile defensiveness	Abnormal sensitivity to touch.
Vestibular	Pertaining to the sensory system located in the inner ear that allows the body to maintain balance and enjoyably participate in movement such as swinging and roughhousing.