

**North Coast Therapy Inc.  
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**Cleveland Association of School Psychologists  
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**The Role of OT as a Related Service When Assessing Fine  
Motor Skills and Nonverbal Learning Disabilities**

**Presented by  
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**I. Understanding the role of (OT) related services as a part of the team**

**A. Related is the key word (see handout)**

- Different than medical model- OT/PT have minimal exposure in college to their role in a school setting
- Support service not stand alone like SLP
- Any student on an IEP is eligible
- Testing does not qualify students
- IEP determines need-needs drive services
- Should not have separate OT/PT goals
- Service delivery options that are research based

**II. Using the VMI as an evaluation tool**

**A. Interpreting and utilizing the results**

Psychologists

- For referral to OT
- Using age equivalents vs. standardized scores
- Fine motor components of the VMI
- Fine motor components of handwriting

OT

- Impact on **function**
- In comparison to cognition
- Correlation to handwriting (research)
- Scoring criteria
- To validate ability to form prewriting strokes
- Using age equivalents to help parents understand developmental abilities in regards to handwriting
- Motor vs. Visual scores to determine intervention approach

## **B. Intervention**

- Beery options and approach
- Psychologists role-recommendations
- OT approach

## **III. Nonverbal Learning Disabilities (NLD)**

### **A. What is it and where did it come from?**

- Deficit in nonverbal domains
  
- Pervasive disability
  
- Strengths and Weaknesses
  
- Cause of NLD
  
- Misdiagnosed
  
- Intervention

## **B. NLD Student Profile**

- **Preschool and Early Elementary**
  - Structure
  
  - Motor
  
  - Communication/social skills
  
  - Visual/spatial /organization

- **Mid to Late Elementary**

- Structure
- Motor
- Communication/social skills
- Visual/spatial /organization

- **Middle School and Beyond**

- Structure
- Motor
- Communication/social skills
- Visual/spatial /organization

**C. Role of OT (PT and SLP) as a related service in evaluation**

- Motor (fine and gross)/ Handwriting/ Self care
  - Motor Planning
  - Visual spatial
  - Daily living skills

**D. Role of the Psychologist in evaluation**

- Arithmetic and Math
- Reading, Spelling, Vocabulary and Written Expression
- Social Emotional
- Organization

**E. Qualifying a student with a NLD**

- Group discussion