

# **Milestones Pediatric NeuroRehabilitation Program**

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Welcome to Milestones! The goal of the Pediatric NeuroRehabilitation team is to work with you and your child to support your child's recovery and adaptation to illness or injury. Therapies at Milestones are designed to boost recovery, teach new ways of learning skills, and help your child learn to manage any areas of weakness. Throughout your time at Milestones, our team will work closely with you so that your knowledge of your child and your goals can be included in the treatment plan and your child's activities. We encourage you to speak with any team member about your child's program whenever you have questions, suggestions, or concerns.

## **What can I expect at the beginning of my child's therapy at Milestones?**

- Before your child arrives, our team will review their available medical and school records.
- During your child's first week at Milestones, we will be getting to know your child and completing some specific tests. It is important that we have a good sense of your child's strengths and weaknesses.
- Your child's schedule at Milestones will include many different types of therapy appointments, designed to maximize their progress and prepare them to return to school and home activities.

## **How should I participate in my child's therapy?**

- We encourage you to attend and participate in your child's therapy.
- At times, children find it difficult to focus on work when a parent is in the room. We will work with you to figure out the right amount of time to

watch your child's therapy while helping build your child's independence in a way that is age-appropriate.

### **What are the guidelines for visitors?**

- You may want a special visitor to come to therapy, such as your child's sibling, grandparent, friend, or even one of your child's teachers or therapists from school. Please discuss this with the therapists directly to make the best use of the therapy time.
- There may also be times when a family friend, adult sibling, or grandparent will bring your child to therapy. Before they do, please let us know and we will have you sign a "Friends and Family" form. This will allow us to share scheduling information with these other adults.

### **What do I need to know about your attendance policy?**

- Your child will get the best results from their therapy if they're attending regularly.
- If your child has a fever or flu-like symptoms, please call and let us know that your child will not be coming therapy that day.
- We reserve therapy spaces for your child's appointments, so unexpected absences without calling or contacting us are difficult for us. We have a policy that after 2 unexpected absences, we may put your child's treatment on hold or stop it entirely. It's very important that you attend the scheduled appointments or call us if you need to reschedule.

### **How does therapy scheduling work?**

The program case manager and front desk team will discuss scheduling options with you. We try to work with you to find good times for your child's therapy schedule. Often we are able to be more flexible to your family needs after the first month or so.

## **What are homework assignments from therapy?**

- Homework and home programs are often an important part of our program. The skills your child learns in therapy must be practiced at home to become consistent and useful in everyday life. We will work closely with you so that homework goals and methods are clear and practical. At times, we may ask you to attend a special session to learn a specific home program.
- **Your feedback on homework assignments is very important.** Please let us know if you have trouble with any home activity, or if you find there are too many (or too few) homework assignments.

## **What meetings will I have with Milestones therapists?**

- Therapists will speak with you at appointments to review your child's treatment goals and provide you with information about their progress.
- You will be offered a family meeting within the first month of your child's treatment. At this meeting, we can review your child's treatment program, discuss progress and plans for the upcoming treatment period, and give you a chance to give input and ask questions to the whole team.

## **When can my child go back to school?**

- The treatment team and your child's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation doctor will have recommendations to guide your child toward a successful return to school. Typically, we encourage a slow return to school to prioritize their recovery. Our team will create a summary report of our team's school recommendations. Members of our treatment team may also be able to virtually attend school meetings.
- Once your child has started some schoolwork, therapy sessions can help address skills that affect their school performance, such as organization, concentration, motivation, and emotional, behavioral, or social functioning.

## **Who is part of the Pediatric NeuroRehabilitation team?**

- Below you can learn about the different members of our team. Each child at Milestones will have a customized program to best serve their unique needs, so they may not receive all of these different services. All team members, including you, will work together to create treatment goals.
- Your participation in your child's therapy is extremely important. You provide the rest of the team with information about your child's abilities, personality, and behavior before their illness or injury. Your input helps us make sure we are addressing the areas that you and your child value most. Finally, your follow-through with home programs helps to transfer the skills your child learns in therapy to your child's typical day.

## **Rehabilitation Psychology and Neuropsychology (RPN)**

RPN services support healthy child development in children with disabilities through direct psychological services, consultation, and advocacy. Individual or family sessions with RPN may:

- Treat emotional and behavioral reactions to impairments and disability
- Treat challenges related to social skills and peer relationships
- Encourage participation in the full rehabilitation program
- Provide emotional and educational support to families
- Provide consultation around community involvement and educational or vocational training
- Provide brief evaluations of thinking skills after brain injury and consult about the need for more thorough assessments

## **Physical Therapy (PT)**

Depending on your child's needs, your physical therapist will work on the following areas:

- Maintaining or increasing movement in their arms and legs

- Improving general mobility (movement in bed, on a mat, in a wheelchair, or when walking) to work toward more independence in the home and community
- Improving balance and body coordination
- Strength and endurance training
- Testing and higher-level exercise to help them return to playing sports

The physical therapist is available to talk with with school representatives and coaches to help with the physical and medical aspects of returning to school or sports.

### **Occupational Therapy (OT)**

The main goal of occupational therapy (OT) is to improve developmental skills and support independence in activities of daily living (such as dressing, grooming, play and community activities, home chore responsibilities, and driving). Treatment uses real-life, functional activities to improve your child's skills. Treatment methods may include:

- Cognitive and perceptual retraining
- Activity programs to improve strength, coordination and balance
- Activities to improve visual-motor (hand-eye) coordination for printing and drawing
- Providing adaptive equipment, splints, and arm supports

Your child's OT may also schedule a home visit to see how your child can become more independent in your home, including recommendations for home environment changes (when necessary).

## **Speech-Language Pathology (SLP)**

The speech-language pathologist will check and treat your child's communication and swallowing skills, and they will provide suggestions to your family and the treatment team.

- Communication includes speaking as well as listening, reading comprehension, and written language. Specific areas of cognition (thinking skills) and memory may be addressed, as they are important for effective communication, including communicating with friends and family. Your child's SLP will help them re-learn specific skills as well as new strategies to help them manage any areas of difficulty.
- If your child's speech is not understandable, the SLP may recommend an augmentative communication system (such as a core board, communication book, iPad, or tablet).

## **Therapeutic Recreation (TR)**

The purpose of the TR process is to improve or maintain physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual functioning to support your child's full participation in life. The recreational therapist will work with your child to identify new interests that will also help your child practice their therapy goals in a way that is interesting and fun. They will also help your child with adapting and/or returning to their favorite play activities.

During therapy, the recreational therapist will assess your child's safety in the community and explore their ability to find their way and manage time and money in age-appropriate ways. They will also help you:

- Explore activities available in your community that will provide opportunities for fun and play for your child
- Learn about adaptive techniques and equipment to help your child become more independent

- Get information on local recreational opportunities for your child with special needs
- Increase your child's opportunities to connect with other people through recreational activities

### **Art Therapy**

Art Therapy is a tool that uses creative techniques to support growth, expression, and healing. Pediatric art therapy helps reduce the stress of the rehabilitation process. Art therapy has been shown to help children cope with having a chronic illness or disability while improving their self-esteem. Children often use the art therapy process to express and release emotions, improve their fine-motor (small movement) skills, increase their ability to focus, and experience joy.

### **Program Case Management**

The program case manager acts as the connection between your family and members of the Milestones team. The case manager may also have contact with other agencies or individuals involved in your child's care like doctors, your insurance company, or other case managers. They will help you with accessing available educational resources about your child's diagnosis and rehabilitation.

### **Patient Services Support Staff**

Members of the Patient Services staff are the first members of our team to greet you as you enter the building. They may help with your schedule, check-in and checkout, and answering general questions.

### **Social Work**

Social workers are available to help address any challenges you have with getting care and many other needs, such as insurance and legal questions or community and family support and resources.

## **Who can I contact for more information about this program?**

If you have any questions about the Milestones Pediatric NeuroRehabilitation Program, please contact Diane DeVoogd at (734) 232-3269.

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