

ACADEMY OF PEDIATRIC PHYSICAL THERAPY

Pediatric Certified Specialist Study Guide

Congratulations on deciding to apply to become a pediatric certified specialist (PCS)! The best place to begin your preparations is on the Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy's website (www.pediatricapta.org). Select "Professional Development," go to "PCS & Other Opportunities for Professional Development," and choose "Pediatric Certified Specialist information." This page has links to the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS) (application, prerequisites, description of specialty practice [DSP], etc.), as well as Academy resources (local and online PCS study groups, the Memorial Fund Scholarship, and Academy courses) that can assist in your preparation for the exam.

I. Getting Started – General Information

- A. Assess Readiness and Develop an Action Plan:** Review the pediatric DSP and the pediatric self-assessment tool (SAT). The written exam is developed from the DSP, which is based on a practice analysis study. The SAT can be used to determine readiness for specialist certification. The SAT helps to identify your current level of knowledge and skills in advanced clinical competencies. Once you have identified the competencies that need to be improved, you can develop an action plan (helpful in prioritizing the time, resources, and funds for your journey to achieving specialization). The pediatric DSP, which includes the SAT, is available for purchase from the American Physical Therapy Association's (APTA) online catalogue (www.apta.org) and choose Store, then search for "DSP."

Note: The pediatric DSP was last updated in 2011 and is a working document that will be modified as necessary.

B. Important Dates:

- July 31:** Pediatric Certification Application Deadline
August 31: Pediatric Certification Reapplication deadline
October 1: Dichter Memorial PCS Scholarship Application Deadline
November 30: Examination Fee Due

II. Next Steps – After Acceptance of the Application

Use your action plan to guide knowledge-gathering strategies. This may include attending continuing education courses, collaborating with colleagues by participating in study groups, and gathering information from textbooks, web-based online resources, and primary research in peer-reviewed journals.

Note: Candidates for the examination sign an affidavit and pledge of confidentiality and cannot discuss exam content, but may state how they prepared. Below is a list of resources from a survey of pediatric clinical specialists (ABPTS does not review or endorse the content of any review materials or courses).

A. Participate in a study group

The Academy PCS Prep Online Study group is up and running and runs throughout the year, with most activity in the months leading up to each yearly PCS exam! Members can log in with their APTA login (pediatricapta.org). Once logged on, go to the Forums button on the menu bar. The site is monitored by the PCS Prep Subcommittee. You are able to look around, post, and reply. The group prepping for the next exam decides amongst themselves how they want to approach getting ready for the exam.

B. Textbooks: The following can be purchased new or used via Amazon.com, other online resources, borrowed from a physical therapy professional program, etc.

- Bly, L. Motor Skills Acquisition in the 1st Year. An Illustrated Guide to Normal Development. Academic Press; 1994.
- Drnach M. The Clinical Practice of Pediatric Physical Therapy: From the NICU to Independent Living. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams, & Wilkins; 2007. ebook 2012.
- Effgen, SK, ed. Meeting the Physical Therapy Needs of Children. FA Davis; 2nd ed. 2012.
- Fettters, Linda, Tilsen. Evidence Based Physical Therapy. F.A. Davis Company. 2012.
- Guide to Physical Therapist Practice 3.0. Alexandria, VA: American Physical Therapy Association; 2014.
- Long TM, Battaile, B, Toscano K. Handbook of Pediatric Physical Therapy. 3rd ed. Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer; 2019
- McEwen IR, ed. Providing Physical Therapy Services Under Parts B & C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). 2nd ed. Alexandria, VA: Section on Pediatrics, APTA; 2009.
- Morrison RT, Weinstein SL. Lowell and Winters Pediatric Orthopedics. 7th ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams, & Wilkins; 2013.
- Palisano RJ, Orlin M, Schreiber J. Campbell's Physical Therapy for Children 5th ed. Elsevere; 2017. (Get access to the expert consult website when you purchase either the hard copy or the electronic version of the text.)
- Pelletier E. Physical Therapy Case Files: Pediatrics. McGraw-Hill Education; 2016.
- Rancho Los Amigos. Observational Gait Analysis. Rev. ed. 2001.
- Ratliff KT. Clinical Pediatric Physical Therapy. Mosby; 2nd ed. 2010.
- Straus S, Glasziou P, Richardson W, Haynes R. Evidence-Based Medicine: How to practice and teach it. Fourth Edition. Churchill Livingstone, 2010.

- Tecklin, JS, ed. Pediatric Physical Therapy. 4th ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams, & Wilkins; 2008. (5th ed. 2014).

C. Primary Research in Peer-Reviewed Journals: Local libraries are often able to assist with obtaining important research articles. If you or your institution provide clinical experiences for students from physical therapist or physical therapist assistant programs, you may have access to the associated university libraries. Contact the director of clinical education at these programs to inquire about this potential resource.

For APTA members, PT Now clinical summaries and the article search database at PTNow.org are helpful in obtaining full text articles. Additional web-based resources that may lead to full-text articles include Google Scholar (www.scholar.google.com) and PubMed (www.pubmed.gov). Access the Evidence-based Practice in Pediatric Physical Therapy fact sheet at www.pediatricapta.org, under “Resources,” which provides additional ideas for searching literature for up-to-the-minute grams to inquire about this potential resource.

Key Journals include:

- Physical Therapy Journal - www.ptjournal.org
- Pediatric Physical Therapy - www.pedpt.com
- Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology
- Journal of Developmental Pediatrics
- Physical and Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics
- Journal of Early Intervention by the Division of Early Childhood of the Council of Exceptional Children
- Rehabilitation Oncology. Oncology section, APTA

D. Fact sheets of the Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy - from the APPT website

In particular:

Intensity of Service in an Outpatient Setting for Children with Chronic Conditions

Frequency and Duration of Physical Therapy Services in the Acute Care Pediatrics Setting

Providing Physical Therapy Services in Schools Under IDEA 2004

Intervention for Youth Who Are in Transition from School to Adult Life

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

E. Online resources

ABPTS, American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties

www.abpts.org

CanChild, McMaster University

www.canchild.ca

PTNow from APTA PTNow,

www.ptnow.org

PubMed, Us National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health,

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

Campbell's Physical Therapy for Children Expert Consult

https://expertconsult.inkling.com/store/book/palisano-campbells-physical-therapy-children-5e/?ia_search_q=campbell&ia_view_type=all&ia_result_type=book (product key to web site provided with Campbells 5th edition which includes videos, cases, appendices, and some extra chapters)

Quizlet

www.quizlet.com (create your own study guide)

There are numerous Web sites and publications available on this subject; this list is not meant to be all inclusive. Many of the listed sites have links to additional resources.

F. Structured Pediatric Courses

- Advanced Clinical Practice course. An in-depth review of major areas of pediatric practice offered over a long weekend in the fall each year by the Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy. Not specifically a PCS prep course, but a lot of pediatric material is presented.
- PCS Exam Prep: Exercising Higher Order Thinking (clinical reasoning pre-conference offering at APPTAC)
- There are several online course options from different companies available that people can look into to see if it would be useful for them (keep in mind that these are not affiliated with the APPT, ABPTS, or the APTA)

G. Description of specialty practice (DSP)

As mentioned above, the written exam is developed from the DSP. The pediatric DSP, which includes the SAT, is available for purchase from the American Physical Therapy Association's (APTA) online catalogue (www.apta.org) and choose Store, then search for "DSP."

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