

TMCSEA January NEWSLETTER

Motor Services News

Benefits of Passive Standing

One type of physical therapy frequently used in the educational setting is standing. In the opinion of many physicians and therapists, it is crucial that standing be a part of a non-ambulatory student's everyday program.

The reasons for standing are numerous. Among the most important is the prevention of contractures, improving circulation, helping prevent osteoporosis and pressure sores and improving bowel and bladder regularity. Standing also gives students a different view of the world from what they have while sitting or laying down.

There are three kinds of adaptive equipment that helps students stand in the school setting:

- 1) **Tilt Table:** These are portable mat tables on which a student lies on his back and straps are used across hips, knees and chest to hold the body in place. The therapist brings the student to standing mechanically. The tilt table is most often used for students who have minimal trunk control and have developed lower extremity contractures. Various adaptations can be made (adding head support, tray for arm support) to provide a more functional position.
- 2) **Standing frame/table:** The student stands from a sitting position and is supported in a fully upright position by a solid frame with padding in front of the knees to keep them extended and a belt and gate behind the hips to prevent them from flexing. It allows for a more normal movement pattern and helps facilitate increased motor control in trunk and leg muscles.
- 3) **Standing Wheelchairs:** These may either be power or manually operated and are used both to achieve regular mobility and to stand the person up independently. This device is the most functional and mobile of the three and is most appropriate for a person who is alert and can do functional things while standing. They can also be easily used in the community.

Because standing is such an important part of the non-ambulatory student's daily program, it is included in their yearly IEP. At this time, Schramm Educational Center has 11 tilt tables that are used on a daily basis.