Therapy & Intervention Guide

FOR KAT6 FAMILIES

A quick reference to common therapies and additional approaches that may support children with KAT6A and KAT6B. Every child is unique. Talk with your child's medical team to find the right mix of supports for their individual needs.

PHYSICAL THERAPY (PT)

Helps build strength, coordination, balance and confidence in movement. Supports gross motor skills such as rolling, sitting, standing, walking, transfers and wheelchair mobility.

- Improve strength and endurance
- Work on balance and motor milestones
- Recommend equipment (gait trainers, orthotics, wheelchairs, standers)

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (OT)

Supports fine motor skills, daily living skills and sensory needs. Helps with activities such as feeding, dressing, writing, play and using technology.

- Develop fine motor skills and coordination
- Support self-care and independence
- Address sensory processing challenges
- Recommend adaptive equipment

SPEECH-LANGUAGE THERAPY

Addresses communication delays and helps develop verbal and non-verbal communication skills. Many children with KAT6 do not rely on speech and benefit from alternative communication methods.

- Improve receptive and expressive language
- Support social communication
- Use augmentative and alternative
- communication (AAC)
- Approaches may include PROMPT therapy

FEEDING THERAPY

Addresses oral motor skills and chewing, swallowing difficulties and sensory feeding challenges. Therapists work on safe feeding strategies and nutritional intake. This may include support for children who are tube-fed.

- Address swallowing safety
- Support positive mealtime experiences
- Work toward oral feeding goals when appropriate
- Ask about how VitalStim may support your child’s oral skills

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VISION THERAPY & CVI SUPPORT

For children with cortical/cerebral visual impairment (CVI) and other vision challenges. A full functional & low vision assessment helps identify how your child uses vision and what supports will provide access to learning and daily life.

- CVI evaluations and intervention
- Support tracking, attention and visual access
- Environmental and learning accommodations
- Collaboration with TVIS and educational teams

Vision therapy is also very helpful for other common KAT6 visual impairments such as: strabismus, nystagmus, and refractive errors

Pediatric VIEW with **Dr. Christine Roman** leading the team as the Director. As a leading expert in the field, Dr Roman has authored the **CVI Range** assessment, ***Cortical Visual Impairment: An Approach to Assessment and Intervention***, ***Sensory Balance: An Approach to Learning Media Planning for Students with CVI***, and ***Cortical Visual Impairment: Advanced Principles***. Pediatric VIEW is a resource for CVI evaluations, therapy and intensive programs. https://www.childrenshomepgh.org/our-services/pediatric-view-program/

APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS (ABA)

Uses principles of learning and behavior to teach skills and support meaningful changes in daily life. ABA may address communication, self-care, safety, social interaction, learning, and behaviors that interfere with participation. Programs should be individualized, developmentally appropriate, and focused on meaningful goals while respecting the child's communication, autonomy, sensory needs, and well-being.

ANAT BANIEL METHOD (ABM)

A gentle, movement-based approach that uses slow movements, variation and attention to give the child opportunities to experience their body and movement in different ways. Rather than repeatedly practicing a difficult skill, ABM encourages exploration of multiple movement possibilities. Families may pursue ABM alongside traditional PT or OT for children with motor and developmental differences. Research specifically evaluating ABM remains limited.

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MOVEMENT & SPECIALIZED APPROACHES

These approaches can support motor development, posture, coordination and functional skills. They are often used in addition to traditional PT and OT.

- Intensive Therapy Programs (PT, OT, speech or combination)
- Dynamic Movement Intervention (DMI)
- Anat Baniel Method (ABM)
- Constraint-Induced Movement Therapy (CIMT)
- Whole-Body Vibration
- Primitive Reflex Integration
- Neurodevelopmental Treatment (NDT/Bobath)
- MNRI (Masgutova Method)
- Craniosacral Therapy
- Therapeutic Massage
- Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES/NMES)

MASGUTOVA NEUROSENORIMOTOR REFLEX INTEGRATION (MNRI)

A reflex-based approach using guided movement, touch and sensory input intended to support the integration and function of automatic motor and reflex patterns. Some families pursue MNRI for children with developmental, motor or sensory differences. While primitive reflexes are a recognized part of neurological development, evidence establishing the effectiveness of MNRI for improving functional outcomes remains limited.

DYNAMIC MOVEMENT INTERVENTION

A hands-on motor intervention that uses progressively challenging exercises to encourage postural control, balance, strength and functional movement. A therapist provides support at different points on the child's body and gradually reduces assistance as the child responds to the movement challenge. DMI is increasingly incorporated into pediatric PT, OT and intensive therapy programs, particularly for children with motor delays and hypotonia. Research is emerging, but the evidence base is still developing.

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TECHNOLOGY-ASSISTED THERAPIES

These tools can be used to support movement, communication and participation for some children.

- Robotic Gait Training
- Virtual Reality / Gaming-Based Rehab
- Eye Gaze and AAC Technology
- Adaptive Equipment and Seating
- Orthotics and Prosthetics

AQUATIC & ANIMAL-ASSISTED

These therapies can support strength,
mobility, coordination and confidence while providing enjoyable, engaging experiences.

- Aquatic therapy
- Hippotherapy (therapy with a horse)
- Therapeutic Riding
- Animal-Assisted Therapy (e.g., therapy dogs)

COMPLEMENTARY & EXPERIMENTAL THERAPIES/TREATMENTS

Some families explore these approaches as additional supports. Evidence is still developing and availability and cost vary.

- Photobiomodulation (Red Light / Low-Level Laser Therapy)
- Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT)
- Mild Hyperbaric Oxygen (mHBOT)
- Biofeedback/Neurofeedback
- Acupuncture / Acupressure

CREATIVE, EMOTIONAL & DEVELOPMENTAL

These therapies can support communication, emotional expression, regulation and engagement.

- Music Therapy
- Art Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Social Skills Groups
- Sensory Integration therapy
- Parent Coaching
- Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)
- Recreational and adaptive sports (e.g., adaptive swim, dance, cycling)
- Brain Gym
- Interactive Metronome

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MEDICAL & SUPPORT SERVICES FOR THERAPY

These specialists and services can be important parts of your child's care and therapy plan.

- Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PM&R)
- Respiratory Therapy
- Swallowing / Dysphagia Evaluation
- Orthopedic Care
- Seizure/Neurology Support
- Seating & Mobility Clinic

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Every child is unique. What works for one child may not work for another.
- Some therapies are well established, while others are emerging or experimental.
- Many families use a combination of therapies.
- Consider your child's goals, potential benefits, risks, cost and how it fits with other therapies and your family's routine.
- **Always talk with your child's medical and therapy team before starting a new therapy.**

GET HELP PAYING FOR THERAPY



Therapies and specialized equipment can be expensive, but financial assistance may be available. Many communities have local nonprofits, charitable organizations, and grant programs that help families cover these costs. Check with your child's care team or local disability organizations to learn about resources in your area.

KAT6 Empowered Grant: Financial assistance for eligible KAT6 families. Visit kat6.org/empowered-grant for details.

CONNECT! Developed by a medical parent, @AdvocacyAbbey on Instagram, and is now housed at **Support Now** provides grants to help families pay for therapies, equipment, intensives and other essential needs. grants.supportnow.org