



INTRODUCTION

Although children with cerebral palsy have been treated in the therapies for decades, the current literature lacks detailed, comprehensive descriptions of their posture and movement. Even rarer in research literature and texts are clinically applicable intervention ideas for therapists.

My understanding of children with cerebral palsy is based on clinical experience; discussion with and observation of peers treating children with cerebral palsy; teaching experiences in university, college, and continuing education settings; and critical reading of the literature. Hopefully, the descriptions in this book can be used to generate further clinical analyses and intervention ideas, as well as research ideas that will enrich our understanding of the needs of children with cerebral palsy.

My hope is that clinicians who read the second edition of this book feel that they have more detailed information, more options for intervention, and a system to evaluate the children they care about so much. I hope, too, that researchers will gain ideas for specific research studies that will test the truth of the descriptions in this book. This edition is based on information gleaned from recent research studies about cerebral palsy; changes in the biopsychosocial model of human functioning, disability, and health; continued clinical practice; and teaching experience.

Although children with cerebral palsy are unique individuals with their own strengths and needs, this book divides and classifies cerebral palsy based on distinct pathophysiologies and motor impairments for clear understanding of their common effects on posture and movement. In reality, most children with cerebral palsy do not fit into neat classifications as far as their integrities, impairments, activities and their limitations, and participation and its restrictions are concerned. This book is organized by these classifications only to assist you in identifying groups of impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions that often are seen together. While this information can help you organize your observations, analysis, and intervention planning, it only begins the process of carefully thinking and planning for each individual child.

Each child with cerebral palsy is different from the next. Each child has a unique family, personality, and strengths. Find out about those first. We are the best we can be as therapists when we value and care about each child as a unique person first. Then use this book to help yourself learn more about the posture and movement dysfunction of each child you serve. Make careful observations and listen to the child's and family's observations and goals, then work to learn why you see what you see and decide what you will do about it.