

Uniquely Wired: embracing neuro diversity

A home play activity box for children on the Autism Spectrum.

Rakshita Gupta, Pearl Academy Noida, rakshitagupta@gmail.com

This project aims at understanding the unique learning challenges of children on the autistic spectrum, and the importance of early intervention for long-term positive effects on symptoms and skill development. The concept of productive play is explored as a way of parent-child engagement, maximising creative potential and enhancing social participation.

Drawing insights from case studies, and observation sessions undertaken during this project at therapy centres and schools. It was ascertained that educators/professionals mostly used available mainstream games which they modified on an individual basis while conducting the therapy sessions for the autistic children.

They however find it challenging to express these modifications to parents/ guardians who are unable to repeat the experience in the home environment. The research further included visiting homes and talking to parents/ guardians of children on Autism spectrum. Prevalence of a social stigma around Autism was very evident while collecting data from primary sources. Currently a huge gap between the learnings of a child at therapy center/ school to learnings at home can be easily mapped in the local context. An opportunity was therefore identified for a tool to guide and motivate parents to conduct play activities at home in order to augment and accelerate the learning developmental process.

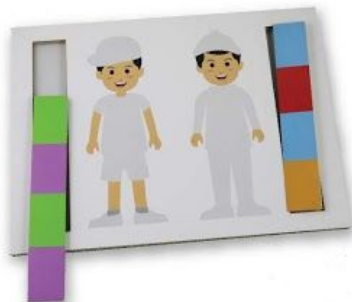
Uniquely Wired is a home play activity kit for children on the Autism Spectrum above two year, to enhance their social, cognitive and motor development. It is packaged as a tool for the parents/ guardians to become more aware about the capabilities and limitations of the child and overcome social aloofness.

It includes a set of 10 cognitive and fine motor skills activities/puzzles along with a box, Sound maze (for eye contact tracking), Customisable mat (for gross motor skills), Tactile stimulation book (to reduce tactile defensiveness) and a set of activity guide with a do's and don't scroll (for parents to guide the child).



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The activities are developed based on a rigorous feedback process from psychologists special educators and therapists that work with autistic children. Activities were tested for their effectiveness and overall learning experience with four children on the spectrum, of the age group 2.5 - 4.5 years. An overall positive outcome was reflected where children were found to be engaged in achieving the learning curves. Parents on the other hand established a sense of contentment as they could participate in the play and contribute constructively. It is believed that a longitudinal study on this design will certainly churn out further insights on using this kit as a way to teach the children at home.



Keywords- Home play, Children, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Activity kit, Social development, Cognitive development, Motor skill development, Parents

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