

A proven therapy program for children
with autism spectrum disorder



*Our therapists train parents to help children connect,
communicate and build relationships with others*

put in the time,
have fun,
make sure child is profiled accurately,
and play at the child's level

4 PRINCIPLES OF P.L.A.Y.

P.L.A.Y. Project

- Strengthens foundation skills to promote generalization and higher levels skills
- Uses modeling, coaching and video taping to promote adult learning
- Teaches functional techniques that can be used throughout entire daily routine as well as play
- Focuses on the quality of engagement not rote skills
- Continually assesses the child's progress as it relates to the developmental levels to create monthly skill building plans by tailoring model to individual family needs every 4 weeks

What makes P.L.A.Y. Project different?

- 10 three hour visits held every 4-6 weeks
 - Modeling, coaching and videotaping
- Use of standardized assessments and evidence based strategies for meeting the goals
- Contact with home consultant as needed between visits
 - Phone and/or email contact
- Written Report
 - A detailed report with individualized plans for “homework”
- DVD of 15 minute interaction analyzed in the written report
- Access to the RELATE NOW website which provides techniques and activities for parents to use

What makes P.L.A.Y. different?

- Ultimate goal is to help with language and social skills through the building blocks of the Functional Developmental Levels which a typical child obtains by age 5
 - Shared attention & regulation (FDL-1)
 - Engagement (FDL-2)
 - 2- way communication and imitation (FDL-3)
 - Complex 2-way communication (FDL-4)
 - Shared meaning & symbolic play (FDL-5)
 - Emotional thinking (FDL-6)

Curricular (PLAY) Activities For Functional Developmental Levels 1 & 2

- Gently shaking arms or legs
- Gently squeezing arms, leg, head.
- Rolling child up in a rug
- Swinging in a blanket
- Gently laying/sitting on them to give them a feeling of pressure
- Tickling
- Gentle wrestling
- Blowing on their skin, hair, face
- Opening and closing a door and playing peek a boo from the other side



Curricular (PLAY) Activities For Functional Developmental Levels 3 & 4

- All from the previous slide, plus:
 - Chase: “I’m gonna get you”
 - Get the bubbles, balloon, etc.
 - Ball play (rolling it back and forth)
 - Very simple pretend (phone to ear, feed dolly, cars crash and make a crashing sound).
 - Finger painting with shaving cream, colored glue with sparkles, etc.
 - Puzzles
 - Farm animal play, dump trucks, trains
 - Being silly

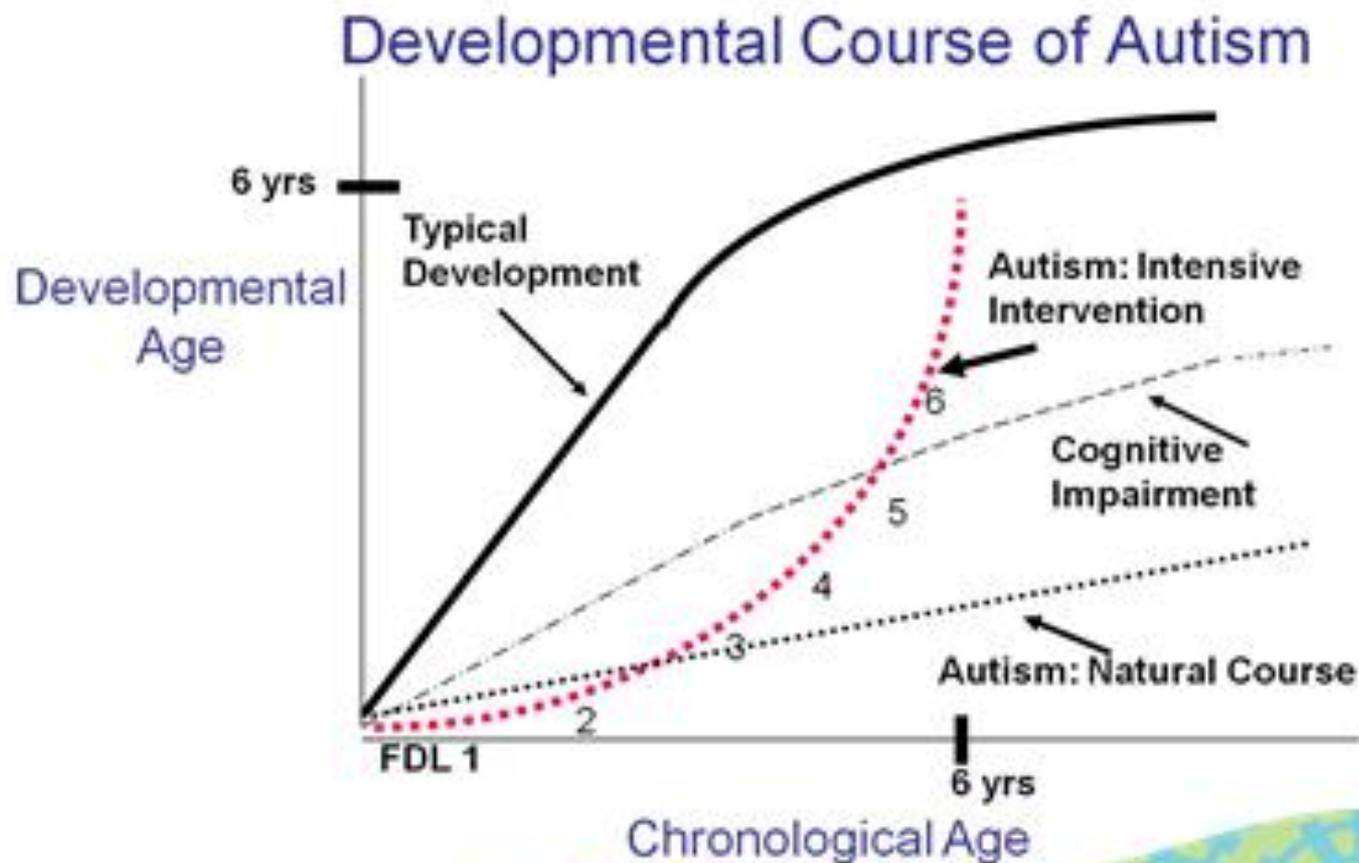


Curricular (PLAY) Activities For Functional Developmental Levels 5 & 6

- Pretend: dress up, crashing cars, tea party, dolly sleeping, dinosaurs chasing a man, etc.
- Real hide and seek, not just peek a boo. Hide a doll and say “Where is the dolly?”
- Duck, duck, goose
- ‘Reading’ books—mostly looking at pictures and telling a simple story (Don’t READ the book, explain what’s happening.)
- Drawing faces



Developmental Course of Autism



QUOTES FROM OUR PARENTS

When my son, Gus, and first I started participating in the PLAY PROJECT, his play consisted of a series of highly-repetitive, non-sensical maneuvers accompanied by memorized phrases. He used few toys the way they are intended and mostly played with the same three things. His favorite thing to say to me when I came near was "Momma, go away."

And I would, feeling badly about it, all the while.

Six months later, both Gus and I have both learned so much about the importance of playing together, thanks to the Play Project. He now engages willingly and of his own accord with other children and though the results are not always in his favor, he continues to try, because we play at home and he knows playing with others is fun and worth his while. As his mother, I have come to respect his current level of play and I have become smarter about how to engage him in play that will expand his play horizon slowly. I see his personality shine and his social awareness grow through each successful play interaction we have - and that is priceless to me.

We still have a long way to go, but I am encouraged most by the fact that come playtime my son now tugs at my waist and says "Momma come play."

Geraldine Dinkins, mother of Gus, age 5, diagnosed with Autism at 30 months

“Prior to the Play Project we were intuitively "on the right path" with our efforts to engage Aaron, but there were so many competing philosophies that we were starting to get bogged down, overwhelmed and were second-guessing our instincts. The Play Project helped us refine our approach to Aaron and gave us permission to meet him on his level to nurture that relationship. At our consultation Aaron was 38 months, verbal but heavily echolalic--very rarely saying anything that was contextually relevant and he was primarily functioning at a level 1 to level 2.

Nine months later he can hold a short conversation, give basic information about the events of his day, and express his wants/needs and likes/dislikes and he fluctuates comfortably up to level 4 with emerging 5's. To say he has grown tremendously is an understatement!”

Samara Mendel, mother of Aaron Price, age 4

Quotes from Dr. Solomon:

“Other therapies puts bricks in the wall before its completely built and PLAY creates the foundation”

“PLAY joins the wishes of the family by helping the family meet their individual goals”

PLAY Project: Skill Sequence

1. List Principles & Strategies Based on Comfort Zone (CZ)
Sensory Profile (SP) and Functional Developmental Level (FDL)

2. Assess Child's unique: CZ Activities, SP & FDL

3. Define Daily & Weekly Curriculum/Activities

4. Follow Child's Cues, Lead & Intent to Increase Circles

5. Create Menu Of Specific Techniques

6. Video Tape/Critically Review Interactions and Progress

7. Refine Curriculum, Methods & Techniques



Program Evaluation: Results

- Satisfaction
 - 74% completed surveys
 - 70% were very satisfied
 - 10% satisfied
- Clinical Outcomes
 - Based on FEAS scaled scores 45.5% of children made good to very good progress after intervention.
 - Based on Home Consultant Clinical Scores
 - 52% of children made very good progress i.e. ≥ 1.5 FDL
 - 14% of children made good progress i.e. 1 FDL



FIRST Outcomes with P.L.A.Y. Project

- 64% of parents improved in Forming Attachment
- 86% of parents improved in 2 Way Communications
- 71% of children improved in Self-Regulation
- 57% of children improved in Forming Attachment
- 50% of children improved in 2 Way Communications
- 71% of children improved in Behavioral Organization

7 yr. old boy with "lower level" skills. Has significant difficulty in all areas and is very avoidant in his interactions with others.

[Click to view](#) a clip of first P.L.A.Y. Project session: baseline of parent child interaction during play



[Click to view](#) a clip of play after numerous sessions focused on increasing basic engagement in quality and quantity.



Through coaching, videotaping, and modeling Mom was able to find his areas of interest and motivation and use this to increase all areas of communication as well as engagement.

We saw overall increase in play skills, functional communication, and a decrease in problem behaviors.

Mom reported that she learned to make the most of small activities in the daily routine and turn them into therapeutic moments.

5 yr. old girl with "higher functioning" skills who could not sustain desired interactions with Mom or peers due to significant complex echolalia, extreme difficulty in sensory regulation, and rigidity in play.

[Click to view](#)

Play after numerous P.L.A.Y. Project sessions in which there was focus on solidifying lower level skills which did not "hold up" during engagement. Mom was coached on how to take play to a more basic level with the focus on true sustained engagement with daughter.



[Click to view](#)



Through coaching and modeling, Mom was shown how meeting her daughter at her true developmental level made it easier for her to increase Molly's overall functioning and true engagement.

We saw a significant increase in joint attention, flexibility, and ability to sustain back and forth with another person. She also became much more regulated in her sensory processing.

We saw a significant decrease in "stemming" behaviors such as hand flapping, eye positioning, and echolalia.

3 year old girl with significant deficits in engagement with people, sensory regulation, and very limited functional communication. As a result she would get stuck in comfort zone activities that would make it even more difficult for her parents to interact with her. She preferred to be alone in her dark room watching TV or playing with her iPad and would often scream when people tried to interact with her.

[Click to view](#) a clip of first P.L.A.Y. Project session which is a baseline of parent child interaction during play.



[Click to view](#) a clip of parent child interaction after four P.L.A.Y. Project sessions during which we focused on lower level skills of self regulation, shared attention, and two way communication. Mom was first coached on using sensory motor play as a way to woo her daughter to her so they address these lower functional developmental levels.



Clip of first P.L.A.Y. Project session which is a baseline of parent child interaction during play.

Through coaching and modeling Mom was shown first how to have fun with her daughter by using sensory motor play and avoiding visual traps. In four sessions we saw a significant improvement in shared attention, engagement with another person, and two way communication. She is initiating interactions, is beginning to use some language, and is beginning to have a more continuous flow of back and forth interactions. The family has not yet finished their tenth PLAY project visit and she and her mother continue to make significant gains.



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