Welcome to the PLAY Project

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Did You Know...

The PLAY Project intervention for young children with ASD is the first developmental, relationship-based, parent training model with research results that show improvements in autism symptomatology?

Dr. Richard Solomon

- Intensive ABA services provided publicly
- ABA Program with Ivar Lovaas PhD
- Early PLAY Project with Stanley Greenspan MD
- 2000 Michigan: No intensive services publicly
- Community-based, family centered, cost effective
  program: PLAY Project born!
- Over the last 14 years PLAY has become a cost
effective, train-the-trainer model that is now in 30 states and 9
countries

What Guides Us

Our Vision
“All parents will be supported in developing a joyous
relationship with their children with autism spectrum
disorders in a way that will help each child reach their
full potential.”

Our Mission
“To train a global network of pediatric professionals to
deliver an evidence-based, low-cost, intensive
developmental intervention to families of young
children with autism spectrum disorders.”

U.S. PLAY Project Consultation Programs

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Introduction to The PLAY Project

Profile of a PLAY Project Consultant

- Masters Degree or equivalent
- Experience working in child development
  - Occupational Therapists
  - Speech/Language Pathologists
  - Social Workers
  - Early Intervention Specialists
  - Teachers & Special Educators
  - Psychologists
  - Community mental health professionals

Certification Process: Preparation

Certified PLAY Project Consultant Curriculum:
- Functional Developmental Levels
- Consultation process
- 7 Circles of The PLAY Project
- Taking videos, analyzing videos
- Preparing reports for families
- Administrative matters

Autism Symptoms and Developmental Delays

Lack of:
- shared enjoyment
- social or emotional reciprocity
- varied spontaneous make-believe or social imitative play

Impairment in:
- social interaction
- language / communication

- Stereotyped and repetitive use of language
- Restricted or repetitive patterns of behavior or interests

Need: Intensive Intervention

National Research Council (2001)
Characteristics of Effective Interventions
- Begin early
- 25 hours/week
- 1:1 or 1:2
- Active engagement of child
- Parent training
- Strategic Direction

How we meet the need

The PLAY Project Early Intervention Program

- Is cost-effective, easy to learn, and easily disseminated model.
- Is evidenced-based and meets the intensity requirements.
- Reduces autism symptomatology
**PLAY Project intervention is...**

- Family and child centered
- Empowering for parents
- Relationship-based
- Playful & fun: Addresses the core deficit: Social impairment

“When you do what the child loves, the child will love to be with you.” Dr. Solomon

**Circle 1: PLAY Project Methods**

- Read the child’s cues and intent
- Slow the pace of play, observing and waiting for the child’s idea
- Follow the child’s lead, responding to what the child wants
- Open and close circles of communication (back and forth interactions)
- Build on the child’s interests
Introduction to The PLAY Project

Seven Circles of the PLAY Project

1. Ready Set PLAY: An Introduction to Principles and Methods
2. Understanding Your Child: Creating a Unique Profile
3. The PLAY Plan: Individualized Techniques & Activities
4. Family Guidance: Coaching, Modeling, and Feedback
5. Engagement: PLAY time between Parent and Child
6. Visit Review: Video and Written Feedback
7. Change and Growth: Revising the Plan as Child Develops

PLAY Goals
- Joyful relating
- Simple and complex nonverbal gestures
- Long interactive sequences (e.g. 50+)
- "Circles" of spontaneous verbal communication
- Shared social attention (FDL 1-3)
- Symbolic language related to feelings (FDL 4-6)
- ‘With us’ continuously, not fragmented/stuck in CZ.
- Socially functional & interested in others.

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PLAY Project Research

- Pre-Post, uncontrolled study published in Autism 11, no. 3 (2007) 205-224.
- 68 children, age range of 2 to 6 years old
- Completed 8 to 12 months of PLAY Project program
- Parents taught to deliver 15 hours/wk. of 1:1 interaction
- Monthly, 3 hour home based visits
- Results indicated that 45.5% of the children made good to very good developmental progress.
- Overall parent satisfaction with the PPHC was 90%

NIMH Randomized control trial

- SBIR NIMH Phase II—Awarded, Sept. 2009
- 3 Year, $1.85 Million
- Easter Seals & Michigan State University
- RCT, multi-site, blinded study
- 5 ES sites, 60 children per year x 2 years = 120
- Largest study of its kind in US.

Evidence for PLAY

Results of the The PLAY Project Intervention

1. Significant improvements in:
   - Caregiver/parent and child interaction
   - Social interaction of child with autism
   - Social-emotional development of child with autism
   - Autism symptomology

2. Secondary Outcomes:
   - Decrease in parent stress and depression
   - PLAY Project consultant fidelity

Research: Implication

- PLAY Project offers a replicable method
- Using an efficient training and certification model
- At relatively low cost to parents and society
- That can be broadly and quickly disseminated
- To serve a growing, unmet national need

EXCITING NEWS

The PLAY Project research was just recently accepted for publication in the Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics

It’s All About Relationships!

"I might not remember what you said, but I'll always remember how you made me feel."

Maya Angelou