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Play Therapy for Autism

All children love to play, but the play activities and playtime options they are attracted to differ, and this holds true for kids with autism as well. Children with autism hold unique behavioral issues and have difficulty understanding the social rules of society. Kids with autism and related difficulties find it problematic to follow unstructured or free playtime and often have difficulty with conventional social interaction. For these reasons, they need to be taught social, emotional, problem-solving, and other life skills through structured, functional play. The right kind of skill building toys and materials that can encourage development of these skills in autistic kids is very important.


A popular skill-building toy that is also rich in learning opportunities for kids is LEGO®. By virtue of playing with LEGO®, kids with autism can be taught social skills easily. A widely used skill building approach for kids with autism is LEGO® therapy. LEGO® therapy was developed by US-based Dr. Daniel B. Goff, a licensed Pediatric and Developmental Neuropsychologist. He has been involved in collaborative research on LEGO® therapy approach to improving social competence in kids with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) – a spectrum of closely related lifelong neurodevelopmental disorders that are marked by cognitive impairment and difficulties with social interactions, communication and behavior.

LEGO® therapy is a socio-developmental therapeutic technique specially designed for kids with ASD. The therapy aims to improve kids' social contact with others, improve their ability to maintain social interaction, and help them deal with their autistic aspects.

So what is it about LEGO® therapy that helps kids with autism and related disorders? LEGO® therapy motivates kids with ASD to communicate with one another and solve a problem by building LEGO® creations, in pairs or groups of three. This technique offers a perfect balance of structured play and learning that many kids with autism find appealing, as they can easily follow a systematic process of building LEGO® creations, and communicate verbally and non-verbally with their group members. With the help of a play therapist and LEGO® bricks, it becomes easy to set rules and make kids follow them. LEGO® therapy also allows kids to exercise sharing tasks, **problem-solving** by communicating with one another, develop listening and social skills. New research into the benefits of LEGO® as a part of play therapy shows that kids who participated in LEGO® therapy showed improvement in social skills. It can also be effective for children with selective mutism, anxiety disorders, especially social anxiety disorder, depression, or adjustment disorders that manifest as depression or anxiety.

STACK

Are you looking for fun **activities for kids**? Then head to STACK – the largest event for fans of LEGO® in the Middle East! Join us at Skydive Dubai from the 19th to 22nd of October 2016 to give your kids an innovative space to meet specific learning goals. This unique family **edutainment** event will host **over 35 amazing attractions**, interesting game-based sessions and challenges for them and **Adult Fans of LEGO® (AFOL)**. The entire family can take part in building challenges and competitions in this four-day LEGO® extravaganza, and win some cool prizes. **Book your tickets here**. Get ready. Get set. STACK!

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