



The PLAY Project

Autism Intervention Fact Sheet

"The best play-based parent training program in the country for young children with autism. Evidence based, compassionate and beneficial for parents and participants." —Stuart Brown MD, National Institute for Play.

- PLAY Project Autism Intervention is an evidence-based,* highly structured, parent implemented, intensive intervention model for young children (14m - 6y) with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) that has been serving families nationally and internationally for 15 years.
- Certified PLAY Project Consultants, in the home or clinic/office setting, coach parents to connect with their child in a joyous, playful way that improves the child's social interaction and development addressing the core social deficits of ASD.

NIH funded research*—the largest autism study of its kind in the U.S. with 128 study children/families from four states—showed that parents can learn the methods, that children improved in their social interaction, functional development, and autism severity and that PLAY Consultants showed fidelity in implementing the program.

- PLAY Consultants typically make one home visit a month for a 2-3-hour visit during which they coach parents using our 7 Circles of PLAY approach and videotape samples of play. They provide detailed mid-month written and video feedback for parents on how to keep play fun and engaging so the child moves up developmentally. Parents are encouraged to PLAY with their child 1-2 hours per day in 15-20-minute sessions and through daily activities (the model works in the clinic, early intervention, or office setting as well with as well with weekly one-hour sessions).
- PLAY Project Consultants are typically child development specialists, including SLPs, OTs, MSWs, MEds, Psychologists, and MDs, with a master's degree or equivalent experience. Over 500 PLAY Project Consultants are providing PLAY Project services in the U.S.
- One full time PLAY Project Consultant can serve up to 25 families making PLAY easy to disseminate in rural or urban settings. PLAY has been implemented in community mental health, early intervention, and medical rehab settings at 1/10th the cost of ABA services.
- Ohio adopted PLAY for its Early Intervention (B-3) system, training 120 consultants over a three-year period with 70% of Ohio counties providing services to over 500 children per year.
- PLAY Project Consultant training is very efficient. An initial training phase—2-day intensive workshop, and weekly online training for 6 weeks— is followed by a supervision phase—12 to 18 months of internet-based feedback for PLAY Project Consultants' ongoing cases. PLAY Project Consultants can begin delivering services to families immediately following the initial training phase.

Richard Solomon MD, a developmental and behavioral pediatrician, is the medical director of The PLAY Project. For more information, visit our website at www.playproject.org or call (734) 585-5333.

* Solomon R, Van Egeren L, Mahoney G, Quon-Huber M, Zimmerman P. PLAY Project Home Consultation Intervention Program for Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Randomized Controlled Trial. J Dev Beh Pediatr. 2014; 35(8): 475-485. To view the full open access article, click on this link: http://journals.lww.com/jrnldb/Fulltext/2014/10000/PLAY_Project_Home_Consultation_Intervention.1.as



The 7 Circles of The PLAY Project

The 7 Circles of The PLAY Project summarize the experience of The PLAY Project's evidence-based, manualized autism intervention:

1. **Principles and Methods:** Families learn the foundations of PLAY:
 - The four principles: 1.) Fun with people, 2.) Put in the time (2 hours/day), 3.) Profile the child accurately, and 4.) Play at the right developmental level.
 - The five methods 1.) Read the child's cues, 2.) Adjust the pace of interaction, observing and waiting for the child's idea, 3.) Follow the child's lead, 4.) Promote "circles of communication" (reciprocal exchanges), and 5.) Build on the child's interests.
2. **Child Profile:** Each child is individually profiled in terms of 1). What they love to do (Comfort Zone Activities), 2). Their sensory profile and 3). Functional developmental levels
3. **Techniques and Activities:** Individualized suggestions give parents clear ideas of how to implement PLAY.
4. **Family Guidance:** PLAY Consultants come to the home to coach, model, and give structured feedback based on the video analysis and visit.
5. **Engagement:** Between visits, parents engage their child and put in the time.
6. **Visit Review:** Between visits, the consultants send a visit review that includes written and video feedback so parents can refine their approach
7. **Change and Growth:** The program is adjusted as the child moves up functional developmental levels.