



Gadgets and toys to aid children with autism

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Children with autism often struggle to socialise, decode everyday interactions and express their basic needs or emotions. This limitation creates frustration and restlessness in those special children's minds, which further exaggerates their difficulties. Here is a list of some simple but impactful gadgets and toys that can help them reduce stress, stay focused on a task, learn basic manners, understand emotions, and develop their communication skills.

In noisy environments such as crowded roads, shopping malls, family gatherings, or sporting events, they struggle to adapt to such an environment and enhance their ability to concentrate on a particular task.

ANTI-STRESS FIDGET CUBE

Fidgeting helps to reduce anxiety and release the restless energy of our body. Fidget gadgets or toys can help individuals, especially children with autism, be helpful self-regulation tools in staying focused on a particular task or improving their learning ability. Because children with autism often face trouble grasping things or being calm and concentrated, keeping their discomfort aside. Anti-stress fidget cube, one of the fidget gadgets, is a small hand-held device and approximately three times bigger than

standard dice. It has geegaws on all sides, such as a rolling ball, a switch, a little joystick, a spinning dial, gears, a worry stone and five buttons. These fidget tools have something to do with glide, click, flip, breathe, spin and roll, which offer a variety of sensory actions for children with special needs.

NOISE-REDUCING BLUETOOTH HEADPHONES/EARMUFFS

Background or loud noise becomes a constant nuisance while processing some critical information and sorting out things. It creates more difficulties being a chronic troublemaker for children with autism or Auditory Processing Disorder (APD). In noisy environments such as crowded roads, shopping malls, family gatherings, or sporting events, they struggle to adapt to such an environment and enhance their ability to concentrate on a particular task. In such condition, noise-reducing Bluetooth headphones or earmuffs can be convenient for them. These headphones are designed so that they will reduce the overall decibel rate of noise to some extent but will also let you listen to someone who is talking to them or near to them. Most earmuffs are adjustable, comfortable and cover the ears of children to ensure maximum protection from the sound.

PICTURE EXCHANGE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM (PECS) BEHAVIOUR KEYRING

The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is a stepping stone to ensure effective communication for children with severe speech disorder. In this method, picture

cards are used to fill up the communication gap and reduce their frustration. Children with such a disorder learn how to and what picture they should hand over to indicate their basic needs and wants. As time passes, they can also learn the use of cards in such a manner that they can form sentences and develop their communication skill. PECS solutions or cards can be both commercial or homemade. However, making them at home can be overwhelming as you need a good amount of research and painting skill for that. Commercial PECS behaviour keyrings store the basic picture cards with a binder. Laminated cards are primarily used for the sake of longevity. The cards are divided into categories so that these children can easily access them.

GEL HAND EXERCISE BALL

The gel hand exercise ball is a therapy ball that helps children with autism to feel sensory stimulation. This well-rounded strengthening tool is irresistibly squishy suitable for squeezing, tossing, massaging and strengthening hand muscles. It is like a fidget toy that assists in improving focus and concentration. Those who have ADHD, ADD, sensory processing disorder and weak hand muscles benefit from using these exercise balls as these increase strength and agility in their hands. For better health benefits, one should practice these hand exercise tools regularly.

These gadgets and toys are affordable and easy to get in local gadget or toy shops. You can also find them in online shops in case your local shops don't sell them.