

By the Grace of G-d.

An Autism Success Story

Following Maxi Mind Brain Training, this Autistic six-year-old boy now reads, follows instructions, socializes, and converses all for the first time. He's even taken up two new languages!

Presenting Issues

Adam was a 6 year old boy diagnosed with Autism and Central Auditory Processing Disorder. His parents registered him with Maxi Mind hoping to address his delayed play and social skills, repetitive behaviours, and difficulty sustaining conversation. Adam would frequently escape through self-talk while tensing and watching his hands. Teachers noted he had considerable difficulty sustaining attention, following instructions, completing tasks, and interacting with peers. An audiologist assessment revealed special difficulty discerning speech amid noise, decoding accented or muffled speech, and directional listening. His auditory memory, concentration, and vigilance were all weak.



Course of Treatment

Adam engaged in a customized Maxi Mind Brain Training Course comprised of 60 one-on-one sessions conducted by a therapist, i.e., a Maxi Mind certified Special Educational Assistant specialized in Neuro-Educational Therapies. The course combined engineered sound stimulation and sensory integration exercises and was supplemented with a selection of cognitive games and fine motor activities. The sessions were 50 minutes in duration and took place on average 3 times per week from over a period of five months during 2012.

The protocol used for engineered sound stimulation was the Sensory Motor Program of the Integrated Listening System (iLs). The exercise regimen was a select combination of the activity sets prescribed in iLs together with those of the Learning Breakthrough Program. Both the music and movement methodologies selected are evidence-based, scientifically developed and medically endorsed.

As a wind-down activity following the exercises, while continuing to listen to the iLs music, Adam was guided in fine motor activities such as connecting dots, mazes, play-dough, small lego, and mini-golf as well as cognitive and memory games such as Rush Hour and I Spy.

Results

The therapist noted increased eye contact and improvement in balance and coordination. Adam made progressively less disruptive noises and started to speak in more complete sentences. His self-confidence increased and he was less often overwhelmed. His ability to follow instructions, focus, and engage in organized activities increased. He became more proficient and more interested in colouring, mazes and board games which previously were too challenging for him.

Before, during and after the Course, parents completed detailed rating forms covering four general areas of functioning: Sensory / Sensory-Motor, Auditory / Language, Social / Emotional, and Organization / Attention / Cognitive.

Rating Form improvements were noted in all areas but the most marked improvements were in the Sensory / Sensory-Motor area. Most specifically, Adam became much more aware of bodily sensations, such as hunger and his sleep improved as well. His posture and core strength were much improved. His visual tracking and hence reading greatly improved. And he developed the ability to listen to and follow directions the first time, even in a noisy environment.

One month post-course, mother notes that improvements continue. Adam is happier than before. He looked forward to his Maxi Mind sessions and wants them to continue. He became more independent and less reliant on parents. He is more sociable and mother considers his communication skills to have improved by 50%.

Previously, if one of mother's parents would try to speak to him, he would cry or scream and hide behind her. This has pretty much stopped and now he will even greet such people with "Hi".

His characteristic escape behaviour, talking to himself while tenting his hands, has diminished considerably. He stopped for example in social situations, understanding that it is inappropriate but will still resort to it when he is alone.

His learning and communication skills are much improved. When he started Maxi Mind his receptive language skills were poor and expressive language only fair. Now he listens and understands much more readily, and converses very well. He has even expressed interest in learning two new languages in order to keep up with a sibling and communicate with a grandparent!

Before starting Maxi Mind Adam was unable to read and now he reads books, signs on the street, and so on, with great interest.

There are still areas of difficulty – social skills are improving but friendships still are difficult. Moods are better but he still has a short fuse. Impulsive behaviour is curbed somewhat but still poses problems. Most notably focusing and attention skills need to be strengthened and this will be the primary target for a second Maxi Mind course.

To find out more, visit www.maximind.ca or call (416) 858-9868 today.