

SPARK: Simple Play Adaptations to Reference for Kids

Ultimate Fidget Fidgetpod

Description:

Five inch in diameter fidget tool featuring 100's of soft rubbery spiky bristles on the top, chunky sensory spokes around the rim, and a 1" deep spider-web design on the bottom that offers crevices, craters and sensory finger compartments. Fidgetpods have a non-skid bottom that keeps them securely in place on a flat surface.

[Purchasing Information](#)

Image:



Who Might Benefit?

Those who...

- Are learning or need support with self-regulation.
- Need quiet, self-directed activities throughout the day to regroup.
- Can't sit still or maintain focus.
- May need to touch or fidget to focus.
- Seek sensory input throughout the day.
- Tend to mouth or chew their clothing.
- Need alternatives to touching things they have been asked not to.
- Have a weak or inefficient grasp.
- Engage in touching, poking, or fidgeting with items to calm themselves.
- Need appropriate tactile materials to support attention to activity.

Why Use?

Provides an opportunity to...

- Explore opportunities for self-regulation.
- Engage in quiet exploration and self-calming activities.
- Explore feeling/sensation.
- Work on eye hand coordination skills, such as tossing and catching.
- Fidget quietly to help maintain their focus.

Instructions for Use:

Environmental Considerations

- Use during large group activities, small group activities, and one-on-one instruction.
- Use at school, home, or the community.

Adaptation Ideas:

Optional Additional Materials/Supplies

- Velcro

Stabilize It

- Construct handle or wrist loop to aid in grasping.

- May be helpful during transitions.

Positioning

- Use in any position; seated, standing, on the floor, etc.

Basic Play/Use

- Open ended exploration (ex. touch, poke).
- This fidget can be selected by or provided to a child during small or large activities when focusing or keeping hands to self is a challenge.

Play Use/ with Others

- Take turns playing an "I Can" game (e.g. I can poke it with my fingers).

- Velcro to a vertical surface for exploration.

Contain It

- Place in a small open container so the child can explore it by brushing it with their hands.
- Store sensory item choices in a basket or tub.
- Determine boundaries for use when being used as a fidget (ex. on lap).

Communication Supports

- Visual supports (non-transient cues) such as communication cards can be used for the child to communicate if a fidget or other sensory support is needed because they are feeling (e.g. anxious, angry, calm, squirmy) or to communicate to the child where to keep the fidget (e.g. hand, lap, table).
- Social stories with themes related to when to request and how to use a fidgets may be useful.

DIY Alternatives

- Purchase inexpensive textured balls at discount stores or pet stores.
- Make squeeze balls by filling latex free balloons with various textures such as water beads, lentils, play doh, etc.
- Substitute or make bean bags.
- For additional [DIY ideas see 31 DIY Fidget Toys That Are Easy and Inexpensive to Make](#) from [weareteachers.com](#)

Additional Considerations:

- Not all fidgets will increase attention.
- Fidgets may be distracting at first.
- Allow all children to explore the fidgets prior to use.
- Explain to children that everyone needs different things to help them learn.
- Offer and choose fidgets with the specific child in mind.
- Limit choices and observe whether the choice is a support or a source of distraction.
- Create an individual or class Social Story describing how fidgets should be used as *tools*, not *toys*.
- For older children, consider a Fidget Contract (see below).

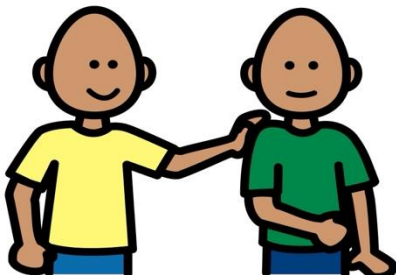
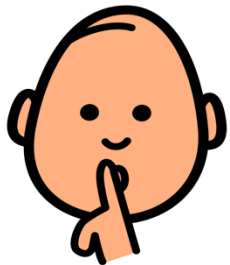
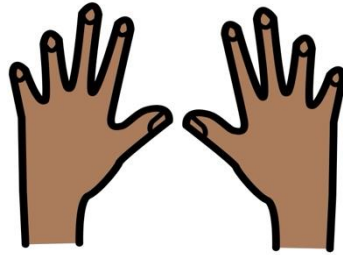
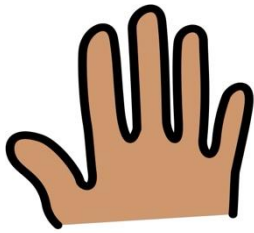
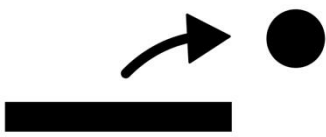
Resources:

- [The Dos and Don'ts of Fidgets for Kids](#) from Understood.org.
- See Social Narratives from OCALI's Autism Center Grab and Go Resource Gallery of Interventions.
- For further information, visit the Social Narratives Autism Internet Module.
- Like Social Stories, Power Cards teach and reinforce academic, behavioral, organizational, and social skills. Power Cards are visual supports that include an individual's special interest. See Power Cards from OCALI's Autism Center Grab and Go Resource Gallery of Interventions.
- Reminder Cue Cards from OCALI's Autism Center Grab and Go Resource Gallery of Interventions help teach and remind individuals how to engage in positive behaviors. Reminder Cue Cards provide "what to do" suggestions when an individual is feeling anxious, stressed, or confused. They also support interactions with peers, and offer ways to self-regulate, and manage emotions.

Ohio Early Learning Standards:

- SE: Self-Regulation: Begins to manage emotions and reactions (2.a.)
- AL: Engagement and Persistence: Persists in completing a task with increasing concentration. (1.c.).

Words to Encourage Play/Use

Touch  An illustration of two children, one in a yellow shirt and one in a green shirt, standing and touching each other's shoulders.	Poke  An illustration of a hand with the index finger extended, poking a red vertical surface. Motion lines indicate the point of contact.	Calm  An illustration of two children, one in a blue shirt and one in a green shirt, hugging each other.
Quiet  An illustration of a child's face with a finger held up to their lips in a 'shh' gesture.	Hands  An illustration of two open hands, palms facing each other.	Fingers  An illustration of a single open hand with fingers spread.
Help  An illustration of a child in a red shirt kneeling and reaching out towards an adult in a green shirt who is standing and reaching back.	On  An illustration of a black ball resting on a black horizontal rectangular base.	Off  An illustration of a black ball being moved off a black horizontal rectangular base. A curved arrow shows the ball's path from the base to the right.

*"Adaptations" adapted from: Haugen's Modes for Adapting Toys based on materials from the "Let's Play" Project at the University of Buffalo

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