

ARE STIM TOYS REALLY A GOOD IDEA?



WHAT ARE STIM TOYS?

Stim stands for “stimulation,” which perfectly describes these often-spinning gadgets festooned with smooth silver balls, seesaw-like clickers, multiple buttons, toothed gears, and even, sometimes, lights and music. They provide in the palm of your hand plenty of sensory stimulation. They are a class of toys originally meant to help children with ADD or ADHD focus better.

ADD, ADHD & ANXIETY

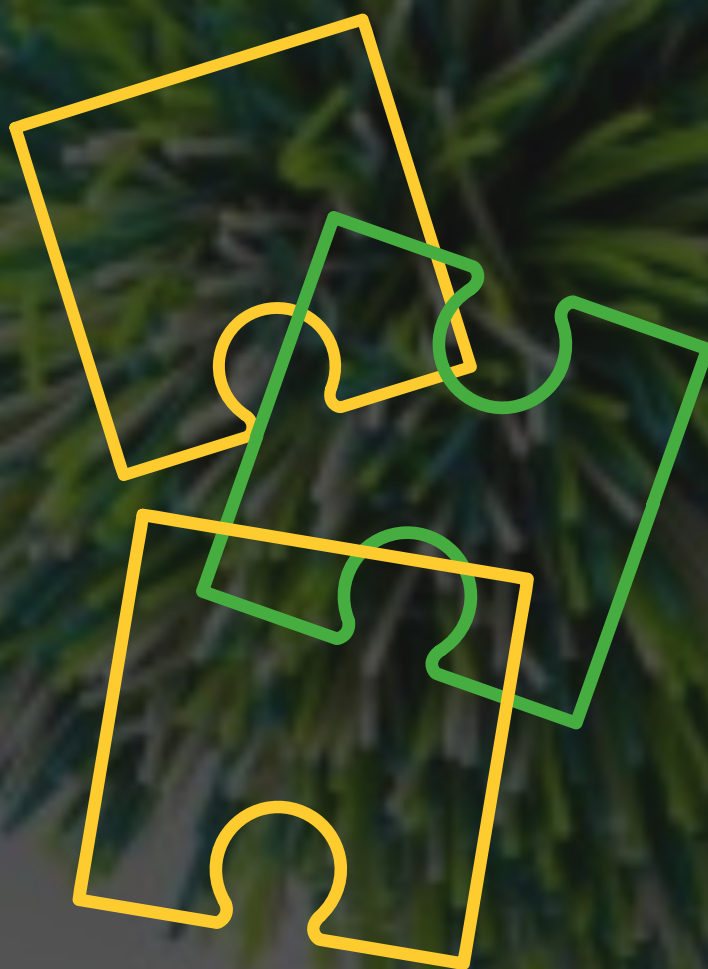
Many people fidget. It’s a common way to use up excess energy from nervousness, anxiety, or just high energy. For kids with ADD or ADHD, it’s particularly difficult to sit in one place and concentrate for an extended period of time. In theory, “stim” toys help them expend some of their excess energy, which helps them stay calm and focus better.

AUTISM

In some cases, people with autism engage in self-stimulation, or “stimming” behaviors in an effort to combat sensory overstimulation, tune-out the extraneous sensory information, and decrease their arousal level. In other cases, the self-stimulation is to provide more sensory information in order to increase their arousal level because their bodies are not appropriately registering the information and they need more input.

EXAMPLES

1. Something to fidget with
 - a. Koosh ball
 - b. Wood fidget puzzle
2. Something to shake
 - a. Pop toob
 - b. scarves
3. Something to squeeze
 - a. stress balls
 - b. Play Doh
 - c. Putty
4. Something to watch
 - a. rain sticks
 - b. liquid timer
 - c. marble run
5. Something to spin
 - a. spinning top
6. Something to mouth
 - a. Gum
 - b. Bitey beads



Source:

<https://harkla.co/blogs/special-needs/autism-fidget-stim-toys>

<https://austinchildrensacademy.org/the-montessori-materials/stim-toys/>