



POSITIVE EFFECTS OF SAFCO BALL CHAIRS IN SPECTRUM ACADEMY CLASSROOM



If I could pick I would want a Runtz chair. I can bounce if I get hyper. I like that it feels different when I bounce then on a ball chair. It's easier to sit on, less distracting, has no back and doesn't slide around.

Student Emma 4th grade



INTRODUCTION

On January 14, 2014, twelve Runtz™ (child size) and three Zenergy™ (adult size) Ball Chairs were donated by Safco Products to the Functional Skills classroom at Spectrum Academy Charter School in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Instructors reported that they observed an immediate, positive response to the chairs and a change in student behavior, focus and an ability to complete tasks. Spectrum Academy instructors not only witnessed this transformation, but the daily data they recorded also reflected these changes.

Below are instructor observations and a graph depicting task completion and improvement, as reported by the teachers, over the span of approximately two months, and the first few weeks after Runtz Ball Chair was introduced to the class. These are early results, but we are hopeful that additional data will be collected to analyze the effect of the ball chairs on autistic students.



GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Runtz Ball Chairs help back posture and stimulates the core, helping students with balance.
- The ability to bounce on the Runtz Ball Chair helps to limit involuntary movements and the need to get up from the chair and run around.
- The bouncing is rhythmical (up and down movement), which helps to calm students.
- The color, shape and texture of Runtz Ball Chairs are calming to students, helping them meet sensory needs. The ball chairs are covered in an antimicrobial Black Vinyl.
- Zenergy Ball Chairs were used for students to lay across on their stomachs to help calm themselves, and may be helpful to students who have gastrointestinal issues.
- Due to the design of the Zenergy and Runtz Ball Chairs, students are able to individualize their posture preference throughout the day, at times leaning forward while at other times sitting erect. Even when sitting on the floor with their head resting on the chair, they seemed to stay focused and on task.



BEFORE



Students seated using standard chairs.

AFTER

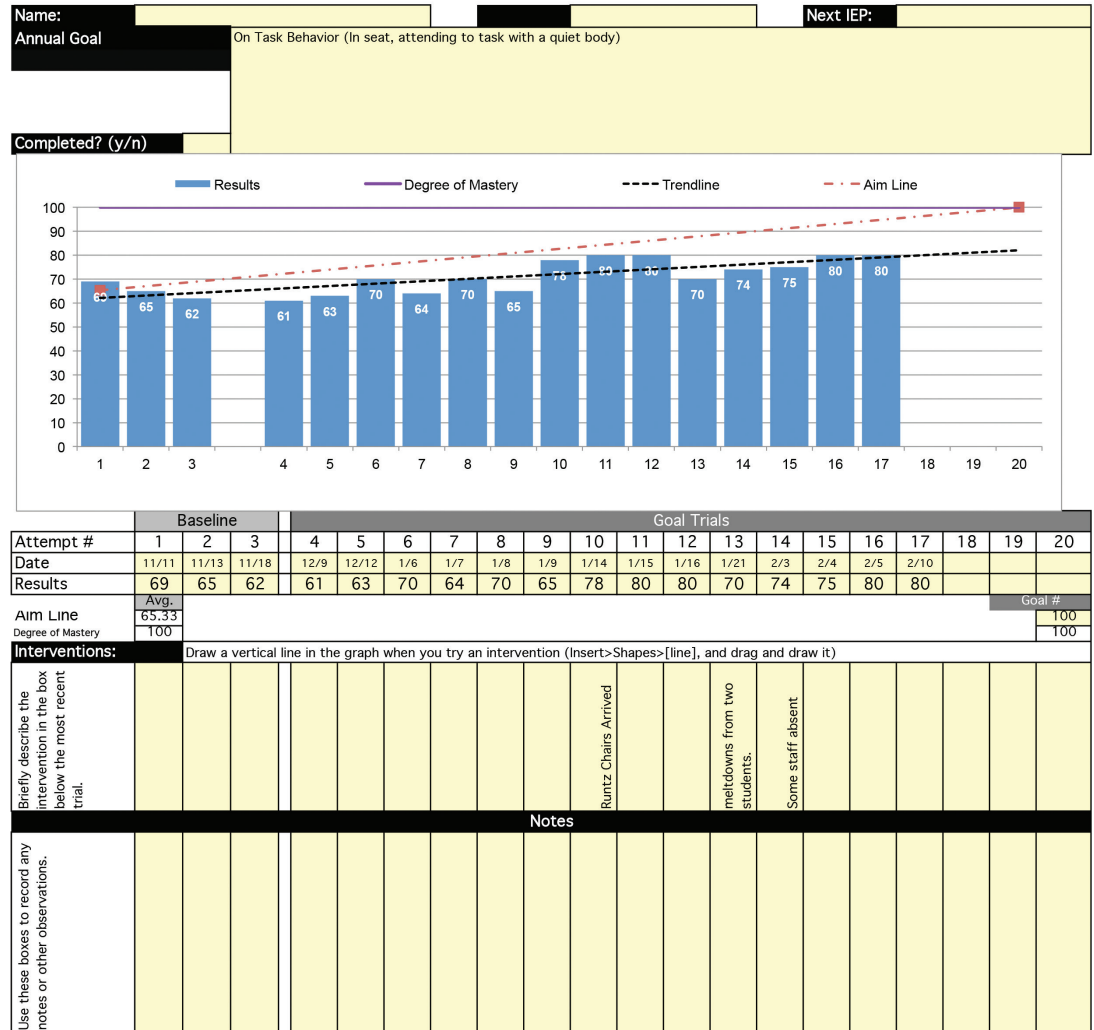


Students seated using Runtz™ Ball Chair.



GRAPH OBSERVATIONS (AS REPORTED BY THE SPECTRUM TEACHERS)

- Graph shows that the percentage of tasks completed increased after the Runtz Ball Chairs arrived.
- Before Runtz Ball Chairs arrived, an average of 64% of tasks were completed during 9 classes over the course of 3 months.
- After Runtz Ball Chairs arrived, an average of 77% of tasks were completed during 8 classes over the course of 2 months.



SPECIFIC STUDENT OBSERVATIONS

- One student habitually leaned back in his chair (back on the hind two legs) and tipped over countless times each day, requiring a para-professional to sit next to him all day to ensure he did not flip backwards. When the student received a Runtz Ball Chair he was able to immediately sit still and perform more tasks, eliminating the need for a para-professional to sit by him, therefore allowing them to assist other students as needed.
- Another student was unable to sit for long periods of time – a couple minutes was fairly normal. Once the Runtz Ball Chair was introduced, he was able to sit for the entire 1.5 hour class.

TESTIMONIAL

Ball chairs are very important to our population. They strengthen core muscles which benefit many areas including handwriting. They also provide opportunity for vestibular balance which increase auditory processing along with many other benefits. The ball chairs that we have been using previous to the Runtz Ball Chairs were helpful but very bouncy and distracting. Students like to bounce and slap the sides of the ball chair which has been distracting in the classroom. Also, students tend to roll off of ball chairs or the ball rolls off of the chair. The Runtz Ball Chairs diminish any distractions and provide the motion for vestibular balance, and core strengthening that our students require. The use of a Runtz Ball Chair has been a wonderful tool for students and an asset to my classroom. Thank you for the opportunity to use a Runtz Ball Chair in my room. -Chris Stuart, 4th Grade Teacher



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