

## Introducing a Novel Treatment Approach in a Special Education School to Encourage Active Participation: A community Project

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### Abstract

**Background:** This article presents the processes of introducing an unfamiliar treatment method into an existing educational system. The presentation describes a project conducted in the years 2020-2021, whereas a novel treatment modality was offered for children with various motor disabilities in a special education school. This treatment method is not yet known in Israel, but is widely used in various places around the world. The aim of this treatment approach is to overcome the low levels of motivation to participate in activities observed in children with motor disabilities. The current project involves the introduction of the Rebound Therapy (RT) treatment method, which utilizes the physical properties of a trampoline to encourage movement. There is preliminary research evidence regarding the effectiveness of the method for improving postural control, balance, and aerobic capacity in a variety of pathologies among patients of different ages.

**Methodology:** The project was conducted in a special education school, attended by about 50 students, aged 6-21 years, with intellectual developmental disabilities and complex physical disabilities. The project consisted of two phases: a) planning the project, b) executing

the project. The planning of the project included an examination of the feasibility of the project using the SWOT model (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). In addition, a review of the scientific literature was carried out in order to present research evidence for the effectiveness of the treatment modality.

The practical steps taken included: the project leader receiving certification from the RT organization; obtaining approvals to introduce the system from the Ministry of Education; creating a building plan for the construction of a suitable room/space in which to provide the treatment; and online learning seminar of the principles of the modality offered to the team, and receiving feedback at the end of the seminar regarding its effectiveness.

**Discussion:** The project described in the article, is an illustration of the necessary processes needed for introducing a new treatment modality into the educational system. Most of the project goals were met. Although the goal of establishing the room has not yet been achieved due to a delay in the schedule caused by the Corona epidemic, it is estimated that it will be completed in the coming year. The presented project indicates that careful planning, setting goals and preliminary testing of the feasibility of the project are key to the success of implementation of a new treatment method. At the same time, this project also showed the need to demonstrate flexibility in dealing with unexpected constraints (such as a global pandemic) and finding solutions to address them.

**Keywords:** processes, implementation of a new treatment modality, developmental intellectual disability, trampoline, Rebound Therapy

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