

# **Vidget® Organic Seating System Evaluation Report**

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## **Introduction**

The Vidget® is a three-in-one seating system. It can transform from a chair into a desk or stool by simply turning it over. The modular & versatile design of the patented pending Vidget® Organic Seating System™ provides many opportunities for teachers and parents to work together with children to build their own environments based on individual and group needs. It also can serve as an added environmental assist for those with developmental challenges as it allows the student to quietly fidget in place, giving additional support to the students regulatory system which allows them to remain focused, attentive, and engaged in their learning for a longer period of time. The seating system is easily adjustable by the student to meet their individual needs without disrupting the overall classroom environment.

During the month of April 2017 a kindergarten classroom in Fairport, New York substituted its traditional classroom seating for the Vidget® seating system. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the effect in a classroom when traditional chairs are replaced with the Vidget® seating system. This evaluation set out to answer the following questions by utilizing the following data collection strategies.

## **Evaluation Questions and Data Collection Strategies**

1. Is there a qualitative improvement in attention, focus, and engagement, when utilizing the Vidget® when compared with regular classroom chairs?
  - Three classroom observation by two independent observers
  - Teacher Survey
2. Do teachers report a qualitative improvement in attention, focus and engagement, of children when they utilize the Vidgets?
  - Teacher Survey
3. How often do children and/or teachers utilize the Vidget® as a chair, a stool, or a desk?
  - Three classroom observation by two independent observers
  - Teacher Survey
4. Is the teacher better able to attend to instruction rather than managing disruption behavior while children use the Vidget® when compared to other chairs?
  - Three classroom observation by two independent observers
  - Teacher Survey

5. What is the overall satisfaction of the teachers and students with the Vidget®?

- Teacher Survey
- Student survey

### **Methods/Data Collection Strategies**

There were 3 primary data collection strategies utilized in this evaluation. These included three separate classroom observations by two independent observers, two surveys completed by the primary teacher and the student teacher in the classroom, and a brief survey completed verbally by the students in the classroom.

The first observation took place before the Vidget® seating system was introduced to the classroom, the second observation took place three days after the Vidgets® were introduced into the classroom, and the third observation took place approximately 3 weeks after the Vidgets® were introduced into the classroom.

The two observers have had extensive background experience in education. The first observer has over 30 years experience as a special education teacher and has focused for the last 20 years on training and mentoring other teachers who work with students on the autism spectrum. The second observer has had more than 30 years experience in non-traditional educational settings.

The teacher and student teacher each completed surveys at the end of the Vidget® trial period and the student survey took place after the third observation of the classroom.

The same student teacher lead the classroom lessons for each observation and the same students participated during each observation. Although the observations took into consideration the entire classroom situation, four students were highlighted throughout the three observations to track their individual responses to the different seating systems. These children were highlighted because of their perceived struggles with attention, focus, and engagement during the first observation. These children are described below

**Girl A** - was an intelligent precocious individual. She seemed to have many positive interactions with the other children but often didn't attend to the classroom instruction. She often seemed bored and often waited until the last minute to complete the lesson. She was frequently disruptively engaging with other children and keeping them off task.

**Boy A** - was a behavior problem within the classroom. He was often out in the hallway when the observers arrived being talked to by the classroom teacher. He rarely participated in the classroom instruction and often would wander the

classroom during instruction or hide in other parts of the classroom. When he was invited into instruction he was often disruptive and at times displayed emotional outbursts toward the other children or the teachers. He needed individualized support if he was to complete a lesson or task

**Boy B** – He was very active boy, craving movement, resulting in postural issues in seating and diminished maintenance of attention to the tasks or lessons at hand.

**Boy C** – He frequently had trouble focusing on his lesson. Often carried a stuffed bear with him, which helped him to attend and focus. His attention would often wander and was in need of redirection to complete his lessons or to participate in the classroom activity.

All of the data collection strategies were completed on schedule and there wasn't any missing data. What follows are the findings of this evaluation.

### **Evaluation Findings**

#### **Is there a qualitative improvement in attention, focus, and engagement, when utilizing the Vidget® when compared with regular classroom chairs?**

There was a qualitative improvement in the classrooms focus, attention and engagement after substituting the Vidget® seating system for the traditional classroom seating. There was a 90% reduction in observable disruptive behaviors after the Vidget® seating system was in the classroom for three weeks. There was also a 74% reduction in the number of times the teacher had to redirect a child to help him or her to refocus on their work. Thus freeing the teacher to spend more time on individual instruction.

During the observations after the Vidgets® were introduced into the classroom there was a noticeable reduction in the overall noise in the classroom as students were more focused and engaged in their work and less engaged in disruptive behaviors.

During the three observations four children were highlighted and their behaviors were noted. All four children benefited from the Vidget® seating system. Girl A initially displayed difficulty attending to her lesson and was often disruptive with other children. The teacher often had to redirect her to help her focus. After the Vidgets® were introduced there was a marked change in her behavior. While rocking in her Vidget® she was able to attend to her school work and rarely required redirection from the teacher. Boy A was the most challenging of the four. He didn't benefit as much from the Vidget® seating as the others but during the third observation Boy A was able to focus on his work as he rocked in his Vidget® but he still required direct intervention from the Teacher. She could spend this time with Boy A because the other children didn't require as much direct supervision.

Both Boy B and Boy C benefited greatly from their Vidgets® Both were observed rocking in their Vidget® and both were focused on their work and completed their tasks with minor intervention and redirection from the teacher.

### **Do teachers report a qualitative improvement in attention, focus and engagement, of children when they utilize the Vidgets®?**

The teachers who participated in this evaluation completed an extensive survey about the effects of the Vidget® system within their classroom. When asked about the effect on their students attention, focus and engagement while using the Vidget® seating system they reported that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the Vidget® seating system increased their student's attention, focus and engagement in their lessons. Additionally, one teacher in the classroom reported to the observers that " I have to say before the Vidgets® I was settling for 50% positive attention during a lesson and now after only 3 days with the chairs, 80% of the kids are attending and doing great!"

### **How often do the children and/or teachers utilize the Vidget® as a chair, a stool, or a desk?**

During the first observations of this Kindergarten classroom with Vidgets® most children didn't utilize the various seating options that were possible with the Vidget®. During the next observation more than two weeks after the Vidgets ® were introduced into the classroom many more children utilized the different seating options. During the third observation the observers recorded more than 9 children independently switching their seating from a chair to a stool depending on their own needs at the moment. These children had distinct preferences for their seating option while doing their schoolwork and were able to self manage these preferences on their own. During the observations no children utilized the Vidget® as a desk. All of the Vidgets ® were used under existing classroom tables so there wasn't a need for the desk option.

The teacher reported that because the Vidget® seating system is responsive to the child's individual needs it is "invaluable as they find the natural seating positions that feel right to them at the moment. Additionally, while the chairs themselves are noisier the noise levels of the children in the classroom are lower."

This observation was also noted by both of the observers. Both observers noted that there was a significant reduction in the overall noise level of the classroom after the Vidgets ® were introduced. This reduction in noise within the classroom was maintained through the final observation more than 3 weeks after the Vidgets ® had been introduced.

## **Is the teacher better able to attend to instruction rather than managing disruption behavior while children use the Vidget® when compared to other chairs?**

During the initial observation, before the Vidget® seating system was introduced into the classroom, both observers independently recorded more than 10 incidences of disruptive behavior and more than 19 incidences where the teacher had to redirect a child in the classroom. This all took place within a 90-minute time span of classroom instruction. During the same 90-minute instructional time after the Vidget® seating system was in the classroom for more than 3 weeks the observers noted only one incident of disruptive behavior and less than 5 incidents where the teacher had to intervene and redirect a child in the classroom. This represents a significant reduction in the teacher's time managing disruptive behavior and an increase in instructional time for the students.

A good example of this is noted during the observations of Girl A. During the initial observations before the Vidgets® were introduced Girl A wanders around the room and is verbally disruptive. The teacher redirects her reminding her of the expected behavior and her work. She is given a paper to complete at her desk, which after a couple of moments she crumples up and discards while disrupting other children in the classroom. After 20 minutes Girl A is given another copy of the worksheet and a teacher sits down next to her to help her attend to work.

During the third observation both observers report that during the lesson Girl A is engaged and participating in group activity. After the morning worksheets are handed out Girl A finds her place at the table and sits in the Vidget®. She is quietly rocking in the Vidget®'s original position. Girl A is on task and engaged in the assignment without any teacher supervision. After approximately 10 minutes Girl A begins to spin in her Vidget® but remains on task and engaged in the assignment still without teacher redirection.

Both teachers report strong agreement that their students are better able to participate more actively in the instructional activities when using the Vidget®s.

## **What is the overall satisfaction of the teachers and students with the Vidget®?**

The overall satisfaction with the Vidget® system was very positive. As reported, the teachers strongly agreed with the statements that their students could better communicate with each other while seated in a Vidget, they were better able to actively participate in instruction, they were more focused, attentive, and engaged while utilizing the Vidget® seating system.

When the children in the classroom were surveyed, all 15 children reported that they prefer the Vidget® seating system to their traditional classroom seating. When

the students were asked what they liked about the Vidget® they reported the following;

*"I like to hang on to the bumps in the chair"*

*"There are two ways to sit on the Vidget®"*

*"I like that I can move it"*

*"It is kind of like a moving chair"*

*"You can do so many things with them"*

## **Conclusions**

It is the conclusion of this evaluation that the Vidget® seating system had a very positive effect on this Kindergarten classroom. Teachers reported that their students were better at attending, are more focused, and more engaged in their learning. After three classroom observations there was noted a decrease in disruptive behavior in the classroom after the introduction of the Vidgets ®. Additionally, there was a reduction in the teacher's needed to redirection her students when the Vidgets ® were in the classroom. This allowed the teacher to spend more of her time on individual instruction and less on overall classroom management of her students. Although the teachers reported an increase in noise as students shift the Vidget ® from a seat to a stool they also reported a reduction in the overall noise in the classroom as students were more engaged in their schoolwork. Both observers also noted this reduction in the overall noise level of the classroom as well as a calmer relaxed atmosphere.

The observers also noted an increase in attention, focus, and engagement of all four highlighted children and a documented reduction in the number of disruptive incidents and a decrease in the need of the teacher to redirect her students to keep them on task.

The teacher in this classroom concluded her survey by stating *"Vidgets ® are an amazing seating option for early education students! I think every Kindergarten class should have them!"*

## **An Addendum**

A few weeks after the conclusion of this evaluation the teacher contacted these evaluators with the following additional observation.

*"Girl A", who struggled with output of class work has TAKEN OFF in her ability to attend to written tasks. Before Vidgets, she consistently wrote just a word or two during a writing task. After a week of using the Vidget she was writing using 1-2 sentences and is now sitting down for extended periods of time to write 5-6 sentence paragraphs! She often sits to write of her own accord now. I'm so grateful to have the Vidgets to give her the sensory input she needs so that the output matches her ability level :)"*