



## AUGMENT THERAPY: USING GAMES TO HELP KIDS HEAL REPORT #2742

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**BACKGROUND:** Developmental disabilities are a group of conditions due to an impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavior areas. These conditions may impact day-to-day functioning, and usually last throughout a person's lifetime. Most developmental disabilities begin before a baby is born, but some can happen after birth because of injury, infection, or other factors. These factors include genetics; parental health and behaviors (such as smoking and drinking) during pregnancy; complications during birth; infections the mother might have during pregnancy or the baby might have very early in life; and exposure of the mother or child to high levels of environmental toxins, such as lead. Recent estimates in the United States show that about one in six, or about 17%, of children aged three through 17 years have one or more developmental disabilities, such as ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, hearing loss, intellectual disability, learning disability, or vision impairment. Children and adults with disabilities need health care and programs to stay well, active, and a part of the community.

(Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/developmentaldisabilities/facts.html>)

**PHYSICAL THERAPISTS AND TREATMENT:** Physical therapists develop a plan of care for each patient that promotes movement, reduces pain, restores function, and prevents disability. They work with the patient, family members, and other health care providers to ensure the goals of the plan are met and the patient has positive outcomes. Therapeutic exercise and functional training are the foundations of physical therapist treatment. Depending on the needs of a patient, physical therapists may manipulate a joint or massage a muscle to promote proper movement and function. They may use other techniques like electrotherapy, ultrasound (high-frequency waves that produce heat), hot packs, and ice. Physical therapists can also help to prevent the loss of mobility by developing fitness and wellness-oriented programs for healthier and more active lifestyles. There is a high demand for physical therapists. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of physical therapists is expected to grow by 36 percent from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations.

(Source: <https://www.apta.org/PTCareers/Overview/>)

**THERAPISTS USING AUGMENT THERAPY:** Augment Therapy is an interactive software that engages kids to exercise using augmented reality. It's camera technology that functions as a motivational tool, exercise prompt, and progress tracker for children needing therapeutic exercise. It can be used in any environment like a hospital, clinical setting, or at home. The games and challenges make exercising fun, and it automatically tracks the frequency of exercise and promotes consistency. The small and portable hardware allows children to continue their exercise programs anywhere they go, and it requires no wearable technology and is suitable for children with sensory issues. "There's no other solution right now in physical therapy for children that is doing this," says Lindsay Watson PT, MPT, CEO of Augment Therapy, who adds that innovation in pediatric physical therapy often takes a backseat to innovation for adults due to it being a smaller market.

(Source: <https://augmenttherapy.com/about-us/> and <https://www.freshwatercleveland.com/street-level/augment042419.aspx>)

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