

TOBY Playpad for kids with autism

Chennai, Dec 21:

Deakin University, one of the leading Australian universities today launched TOBY Playpad (Therapy Outcomes by You), an early intervention application for children with Autism. TOBY Playpad monitors child's performance on tasks from a complex syllabus and adjusts lesson delivery to each and every child. The application aims to empower parents to start early intervention to maximize child's development.

TOBY offers diverse tasks drawn from a curriculum based on the kid's progress with pre-requisite tasks. The curriculum has a very dynamic approach; it is able to adapt child's learning and developmental needs by choosing goals and adjusting the difficulty of

tasks. Based on TOBY's recommendations one needs to choose the tasks to complete each day and based on the child's results, TOBY further generates suggestions for the following day's activities.

TOBY's intensive curriculum covers social skills, language, sensory discrimination and cognitive skills. This unique therapist-designed early intervention curriculum includes 20 minutes of iPad time and similar amount of time off the iPad. These tasks are weaved into the parent's daily routines and child's play interests. Parents can track their child's progress, as TOBY generates easy to read reports through curriculum tree and suggests how much support, or prompting, they need. This also

helps parents, therapists and educators to identify the problems which might be occurring and later design strategies to help them.

During the launch of TOBY app, Svetha Venkatesh, Professor of Computer Science and Director, Pattern Recognition and Data Analytics (PRaDA) at Deakin University, Australia, said, "The TOBY Playpad is an opportunity for parents and educators to provide their children early intervention therapy as soon as autism spectrum disorder has been diagnosed. This technology has been carefully designed for parents and educators in collaboration with Autism West Support Inc (a Western Australian Autism support charity) which is cost effective and easy to use program with children at home."