

LEGO®-Based Therapy Fact Sheet

What is Brick Club?

Brick Club is a social skills club, where children take part in LEGO®-Based Therapy. It is a social skills programme based around building LEGO models in groups. The approach was developed by Dr. Dan LeGoff, a Clinical Neuropsychologist from Philadelphia, USA. The aim of the group is to help children to develop social interaction skills in a friendly, fun setting.

What do children do in Brick Club?

Brick Club sessions are usually 1hr long. In the session children build LEGO models in groups of 2 or 3, with adult help. One child finds the bricks (the 'supplier'), another has the instructions (the 'engineer') and a third child puts the model together (the 'builder'). Children take it in turns to play the different roles. Other activities include building models more creatively, without instructions in pairs or small groups. The adult running the group prompts children to solve any social difficulties that might arise. If there is a problem (e.g. if one child snatches a brick), everyone stops building, sorts out the problem together, and practices an alternative strategy (e.g. asking for the brick first).

What skills are practiced in Brick Club?

Social interaction skills such as turn taking, collaboration, social problem solving, joint focus and communication are all key elements of the LEGO®-based therapy approach used in Brick Club.

Is there any research on LEGO®-based therapy?

Research has shown that LEGO®-based therapy improves social skills in 6-16 year olds with autism spectrum disorders. As always, there is variability in the extent to which children improve in their skills: some improve a lot, others only a little, some not at all. Most children who enjoy building LEGO enjoy Brick Club. Further research is needed.

Where can I find out more information?

A LEGO®-based therapy manual has been published (see references) which explains the approach in some detail. Talk to the person who is running your child's Brick Club as they will have attended training and will be able to answer any questions you may have.

References:

- LeGoff, D.B., Gomez de la Cuesta, G., Krauss, G. & Baron-Cohen, S. (2014). *LEGO®-Based Therapy: How to build social competence through LEGO®-based clubs for children with autism and related conditions*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- LeGoff, D. B. (2004). Use of LEGO as a Therapeutic Medium for Improving Social Competence. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 34 (5), 557-571.
- LeGoff, D. B., & Sherman, M. (2006). Long-term outcome of social skills intervention based on interactive LEGO© play *Autism*, 10(4), 317-329
- Owens, G., Granader, Y., Humphrey, A., & Baron-Cohen, S. (2008). LEGO therapy and the social use of language programme: an evaluation of two social skills interventions for children with high functioning autism and Asperger Syndrome. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 38(10), 1944-1957