



## FEATURE RELEASE

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### Mind-Molders and Creativity Sparkers: Play-Doh Revolutionizes Child Development

A mere three months after the birth of their first child, Sarah and Mark Jones were given heartbreaking news. Their precious little girl, Michaela, was diagnosed with autism. Sarah, forlorn by the diagnosis, knew she would face several obstacles as Michaela continued to grow—what kind of special attention will Michaela need? What difficulties will she undergo? What kind of education tools will she need to be provided with? In hope of giving her child the best life possible, Sarah avidly searched for the means to help Michaela to her greatest ability. Little did she know, one of the finest tools had been made available to her since her own childhood.

After several months of planning and various consultation sessions with certified doctors, Sarah felt overwhelmed: “Sure, there are special needs schools and classes that Michaela can be enrolled in, but I wanted to know how I could help her at home.” Sarah ultimately learned that the activities she involved Michaela in at home could be just as productive as professional care. Taking to the Internet, Sarah discovered that certain activities can spark brain development, especially arts and crafts projects that include a tactical element. Sarah racked her brain, thinking of stimulating projects she could do with Michaela, but to no avail. “Glitter and glue are a recipe for disaster with any mom,” Sarah jokes. After much research and thoughtfulness, however, Sarah found her solution. Only one product stood out from the traditional crowd of arts and crafts materials—Play-Doh. “When I was rummaging through my old collection of toys and found my old tubs of Play-Doh, I couldn’t believe I didn’t think of it earlier,” she said.

Play-Doh is unsurpassed as a product in its ability to stimulate creativity and enhance motor skills. Created in 1956, the established brand stands as one of the safest and most productive ways for parents to interact with children. For Sarah and Michaela however, Play-Doh did so much more.

“Unlike average arts and crafts, Play-Doh opens up a whole new world of fun for my little girl,” explains Sarah. “Michaela can shape and mold absolutely anything out of it—we make farm animals, rocket ships and even food. The opportunities are endless.”

Aside from being an enjoyable recreational activity, Play-Doh is scientifically proven to stimulate the brain and enhance motor skills. According to the Franklin Institute, a resource for scientific learning, “working with modeling clay or Play-Doh is an especially good way for children to grow new connections. It helps develop agility and hand-brain coordination, (like controlling the computer mouse with your opposite hand).”

So, what makes Play-Doh so great? As a modeling compound, primarily made of water, salt and flour, it is, above all else, non-toxic, non-irritating and non-allergenic. It is even edible, should your child accidentally ingest some. What’s more, it is easy to clean off any surface and is reusable. When sealed properly in its container, it can last for years.



Sarah knew Play-Doh would be a hit with Michaela, since she played it when she was a child. “I used to love taking Play-Doh with me on family road trips. It always helped me to pass the time in the car.” Not only is Play-Doh popular among families, it’s also included in teacher lesson plans across the globe. Math teachers use it to make sums less intimidating— counting blocks aren’t anywhere near as fun as Play-Doh. Art teachers also use Play-Doh as an alternative to clay as a way to avoid sticky messes and dreaded clean ups.

Children can learn and be creative with Play-Doh, making it one of the most multifunctional toys on the market.

Scholastic.com agrees Play-Doh is one of the best educational and stimulating tools out there. In an article published on the website, Scholastic.com stated, “As entertaining as it is pliable, this jack-of-all-trades medium provides hours of fun while improving hand strength, dexterity, and motor skills. Recent research also shows that using your fingers and hands actually stimulates your brain and increases the number of neural connections it makes. So when your child digs into Play-Doh, they’re not only building little figures and shapes, they’re building their brain.”

For any child, Play-Doh is fun and educational. But, for children with challenges, it is so much more. “As a mother of a child with mental disabilities, I’m fully aware that my daughter won’t necessarily have all the experiences an average child would. She won’t grow up to be a surgeon or an astronaut. I know she will need special attention all her life,” admits Sarah. Although this may seem a troubling and stress-inducing issue for most parents, Sarah sees Play-Doh as a way to lighten the load. “With Play-Doh, Michaela can be all the things she won’t really have the opportunity to become. We can make rocket ships and build castles, create a bakery and build fortresses. Michaela can use her imagination with Play-Doh, stimulate her mind and most importantly, have fun with me. With Play-Doh, she can be whatever she wants to be. Play-Doh is the best gift I could ask for.”

Note to Editors:

Sarah Jones is a stay-at-home mom living in New York City with her daughter Michaela, husband Mark and their beagle, Mustard. Sarah Jones can be reached for interviews at (212) 784-3456 or at [sjones@gmail.com](mailto:sjones@gmail.com). Sarah is currently running momslikeme.com, a blog dedicated to moms struggling through daily challenges of raising children with special needs.