



GYMBOPSM at The Day School at The Children's Institute

GYMBOPSM is a non-traditional educational program developed at The Children's Institute to help students with severe disabilities. Faculty from The Day School at The Children's Institute developed GYMBOPSM by integrating the educational specialties of music and adapted physical education with occupational, physical and speech/language therapies.

GYMBOPSM incorporates energetic and playful sports and music themes into a weekly class at The Day School. By incorporating a measure of fun, GYMBOPSM has helped students to participate in their therapy more actively and willingly and to improve their overall involvement in classroom activities, especially for those students who are otherwise resistant or fearful of therapy or for whom traditional methods for delivering therapy have not been effective.

Using technology to create virtual experiences such as roller coaster rides, horseback riding and baseball games, GYMBOPSM helps students play through one-on-one interaction with teachers, therapists and volunteers. All therapeutic actions—rolling, pushing, pulling and balancing—are adapted to the particular needs and abilities of the individual child. While these actions may seem simple, they can mean the difference between a child being totally dependent on others for all of his needs and the child helping with his own care. When children perceive therapy as a game, sport or other enjoyable activity, they are much more compliant and participative in the therapy. GYMBOPSM activities are designed to help each child achieve success—through practice, repetition, adaptive technology and one-on-one coaching—which leads to greater self-confidence and

self-esteem. And success in GYMBOPSM translates to success in the classroom.

The Day School faculty has seen remarkable progress in their students since GYMBOPSM was launched. Among the positive effects are the following:

- Children who begin the school year apprehensively become excited about participating in GYMBOPSM.
- GYMBOPSM participants show increased levels of trust in faculty and therapeutic staff.
- GYMBOPSM students demonstrate more independence in the classroom, lifting their heads when they hear a familiar song or helping move themselves from their wheelchair to a typical chair, rather than relying solely on their teacher.
- Children who participate in GYMBOPSM show an increased willingness to try new tasks, even if the tasks are difficult or painful.

GYMBOPSM has become an important element in the educational process at The Day School. And it is one more example of why The Children's Institute is one of the nation's leaders in the development and delivery of care for all children with special needs.

For more information on GYMBOPSM, please contact Bill Bauer, director of The Day School, at bba@the-institute.org or call 412.420.2300.

For more information on ways to support the GYMBOPSM program at The Day School at The Children's Institute, please contact the development department at dev@the-institute.org or call 412.420.2205.