

Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) Case Study

Supporting an Autistic Teen with PDA in Self-Care

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



SUMMARY

Gabriel, a 14-year-old diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), attention deficit disorder (ADD), and exhibiting Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) behaviour, faced challenges in adhering to self-care routines, especially when reminders were presented in a demanding manner. Gabriel and his mother, Ruth (also diagnosed with ASD), utilised GenieConnect®, a remote care platform, to deliver personalised, non-demanding prompts and reminders to enhance Gabriel's independence in self-care during Ruth's absence.

CHALLENGES

Gabriel experienced difficulties following demands or instructions, particularly in self-care tasks, leading to inconsistencies in personal hygiene and medication routines. Gabriel's ADD posed challenges in maintaining focus and transitioning between activities, often resulting in forgetfulness and incomplete tasks.

SOLUTION

Utilising GenieConnect®, personalised prompts and reminders were tailored for Gabriel in a non-demanding format, avoiding triggers associated with PDA. Ruth had the flexibility to send reminders through the GenieConnect® Companion App. Genie's placement in the home was optimised to catch Gabriel's attention, delivering both verbal and visual prompts and aiding him in self-care tasks.

RESULTS

● Enhanced Task Completion

Genie's implementation significantly aided Gabriel in completing tasks more efficiently. Gabriel's attention deficit disorder often resulted in distractions and forgetfulness during task transitions. However, with Genie's support, Gabriel experienced smoother transitions between activities. By prompting him and providing visual and verbal reminders, Genie assisted Gabriel in maintaining focus and completing tasks without interruptions or distractions.

● Improved Task Initiation

Gabriel's response to Genie's non-demanding prompts demonstrated a remarkable improvement in initiating tasks. Specifically, Gabriel found Genie's prompts less triggering, enabling him to begin activities like teeth brushing and medication intake without the usual resistance associated with demand aversion. For instance, Gabriel expressed that **“when it says ‘teeth,’ it’s like it reminds me I have teeth rather than telling me to brush my teeth”**. This shift in perception positively impacted his willingness to engage in self-care activities.

● Increased Task Regularity

Post-intervention evaluations revealed a notable increase in the frequency of Gabriel's teeth-cleaning routine. The non-demanding prompts from Genie played a pivotal role in establishing a more regular self-care schedule for Gabriel. The prompts, tailored to avoid triggering demand avoidance tendencies, contributed to a consistent and improved teeth-brushing routine, marking a significant achievement in Gabriel's self-care regimen.

● Medication Compliance

Ruth, Gabriel's mother, observed a visible enhancement in Gabriel's medication intake. Genie's reminders effectively supported Gabriel in adhering to his medication schedule.

Ruth noted this improvement, emphasising how Genie's non-demanding prompts positively influenced Gabriel's medication compliance. This increase in adherence to medication intake is crucial for managing Gabriel's overall health and well-being.

● Positive Recipient Feedback

Both Gabriel and Ruth provided positive feedback regarding Genie's effectiveness. Gabriel said he would **“rate Genie 4 out of 5,”** indicating high satisfaction with the technology. Gabriel expressed that Genie's prompts were helpful in reminding him without feeling pressured or overwhelmed. Ruth also echoed this sentiment, highlighting that the non-demanding prompts aided her in setting important reminders, such as notifying Gabriel about appointments or tasks, effectively integrating Genie into their daily routine.



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