Enhanced Walker
Jodie Lanier/Garrett Mitchell/Troy Tallant/Wade Thomson

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to encourage a young boy to use his walker. The client had a physical affliction that caused the use of the walker to be a necessity; however, he could not bring himself to employ it, because it offered him so little aesthetic stimulation. As a result of this, he was falling behind in his physical rehabilitation. It was imperative to create a solution to this problem that would fulfill both his physical and emotional needs.

Team Structure

The team included four members as follows: Jodie Lanier, Garrett Mitchell, Troy Tallant, and Wade Thomson. It was compiled by voluntarily selection of this project from many by all four members. All members shared equal responsibility in the planning, building, and reporting of this project.

Methods

The methods employed were finding something that would catch the client’s attention while also being able to use the medically prescribed walker he had been shunning. The original walker was used as a base, because it had already been custom fit to his preferences and needs. The team then found out his hobbies and interests, which included his favorite color, red, and car, a Jeep. After intensive brainstorming, the team searched for a PowerWheels model that would fit the preferences of the client. When one was found, it then had to be modified to accommodate the needs of the child. The inside of the car was cut out so that it could be placed over the walker, then the shell was clamped to the legs. Because he so rarely used the proper handholds, buttons that triggered music of his favorite song were inserted into the handles of the walker. To support his weight if he fell forward, an extra wheel was installed into the front bumper of the PowerWheels shell. The car was cut in half so that the front would open like a door in order to ease the process of getting the child in and out of the module. The wheel on the front bumper also reinforced this development.

Conclusions

The client was very enthused about the final product. His supervisors claimed that he used the walker more in a day after the modifications than he did his entire life before the modifications. The team clearly met all of the aesthetic wishes of the client while still enabling him to properly improve on his medical condition.