HOW VR HELPS CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

Autism is a spectrum disorder, which means that it affects people in different ways. Autism affects adults and children in the areas of behaviour, social skills, verbal and nonverbal communication, as well as sensory and attention impairments. They do have unique identities, personalities, talents just like anyone else. Virtual reality is one technique that therapists, parents and teachers and their children are using to assist children with autism communicate and connect with others and the world around them. Virtual reality has also been used to help autistic children prepare for public speaking. Children were encouraged to look around the room rather than just ahead by using avatars that faded away if the speaker didn't make eye contact. The game of keeping the avatars on the screen was well appreciated by the participants.

Virtual reality has also been used to combat phobias that commonly affect autistic children. These phobias can range from a fear of public transportation to a fear of classrooms, balloons, and animals. The consequences of these phobias can be remedied using cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), but to fully benefit from CBT, visualization and imagination should be used: these practices can be hard for people with phobias. The goals and uses of Virtual Reality are very different for adolescents and young adults. VR can be very empowering for adolescents transitioning into young adulthood, especially for individuals with autism. VR can help your child become more independent, work on his or her challenges and improve upon his or her strengths.

VR has identified as a useful new therapy solution in a variety of medical fields, including rehabilitation, emotional well-being in inpatients, surgery training, and mental health care. VR is applied in the treatments of a wide range of diseases in mental health, including phobias, post-traumatic stress disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, and, of course, ASD. VR has proven some advantages in this intervention field, allowing ASD patients to be instructed in a realistic environment that could be modified and adapted to the subject's traits and skills.In terms of intervention areas, and taking into consideration the capabilities of VR technology, are focused on improving daily activities and communication, particularly social and emotional skills. When the intervention area is considered, we may identify six distinct categories: social skills, emotions, everyday living activities (driving, shopping, etc.), communication, cognitive training, self-care training etc.