
What Do the Parents Say? Parents of Children with Developmental Disabilities Using Touch-Screen Mobile Devices

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Key words: children with disabilities; touch-screen mobile devices; quality of family life; satisfaction of parents of children with disability; supportive services for parents

Abstract

Purpose: This study was designed to investigate the experience of parents of children with and without developmental disabilities who use Touch-Screen Mobile Devices (TSMD) and their subjective evaluation of its impact on their children. **Procedure:** A survey was administered via the internet and via personal connections. **Results:** Statistically significant differences were found between the parents of children with a disability and those without. In general the study findings show a fairly high degree of satisfaction with the

TSMD experience among parents of children with disabilities and somewhat less satisfaction among parents of typically developing children. Reports of satisfaction among parents of children with disabilities were highly correlated with improvement in the child's positive social interaction, having clear goals for the child's use of the technology and the degree to which the parent was involved in the child's experience. Parents expressed low satisfaction with the preparation, support and instruction that they received to use the TSMD.

Conclusions: TSMD technologies offer a non-stigmatizing tool that can complement existing support strategies to aid a child's with disabilities and the family to improve communication, social interaction, anxiety management, and relaxation. There is a need to develop supportive and guiding services for parents to help them develop meaningful goals and to encourage their participation in the child's experience.