

I'm writing this letter in regards to my daughter, Aleah, and her use of the Beams music player. I should actually say love, because it was clear the first time she used it that she loved it. Aleah has been blind since birth and as her parents we have tried to encourage a love of all things in life especially learning. We didn't want her to be categorized or stereotyped that because she is blind she must love music. That being said Aleah loves music. She connects to it in a way that she uses it to learn about everything else in life. Being given the beams allows her a way to begin manipulating and putting to use all the concepts she has learned through listening to music all her life while supporting concepts that she struggles with such as spacial awareness and motor planning.

Blindness for Aleah and many others means that she has a hard time understanding where her body is in space and in relation to the world around her. Most children are told to put their hands straight out can do it because they have seen it done by others and are modeling. To Aleah this can be a difficult concept she may put her hands up near her head or often down by her waist. The beauty of the beams is that it teaches her concepts like this while turning it into a fun activity. Additionally, if Aleah were to put her hands out correctly, bring them in to her sides, and try putting her hands out again she will have already lost her sense of where her hands should be. Having the beams allows her to continually practice this concept. This can then be used as the foundation to build this skill in other movements and body positions.

The beams also helps Aleah continue building skills in coordinating both left and right sides of her body to move in different ways. She does this using different hand motions on each side. Aleah has limited control over a variety of things in her world, partially because she is a child, but mostly because she is blind. With the beams it is clear that she loves feeling in control of something that she has a passion for. She is able to manipulate the music and sounds while supporting her development. As a parent I love that I can give Aleah something to do that is therapeutic towards her development while engaging her passions.

Thank you!

Marzieh M Cassidy