

Empowering Families

A Holistic and Sustainable Neurodivergent Care Model

Pariva in support with **The LEGO Foundation**



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WHITE PAPER
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Overview of Key Insights

The landscape of care for neurodivergent children remains fragmented, often leaving families to navigate a complex system with minimal guidance. Traditional intervention models primarily focus on the child, overlooking the essential role of the family in supporting developmental progress. Without holistic, family-centered support, caregivers experience heightened stress, uncertainty, and limited resources to actively participate in their child's growth.

Additionally, developmental programs often lack the flexibility and engagement needed to adapt to the evolving needs of both the child and their caregivers. Static, one-size-fits-all approaches fail to integrate continuous feedback loops, making interventions less effective over time. The absence of play-based learning, a critical and evidence-backed strategy for fostering engagement, further limits the impact of these programs. Research highlights that play supports cognitive, social, and emotional development, yet many traditional models underutilize its benefits.

The Pariva Family Support Program (FSP) provides a comprehensive, data-driven solution to address these issues. By integrating whole-family engagement, structured intervention plans, dynamic program adjustments, and play-based learning, FSP bridges critical gaps in existing care models. It prioritizes the well-being of both the child and the caregiver, ensuring that families receive the tools, strategies, and emotional support needed to thrive.

FSP operates on a continuous assessment and feedback model, allowing interventions to evolve based on real-time progress. This ensures that support remains personalized and responsive, rather than rigid and standardized. Families enrolled in FSP have demonstrated measurable improvements—with children showing significant progress across cognitive, social-emotional,

adaptive, and physical developmental domains, and caregivers reporting reduced stress and increased confidence in their ability to support their child. Additionally, by aligning with existing therapeutic services, FSP enhances the efficiency of care delivery, reducing the need for excessive intervention hours and promoting cost-effective, sustainable solutions.

This whitepaper underscores the necessity of integrated, family-centered, and play-based approaches to neurodivergent care. It highlights how Pariva's FSP model is reshaping the support ecosystem, making interventions more dynamic, engaging, and personalized—ensuring that every child and family has access to the resources they need to succeed.

Bridging the Gaps: Addressing the Needs of Families Raising Neurodivergent Children

The journey for families of neurodivergent children is filled with challenges that extend beyond the child's development, deeply impacting the entire family unit. Traditional care models often fall short of addressing these challenges holistically, leaving families navigating fragmented systems, enduring emotional and financial strain, and feeling unsupported in their crucial caregiving roles. This whitepaper identifies six critical issues that reflect the gaps in current care models and highlight the pressing need for a more integrated and family-centered approach.

1 Lack of Holistic, Family-Centered Support

Current care models focus primarily on the child, neglecting the emotional well-being and active involvement of the broader family unit. Without tools, guidance, or emotional support, caregivers face heightened stress and reduced efficacy in contributing to their child's developmental journey.

2 Shortage of Trained Professionals for Neurodivergent Families

The rising demand for neurodivergent care exceeds the availability of trained professionals, leading to long waitlists and limited access to essential services. This shortage compromises the quality of care and places additional strain on families, emphasizing the need for scalable workforce development and holistic training initiatives to bridge this critical gap.

3 Limited Accessibility to Quality and Timely Care

Families of neurodivergent children often face significant barriers in accessing timely and effective care. Long waitlists, fragmented services, and inconsistent care planning leave families without the support they need when they need it most. The absence of streamlined processes and data-driven decisions exacerbates delays, reducing the quality of care and creating additional financial and emotional burdens for families.

4 Limited Caregiver Empowerment and Training

While caregivers are pivotal to a child's progress, most programs fail to equip them with the skills or resources needed to manage challenges effectively. This leaves families dependent on professionals and limits sustainable, at-home progress.

5 High Lifetime Costs of Care

Neurodivergent families face substantial financial burdens, averaging \$62,000 annually for ABA therapy and \$17,000 in additional health-care costs. Affordable, impactful solutions are needed to ease this strain while delivering meaningful outcomes.

6 Insufficient Integration of Feedback and Play-Based Learning

Many developmental programs fail to adapt dynamically to evolving family needs, neglecting the use of continuous feedback to personalize intervention plans. Additionally, the role of play-based learning—proven to foster engagement and holistic growth—is often underutilized, missing opportunities for enjoyable, meaningful therapy.

After identifying these significant issues, we outline our vision to meaningfully resolve them, empowering families and creating an effective, cohesive ecosystem of care for a child through Pariva's Family Support Program Model.

Introduction

Families with neurodivergent children often face significant challenges that can impact the well-being of both the children and their caregivers. According to Guralnick (2017)¹, these families often struggle with limited access to resources, long waitlists, and fragmented services that do not fully address the diverse needs of the child. The emotional burden on parents is profound, as they navigate complex systems to obtain the right support while also managing the day-to-day challenges of caring for their children.

The need to address the holistic development of children—including cognitive, noncognitive, social, and emotional aspects—is often unmet by traditional services. Research has highlighted the need for holistic approaches that consider not only the cognitive and behavioral development of the child but also their social and emotional growth (Bierman K L et al., 2018)².

Furthermore, even when home-based programs are available, they often lack adequate parent training and empowerment, leaving caregivers ill-equipped to meet their children's needs. Studies have shown that when parents are empowered to take an active role in their children's development, the outcomes are markedly better (Schreibman et al., 2012).³

Additionally, there is often a failure to integrate play into these programs, despite its critical role in child development. Stagnitti et al. (2016)⁴ demonstrated that parents who were trained to engage in play with their children saw significant improvements in their children's play behaviors, including an increase in pretend play.

The Pariva Model emerges as a solution to these challenges by offering a holistic and individualized Family Support Program (FSP). This model emphasizes the importance of assessing both the child's development and the mental health of the parents or caregivers, ensuring that the entire family unit is supported. By focusing on play as a vital part of development and integrating it into daily routines, the Pariva Model aims to meet children where they are, making learning a natural and enjoyable part of their lives.



Bierman K L et al., 2018² emphasize the importance of early interventions tailored to the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of young children. Their research highlights how comprehensive support systems can foster positive developmental outcomes, particularly when interventions are individualized and family-focused. By addressing these core areas, children are better equipped to navigate challenges, build meaningful relationships, and engage in learning environments successfully.

¹ Guralnick, M. J. (2017). Early intervention for children with intellectual disabilities: An update. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 30(2), 211–229.

² Bierman, K. L., Mathis, E. T., & Domitrovich, C. E. (2018). Serving the needs of young children with social, emotional, and behavioral needs: A commentary. *School Mental Health: A Multidisciplinary Research and Practice Journal*, 10(3), 254–263. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-018-9265-4>

³ Schreibman, L., Kaneko, W. M., & Koegel, R. L. (2012). Positive effects of parent education for families of autistic children. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 42(6), 1152–1163.

⁴ Stagnitti, K., O'Connor, C., & Sheppard, L. (2016). Impact of the Learn to Play program on play, social competence and language for children aged 5–8 years who attend a special school. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 63(3), 168–176.

Disclaimer

This white paper addresses key challenges in the current landscape of care for neurodivergent children and their families. The identified issues reflect the gaps in holistic, family-centered support, caregiver empowerment, integrated care models, adaptive feedback systems, and cost-effective solutions. These insights are derived from existing research, programmatic outcomes, and stakeholder experiences.

The content herein is intended to inform and propose innovative, evidence-based solutions to bridge these gaps. It emphasizes the importance of collaboration among caregivers, educators, healthcare providers,

and insurers to deliver impactful and sustainable support for families. While the white paper advocates for approaches like the Family Support Program (FSP), it is not intended to replace any existing therapies or interventions but rather to complement and enhance them.

All data, case studies, and methodologies discussed are contextual and should not be generalized without considering the unique needs of individual families and systems. This white paper serves as a guide for reimagining neurodivergent care and highlights the necessity of dynamic, inclusive, and cost-efficient strategies.

Establishing Credibility and Context

The care landscape for neurodivergent children and their families is at a critical juncture. With rising demands for holistic and integrated care, families, care providers, and insurers are struggling to meet the multifaceted needs of neurodivergent children in ways that are effective, inclusive, and sustainable. Despite the growing recognition of the importance of family-centered and adaptive interventions, the gaps in support systems persist.

The Family Support Program (FSP) is grounded in years of research, evidence-based practices, and programmatic outcomes that emphasize the importance of addressing not just the child's developmental needs but the well-being and involvement of the entire family. This white paper draws on a wealth of expertise, program data, and stakeholder feedback to identify the challenges families face and propose impactful solutions.

Backed by a collaborative model that integrates tailored interventions, play-based learning, and continuous feedback, the FSP has shown measurable progress in addressing critical developmental and caregiver stress outcomes. This white paper aims to

provide actionable insights and solutions that build on FSP's proven methodologies, ensuring that families and service providers can overcome systemic barriers while fostering growth and resilience for neurodivergent children.

By exploring the issues and presenting the FSP as a scalable, holistic approach, this white paper seeks to inspire a shift in the way neurodivergent care is structured and delivered. It advocates for dynamic, inclusive care models that empower caregivers, integrate services, and deliver measurable outcomes for children and families alike.

1 Lack of Holistic, Family-Centered Support

The current landscape of care for neurodivergent children primarily focuses on addressing the child's developmental and behavioral needs, often at the expense of the broader family unit's well-being and involvement. While individualized interventions tailored to the child are crucial, ignoring the interconnectedness of the family dynamic leads to fragmented and less effective outcomes (Guralnick, 2017)¹. Parents, siblings, and extended family members play pivotal roles in shaping the environment in which a neurodivergent child grows, yet their emotional, mental, and logistical needs remain overlooked. The absence of a holistic, family-centered approach in care models creates significant gaps, heightening caregiver stress and diminishing the effectiveness of interventions (Schreibman et al., 2012)³.

Caregiver Challenges and Emotional Burden:

Families of neurodivergent children often experience elevated stress levels due to the demands of managing the child's care while navigating fragmented systems of support. Studies indicate that caregivers of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) report higher levels of psychological distress compared to caregivers of neurotypical children (Hayes & Watson, 2013)⁵. This emotional burden can impair their ability to actively contribute to the child's developmental journey, creating a cycle of reduced efficacy in interventions and worsening caregiver well-being.

Inadequate access to tools and guidance compounds these challenges. Caregivers often feel overwhelmed and unsupported in their efforts to manage behavioral, emotional, and developmental challenges. When left without practical resources or emotional support, caregivers may become passive participants in the therapeutic process, limiting their capacity to reinforce progress made during professional interventions at home (Meadan et al., 2010)⁶.

The absence of family-centered models of care further exacerbates the issue. Family-centered care prioritizes the inclusion of all family members—parents, siblings, and even extended relatives—in therapeutic interventions. This approach acknowledges the critical role that familial dynamics play in shaping a child's development and emotional well-being. Research highlights that family-based interventions improve outcomes not only for the child but also for the entire family system, promoting cohesion, resilience, and shared understanding (Michaelson, V et al., 2021)⁸.

Unfortunately, most current models focus narrowly on the child's behavior or developmental milestones, sidelining the family's emotional needs and their role as active participants. This gap is particularly pronounced in therapeutic settings that fail to provide adequate psychoeducation or opportunities for caregivers to collaborate with professionals in setting goals and strategies (Brookman-Frazee et al., 2006)⁷.

1 Guralnick, M. J. (2017). Early intervention for children with intellectual disabilities: An update. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 30(2), 211–229.

2 Bierman, K. L., Mathis, E. T., & Domitrovich, C. E. (2018). Serving the needs of young children with social, emotional, and behavioral needs: A commentary. *School Mental Health: A Multidisciplinary Research and Practice Journal*, 10(3), 254–263. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-018-9265-4>

3 Schreibman, L., Kaneko, W. M., & Koegel, R. L. (2012). Positive effects of parent education for families of autistic children. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 42(6), 1152–1163.

5 Hayes, S. A., & Watson, S. L. (2013). The impact of parenting stress: A meta-analysis of studies comparing the experience of parenting stress in parents of children with and without Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 43(3), 629–642.

6 Meadan, H., Halle, J. W., & Ebata, A. T. (2010). Families with children who have autism spectrum disorders: Stress and support. *Exceptional Children*, 77(1), 7–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001440291007700101>

7 Brookman-Frazee, L., Baker-Ericzén, M., Stadnick, N., & Taylor, R. (2006). Parent perspectives on community mental health services for children with autism spectrum disorders. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 15(4), 377–393. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-006-9022-7>

8 Michaelson, V., Pilato, K. A., & Davison, C. M. (2021). Family as a health promotion setting: A scoping review of conceptual models of the health-promoting family. *PLoS one*, 16(4), e0249707. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0249707>

2 Shortage of Trained Professionals for Neurodivergent Families

The growing demand for neurodivergent care has unveiled a critical shortage of trained professionals, creating significant barriers for families seeking timely and effective therapeutic services. According to the National Autism Indicators Report (Roux et al., 2021)⁹, nearly 78% of families of neurodivergent children face challenges in accessing appropriate care due to the lack of qualified providers.

This systemic issue often results in long waitlists and delayed interventions, which are vital for maximizing developmental progress during critical early years (Guralnick, 2017)¹. This shortage not only limits accessibility but also impacts the quality of care delivered. Overburdened providers may struggle to deliver personalized, evidence-based interventions, further diluting the impact of care on the child's development. Compounding this issue, many professionals lack adequate training in family-centered care models, leaving caregivers without the guidance, resources, and emotional support needed to actively participate in their child's developmental journey (Bierman K L et al., 2018)².

To overcome this challenge, scalable workforce development initiatives are essential. Programs focused on cross-disciplinary training, incorporating elements such as play-based learning, individualized intervention planning, and caregiver empowerment, have been shown to enhance provider

readiness and the efficacy of interventions (Stagnitti et al., 2016)⁴.

By investing in these initiatives, the system can alleviate waitlists, reduce provider burnout, and deliver high-quality, holistic care. Strengthening the workforce in this way ensures that families of neurodivergent children can access timely and inclusive support tailored to their unique needs. Such advancements pave the way for improved developmental outcomes and a more equitable system of care for neurodivergent families.

An estimated **14.1 million** U.S. children require specialized healthcare, including therapies like ABA. However, fewer than **35,000** certified ABA providers are available nationwide, leading to significant delays in care.

Additionally, nearly **45% of school districts** report unfilled special education roles, exacerbating the service gap.

9 Roux, A. M., Rast, J. E., & Shattuck, P. T. (2021). National Autism Indicators Report: The Complex Health and Health Care Needs of Children with Autism. Life Course Outcomes Program, A.J. Drexel Autism Institute, Drexel University. <https://drexel.edu/autismoutcomes/publications-and-reports/publications/NAIR-2021-Health-Report/>

1 Guralnick, M. J. (2017). Early intervention for children with intellectual disabilities: An update. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 30(2), 211–229

2 Bierman, K. L., Mathis, E. T., & Domitrovich, C. E. (2018). Serving the needs of young children with social, emotional, and behavioral needs: A commentary. *School Mental Health: A Multidisciplinary Research and Practice Journal*, 10(3), 254–263. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-018-9265-4>

4 Stagnitti, K., O'Connor, C., & Sheppard, L. (2016). Impact of the Learn to Play program on play, social competence and language for children aged 5–8 years who attend a special school. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 63(3), 168–176.

3 Limited Accessibility to Quality and Timely Care

Families of neurodivergent children face substantial challenges in accessing timely and effective care due to systemic barriers. Long waitlists and fragmented service delivery models delay essential interventions, which are critical for optimizing developmental outcomes during early childhood (Guralnick, 2017)¹.

According to the CDC (2020)¹⁰, families of children with autism spectrum disorder often experience delays averaging over 18 months between initial concern and access to therapeutic services. This delay not only limits developmental progress but also places emotional and financial strain on caregivers.

The fragmentation of services and lack of collaboration between providers further exacerbates accessibility issues. Care plans are often inconsistent, forcing families to navigate uncoordinated systems that fail to address their child's holistic needs (Bierman K L et al., 2008)². Additionally, a lack of data-driven decision-making results in inefficient care allocation, leaving families without the timely support they require.

Addressing these barriers requires integrated care models that streamline processes and prioritize accessibility. Evidence-based approaches that include continuous feedback, holistic assessments, and caregiver involvement have been shown to improve access and outcomes for neurodivergent families (Stahmer et al., 2015)¹¹.

Implementing unified care systems can reduce delays, ensure quality services, and alleviate the financial and emotional burden on families, providing the timely and effective care they deserve. A family could coordinate care among caregivers, pediatricians, mental health professionals, educators, ABA therapists, and others, yielding a streamlined, consistent approach. Consistency has proven benefits for all children; think of the impact if all the spheres of influence in a neurodivergent child's life were aligned on similar approaches and practices.

Families of children with autism spectrum disorder often **experience delays averaging over 18 months** between initial concern and access to therapeutic services.

The lack of uniformity in behavioral health providers' **scope of practice, reimbursement challenges, and increased burnout** hinder the accessibility of the behavioral health workforce.

As of August 2024, more than **one third (122 million)** of the U.S. population lives in a **Mental Health Professional Shortage Area** (Mental Health HPSA).

¹ Guralnick, M. J. (2017). Early intervention for children with intellectual disabilities: An update. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 30(2), 211–229

² Bierman, K. L., Mathis, E. T., & Domitrovich, C. E. (2018). Serving the needs of young children with social, emotional, and behavioral needs: A commentary. *School Mental Health: A Multidisciplinary Research and Practice Journal*, 10(3), 254–263. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-018-9265-4>

¹⁰ According to the CDC (2020), families of children with autism spectrum disorder often experience delays averaging over 18 months between initial concern and access to therapeutic services.

¹¹ Schreibman, L., Dawson, G., Stahmer, A. C., Landa, R., Rogers, S. J., McGee, G. G., Kasari, C., Ingersoll, B., Kaiser, A. P., Bruinsma, Y., McNerney, E., Wetherby, A., & Halladay, A. (2015). Naturalistic developmental behavioral interventions: Empirically validated treatments for autism spectrum disorder. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 45(8), 2411–2428.

4 Limited Caregiver Empowerment and Training

Caregivers play a crucial role in the developmental journey of neurodivergent children. However, most intervention programs inadequately equip caregivers with the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to address challenges effectively. As a result, families often feel overwhelmed and remain overly dependent on professionals for their child's progress. This dependency creates a gap in sustainable, at-home implementation of therapeutic strategies, ultimately hindering long-term outcomes (Schreibman et al., 2012)³.

Research indicates that caregiver involvement is a key determinant of a child's developmental success, with empowered caregivers more likely to implement strategies consistently and foster skill generalization in daily life (Stahmer et al., 2015)¹³. However,

the absence of comprehensive training leaves families ill-prepared to handle behavioral, social, and emotional challenges, leading to increased stress levels and burnout (Singer, 2006)¹².

Programs that prioritize caregiver empowerment through tailored training, psychoeducation, and resources have been shown to enhance both caregiver confidence and child outcomes (Brookman-Frazee et al., 2009)⁷.

By addressing this critical gap, holistic programs that integrate family-focused interventions can foster sustainable progress, reduce stress, and enable caregivers to actively contribute to their child's development with confidence and independence.

5 High Lifetime Costs of Care

Families of neurodivergent children face significant financial burdens due to the high cost of long-term therapeutic interventions. On average, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy alone costs \$62,000 annually, and families incur an additional \$17,000 in health-care expenses for related services (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). These substantial costs can be overwhelming for families, often forcing difficult decisions about the level of care they can afford.

The financial strain is further compounded by the need for sustained support over a child's lifetime, making it essential to explore cost-effective solutions that maintain high-quality outcomes. Traditional care models frequently prioritize intensive interventions without exploring scalable options that empower families to manage care at home or integrate therapy

into daily routines. Research has highlighted that holistic, family-centered programs that incorporate evidence-based strategies, such as play-based learning and caregiver training, can reduce dependency on costly professional hours while still achieving measurable progress (Schreibman et al., 2015)¹¹.

Affordable and impactful solutions, such as family-focused models, have the potential to address this financial burden by balancing professional intervention with sustainable, home-based practices. Such approaches not only ease the financial strain but also deliver meaningful and lasting developmental outcomes for children and families alike.

3 Schreibman, L., Kaneko, W. M., & Koegel, R. L. (2012). Positive effects of parent education for families of autistic children. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 42(6), 1152-1163.

7 Brookman-Frazee, L., Baker-Ericzen, M., Stadnick, N., & Taylor, R. (2006). Parent perspectives on community mental health services for children with autism spectrum disorders. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 15(4), 377-393. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-006-9022-7>

11 Schreibman, L., Dawson, G., Stahmer, A. C., Landa, R., Rogers, S. J., McGee, G. G., Kasari, C., Ingersoll, B., Kaiser, A. P., Bruinsma, Y., McNerney, E., Wetherby, A., & Halladay, A. (2015). Naturalistic developmental behavioral interventions: Empirically validated treatments for autism spectrum disorder. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 45(8), 2411-2428.

12 Singer, G. H. (2006). Meta-analysis of comparative studies of depression in mothers of children with and without developmental disabilities. *American Journal on Mental Retardation*, 111(3), 155-169.

13 Stahmer, A. C., Rieith, S. R., Lee, E., Reisinger, E. M., Mandell, D. S., & Connell, J. E. (2015). Training teachers to use evidence-based practices for autism: Examining procedural implementation fidelity. *Psychology in the Schools*, 52(2), 181-195.

6 Insufficient Integration of Feedback and Play-Based Learning

Developmental programs for neurodivergent children often fall short in dynamically adapting to the evolving needs of children and their families. Without the integration of continuous feedback loops, interventions risk becoming static, failing to address shifting developmental milestones and family dynamics. Personalized and responsive intervention plans are crucial for ensuring sustainable progress, yet many programs lack mechanisms to assess and refine strategies in real time (Brookman-Frazee et al., 2006)⁷. As stated earlier, families often become dependent upon narrowly focused professionals to achieve progress for a child. In such situations, parents may not feel they have enough knowledge of the therapeutic situation to provide feedback.

Furthermore, play-based learning—a method backed by extensive research for fostering engagement and holistic growth—remains underutilized in many intervention programs.

Play offers a natural and enjoyable medium for learning, encouraging skill development across cognitive, emotional, and social domains. Studies highlight that guided play not only improves specific academic and behavioral skills but also enhances problem-solving and emotional regulation in neurodivergent children (Pyle & Danniels, 2017)¹⁴.

Programs that fail to leverage these dual components—continuous feedback and play-based learning—miss an opportunity to create impactful, meaningful, and enjoyable therapeutic experiences. Addressing this gap requires developmental programs to integrate real-time monitoring, personalized adjustments, and play as a central medium for learning, creating a more engaging and adaptive approach to therapy.

What do we mean by Playful Learning Experiences?

Playful learning experiences serve as powerful contexts for fostering holistic child development.

At the core of learning through play are **five essential characteristics—Joyful, Meaningful, Iterative, Actively Engaging, and Socially Interactive**. These characteristics work in harmony, creating dynamic learning environments where children explore, discover, and grow at their own pace.

While not all five characteristics need to be present at every moment, their fluid interplay ensures that children experience moments of

joy and surprise, establish meaningful connections to their surroundings, remain actively engaged and absorbed, experiment through iteration, and interact socially with peers and caregivers. Through this approach, children develop critical cognitive, emotional, and social skills that lay the foundation for lifelong learning and adaptability.

⁷ Brookman-Frazee, L., Baker-Ericzen, M., Stadnick, N., & Taylor, R. (2006). Parent perspectives on community mental health services for children with autism spectrum disorders. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 15(4), 377–393. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-006-9022-7>

¹⁴ Pyle, A., & Danniels, E. (2017). A continuum of play-based learning: The role of the teacher in play-based pedagogy and the fear of hijacking play. *Early Education and Development*, 28(3), 274–289.

What is Pariva's Family Support Program?

Addressing the developmental and behavioral health needs of neurodivergent children requires more than child-focused care. Families cannot navigate these challenges alone, making a partner specializing in holistic, family-centered care essential to bridge gaps in support.

The Pariva Family Support Program (FSP) model recognizes that the well-being of the child is intricately connected to the well-being of the entire family unit, offering a solution that emphasizes collaboration and whole-family engagement.

The program begins with a thorough assessment of the child's skills across key developmental domains, such as physical, adaptive, social-emotional, cognitive, and communication abilities.

This comprehensive skill profiling identifies the child's specific strengths and areas needing support, enabling the program to craft individualized strategies that cater to their unique developmental needs. Simultaneously, the model extends its focus to the entire family, assessing emotional well-being, parenting confidence, and family dynamics.

In addition to structured interventions, FSP also provides need-based consultations and ongoing support with Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Occupational Therapists (OTs). These specialists offer targeted guidance to families, addressing specific concerns related to communication development, sensory integration, and functional skills. This ensures that families receive expert insights tailored to their child's evolving needs, reinforcing a well-rounded and comprehensive approach to care.

By engaging all family members—including parents, siblings, and extended relatives—the program creates a cohesive support system that fosters understanding and collaboration within the family.

Empowering caregivers to take an active role in their child's development is critical to achieving meaningful and sustainable outcomes. However, most programs fall short of equipping caregivers with the tools, confidence, and resources they need to thrive in this role.

The Family Support Program (FSP) begins by conducting a series of structured, evidence-based assessments with caregivers. These assessments provide a comprehensive understanding of their emotional well-being, happiness and stress levels, parenting confidence, protective factors, and overall family dynamics. The insights gained from these evaluations enable the program to tailor interventions and resources to the unique challenges and strengths of each family, creating a truly personalized approach.

Caregivers are equipped with practical strategies grounded in evidence-based practices to seamlessly integrate therapeutic techniques into everyday routines, such as playtime, mealtimes, and transitions. By offering step-by-step guidance on times, and transitions. By offering step-by-step guidance on creating structured yet flexible routines, FSP ensures these strategies are both practical and sustainable. The program emphasizes real-world applicability while providing ongoing feedback and adjustments, ensuring that interventions remain aligned with the evolving needs of both the child and the family.

Through psychoeducation, skill-building sessions, and stress-reduction strategies, caregivers are equipped with evidence-based tools and techniques to confidently address their child's developmental needs while navigating their own challenges. Through targeted training, caregivers are empowered with skills in positive reinforcement, emotional regulation techniques, and conflict resolution. This enables them to reframe challenges constructively and respond with confidence.

What we Assess?

For the child, we assess developmental domains:

- Physical
- Cognitive
- Social Emotional
- Communication
- Adaptive

We assess each parent/caregiver individually in the following areas:

- Parenting Stress
- Happiness and Well-Being
- Family Resilience and Adaptability
- Parental Self-Beliefs
- Self-Compassion
- Social Connections and Support System

Understanding a Child's Developmental Profile

We assess several key developmental domains in children, beginning with the physical domain, which involves large and small muscle coordination, strength, stamina, flexibility, and sequential motor skills. This includes a child's ability to perform tasks that require physical movement and coordination, such as running, jumping, and fine motor skills like grasping and manipulating objects.

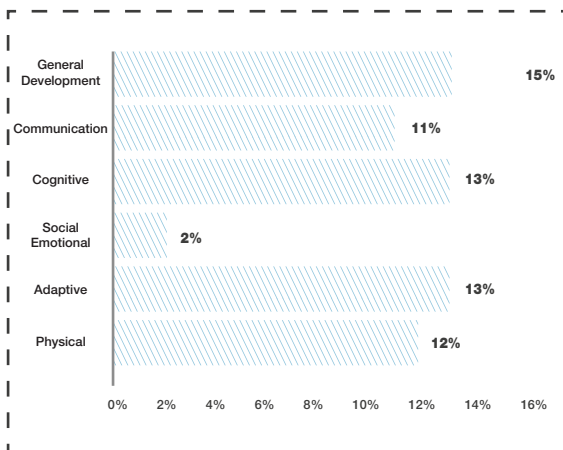
Adaptive behavior is another critical area, focusing on a child's ability to cope independently with their environment, including daily living activities such as eating, dressing, using modern technology, and overall self-care.

Social-emotional development is also evaluated, examining the child's interpersonal abilities, understanding of social and emotional cues, and functional performance in social situations with friends, relatives, and adults.

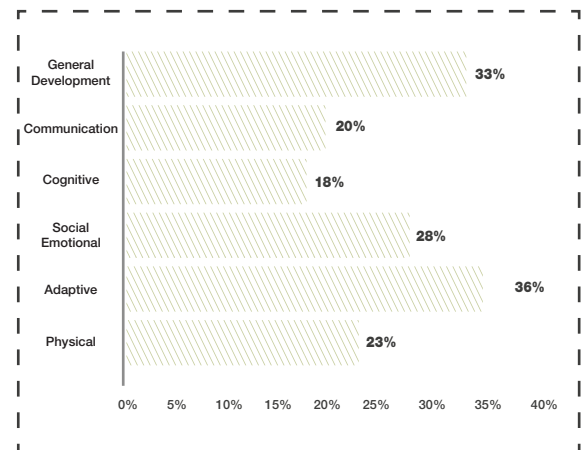
Cognitive abilities are assessed as well, looking at intellectual skills like problem-solving, memory, and attention that are foundational for academic achievement and overall learning. Finally, communication skills are measured, including both expressive and receptive aspects, covering how effectively the child understands and uses language—whether written, spoken, or gestural—to interact with others.

Each domain is scored based on the child's performance relative to their age group. Standard scores are derived for each domain, with higher scores indicating more advanced development. Improvements are evident in the increased scores across all domains, indicating that children in the program are meeting developmental milestones when given consistent opportunities and exposure. This success highlights the model's comprehensive impact on fostering well-rounded development in children.

G1: Children, for families participating in FSP for 3 months, showcased the below given Average Growth Percentage Across Developmental Domains



G2: Children, for families participating in FSP for 6 months, showcased the below given Average Growth Percentage Across Developmental Domains



Baseline as a Foundation:

The baseline assessment conducted at the time of intake serves as a starting point for understanding each child's unique developmental profile. It provides critical insights into areas requiring support and guides the formulation of individualized intervention plans.

Reassessments for Continuous Monitoring:

To ensure the program remains dynamic and adaptive to each child's evolving needs, reassessments are conducted at regular intervals (every 3 months). These provide an evidence-based framework for evaluating progress and adjusting intervention strategies, ensuring optimal growth across domains.

This evidence serves as a testament to FSP's effectiveness in transforming the developmental trajectory of neurodivergent children, ensuring they achieve their fullest potential.

The Pariva Family Support Program (FSP) serves children across various age groups, each with distinct developmental needs and intervention goals. The accompanying pie chart provides a breakdown of the age distribution within our program, illustrating the focus on early intervention and ongoing support for older children.



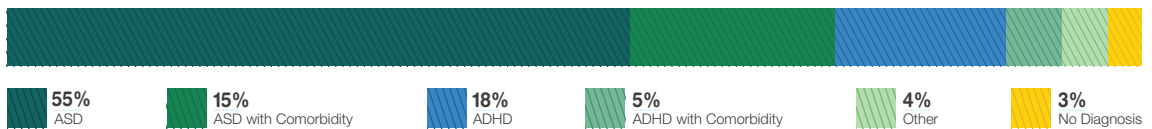
57% of children fall within the 2 to 5 years age range, highlighting the critical period for early intervention and foundational skill development. This age group benefits significantly from structured play-based learning and early developmental support to enhance communication, social, and adaptive skills.

26% of children are between 6 to 8 years old, a stage where continued intervention supports social-emotional growth, school

readiness, and behavioral management strategies that promote successful integration into educational settings.

17% of children belong to the 9 to 13 years age group, where interventions focus on fostering independence, life skills, and academic support to ensure a smooth transition to adolescence.

More on Child Development Impact



The Pariva Family Support Program (FSP) serves a diverse group of children with varying neurodivergent diagnoses, each requiring tailored support to address their unique developmental needs. The accompanying pie chart provides an insightful overview of the distribution of diagnoses within our program, highlighting the broad spectrum of challenges that families face and emphasizing the need for individualized, holistic interventions.

Through comprehensive assessments and

personalized intervention plans, FSP caters to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Developmental Delays, Sensory Processing Disorders, Speech and Language Delays, and other neurodevelopmental conditions.

This data underscores the importance of a flexible, multi-faceted approach that integrates play-based learning, caregiver empowerment, and individualized therapy to foster meaningful progress across all developmental domains.

Breakdown of Payor based Insurance Providers supported within Pariva



Supporting those Who Support: Understanding Parent & Caregiver's Need

Parents, like their children, require support in navigating the complexities of their personal identities, which is why we prioritize their mental, emotional, and physical well-being as much as the development of their children.

Our approach to working with families is rooted in a holistic and multi-faceted understanding of their needs. We focus not only on the growth and well-being of parents as individual adults but also on their strengths and challenges in their role as caregivers. In addition to focusing on the individual development of parents, we emphasize the critical importance of family interactions.

This involves addressing the interaction between parents and their children and the relationship between parents themselves.

No two families are alike, and we understand that what works for one may not work for another. This is why flexibility and personalization are at the heart of our model. Our program has been highly effective in ensuring positive outcomes across all these areas.

The following outlines the key areas we consider, and the progress achieved by the families participating in our program.

Personal Empowerment of Parents

We help parents build a strong foundation for their roles within the family and outside.

An important part of this is measuring the individual and family's subjective well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction. We also measure the individual's stress levels, parenting confidence, protective factors, and overall family dynamics. The Pariva Model has been shown to significantly increase these scores, contributing to more positive family dynamics and healthier coping mechanisms. Improvements in this scale suggest that parents and families feel more content, satisfied, and optimistic about their circumstances.

In addition to subjective well-being, self-compassion is a critical focus. Self-compassion helps us understand how compassionate parents are towards themselves, especially

during difficult times. We measure the ability to be kind and understanding toward oneself and to stay present in the emotional experience. By encouraging self-kindness and patience, we aim to reduce self-criticism and enhance emotional resilience. These improvements not only benefit parents' individual well-being but also lead to more balanced emotional states within the family unit, creating an environment where both children and parents can thrive.

We also consider the degree to which individuals see their struggles as part of a shared human experience. This ability to share common humanity reflects a greater sense of connection with others and less isolation. When parents feel connected to others and see their challenges as part of a broader human journey, they report reduced loneliness and increased emotional connection. This helps them balance emotions and prevents them from becoming overwhelmed by negative feelings.

Lastly, we emphasize building parental resilience, a protective factor that plays a crucial role in coping with stress and adversity. This factor evaluates how well parents cope with stress and challenges. By strengthening resilience, parents become more capable of bouncing back from difficulties, adapting to new situations, and maintaining stability within the family. Increased resilience often translates into better mental health for both parents and children.

Results from families who continued Family Support Program intervention for 3 months

62% Parents and caregivers reported **lower Stress levels.**

75% Parents and caregivers reported **higher Happiness Scores.**

40% Parents and caregivers reported **higher Happiness & Reduced Stress**

60% Parents and caregivers who initially experienced **critically high stress levels** successfully transitioned to a healthy, **normal stress range.**

Focus on Effective Parenting

Effective parenting is essential for creating a nurturing and supportive environment in which children can grow and thrive. It is not just about meeting the immediate needs of children but about empowering parents to confidently navigate the unique challenges of raising neurodivergent children while fostering their own emotional and mental well-being. By focusing on parenting goals such as parenting beliefs, self-efficacy, and stress management, we help parents build a parental identity. The Pariva Model addresses these core areas, ensuring that parents develop the necessary tools to handle their role with greater confidence and lower stress levels.

This confidence that parents have in their ability to fulfill their parenting duties effectively is the epitome of self-efficacy. When parents feel more assured in their role, they are better

equipped to make decisions, address problems, and engage positively with their children. Our program enhances this sense of competence through tailored training and support, leading to a marked improvement in both parent and child outcomes. The increase in parental confidence is directly linked to a healthier, more engaged parenting approach.

Closely tied to this sense of competence is the reduction of parental stress and distress. Parents often feel overwhelmed by the pressures of daily responsibilities and emotional strain, which can impact their ability to connect with their children and maintain their well-being. By offering strategies and resources to manage these stressors, the Pariva Model helps parents experience less burnout and emotional fatigue. Lower stress levels enable parents to be more present and emotionally available for their children, fostering a stronger parent-child bond and more effective parenting overall.

Outcome from Families Engaged in the Family Support Program for 6 Months

Increased Happiness Among Parents and Caregivers

80% of parents and caregivers reported an increase in their happiness scores, showcasing the program's ability to foster a sense of fulfillment, positivity, and emotional stability across family units.

Happiness and Stress Reduction:

50% of parents and caregivers reported a dual benefit of increased happiness coupled with decreased stress levels, demonstrating how FSP interventions not only uplift emotional well-being but also equip families with effective strategies to manage everyday challenges.

Stress Transition to Healthy Range:

75% among those who began the program with critically high stress levels, successfully transitioned to a healthy, normal stress range within six months. This underscores FSP's commitment to empowering families with tools for emotional regulation, stress management, and sustainable coping mechanisms.

Families, who Continued Intervention within Family Support Program for 6 months

50% Parents and Caregivers reported **Increased Happiness and decreased Stress**

75% Parents and caregivers who initially experienced **critically high stress levels** successfully transitioned to a healthy, **normal stress range**

50% Parents and caregivers reported an **increase** in their Family Coherence scores, indicating **strengthened resilience, and enhanced family cohesion**

Impact and Meaning

Parents and Caregivers reported

7% average growth in their Parental Self-Beliefs

60% of parents reported **12%** of average growth in their confidence in parenting skills

9% average growth in their Happiness & Well-Being

80% of parents reported **12%** average growth in their well-being and emotional resilience

8% -average decrease in their Stress Levels

70% of parents reported **12%** average decrease in their stress levels and parenting challenges

4% average growth in their Self-Compassion

70% of parents reported **9%** average growth in their self-kindness and emotional adaptability

2% growth in their Social Connections and Support System

40% of parents reported **12%** average growth in understanding their strengths and support systems

Impact Driven Across the Issues

Pariva Family Support Program (FSP) model provides a groundbreaking solution that directly addresses the challenges faced by families of neurodivergent children, tackling key issues with a family-centered, evidence-based framework.

Lack of Holistic, Family-Centered Support:

FSP adopts a comprehensive approach, recognizing that a child's development is deeply interconnected with the well-being of their entire family. By assessing family dynamics across six developmental domains, FSP develops tailored interventions that address the unique challenges and strengths of both children and caregivers. This holistic focus ensures that all family members' emotional, social, and behavioral needs are met, fostering stronger family bonds and reducing caregiver stress.

Shortage of Trained Professionals for Neurodivergent Families:

The program incorporates scalable solutions to address workforce limitations by empowering families to take a more active role in their child's progress. Through structured training and skill-building sessions, caregivers are equipped with practical tools to implement strategies at home. This reduces dependency on professionals and ensures sustained progress even in the absence of direct support, easing the strain on limited resources.

Limited Accessibility to Quality and Timely Care:

FSP eliminates delays in intervention by offering families immediate, personalized

support. With integrated therapeutic services and a structured framework, families bypass the long waitlists associated with traditional care systems. The program aligns with existing therapies, such as ABA and OT, bridging fragmented services to create a seamless experience for families.

Limited Caregiver Empowerment and Training:

Caregivers are equipped with evidence-based strategies, such as emotional regulation, positive reinforcement, and conflict resolution techniques, empowering them to confidently manage challenges. By embedding therapeutic interventions into everyday routines like playtime and transitions, FSP enables caregivers to foster sustainable, at-home progress, enhancing family dynamics.

Insufficient Integration of Feedback and Play-Based Learning:

FSP prioritizes continuous feedback, ensuring interventions evolve alongside the child's and family's changing needs. Play-based learning is central to the program, fostering cognitive, social, and emotional growth in a natural, engaging way. This personalized and adaptive approach ensures therapy remains effective and enjoyable for children and families alike.



In addition, the program aligns seamlessly with existing services like ABA, Occupational Therapy, and Early Intervention, bridging gaps in fragmented systems and delivering comprehensive results.

Research underscores that holistic approaches incorporating play-based learning, particularly with active family participation, significantly improve children's developmental outcomes (Stagnitti et al., 2016)⁴.

Charting the Way Forward

The journey toward comprehensive, family-centered care for neurodivergent children requires a shift from fragmented, child-only interventions to a holistic, dynamic, and inclusive model of support.

The Pariva Family Support Program (FSP) is leading this transformation by addressing the developmental needs of the child while strengthening the entire family unit. Through structured assessments, caregiver training, and personalized interventions, FSP empowers families to take an active role in their child's progress.

By integrating play-based learning, real-time feedback loops, and interdisciplinary collaboration, FSP ensures that children receive developmentally appropriate and engaging interventions that evolve alongside their needs. Moreover, by reducing barriers to accessibility and enhancing caregiver confidence, FSP fosters sustainable progress that extends beyond therapy sessions into daily life.

As we look ahead, scalability and accessibility remain central to ensuring that more families benefit from this model. Future initiatives will focus on expanding partnerships with schools, integrating additional specialist consultations, and refining intervention strategies to enhance long-term outcomes.

The vision is clear—creating a world where every neurodivergent child receives the support they need while ensuring that families are not just involved but truly empowered in the process.

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