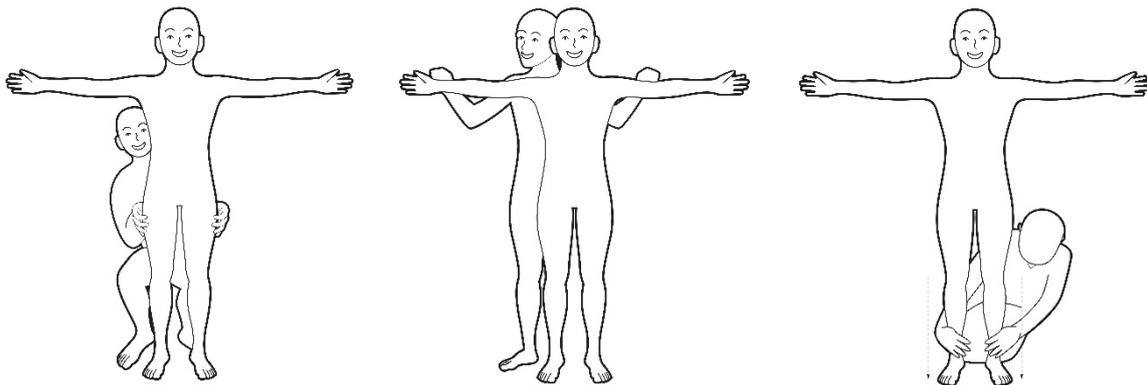


The power of tracing the body outline

Lynette van Wyk

On presenting *Play Learn Grow* in a remote rural town, a mom asked advice regarding her 16-month-old girl who will not play with any toy whatsoever, shows no interest in touching anything messy, does not say a word, not even Mommy, and was diagnosed by her paediatrician with Sensory Disorder. The mom showed me a video with the little girl spinning a household object. That was her only interest in an object – spinning it. She showed no interest in playing with toys. Regardless of the mommy's desperate efforts to get her involved in play, she was not successful and wanting to know what she could do.

During the course we refer to the tracing of the body outline. The mommy was hesitant whether their 16-month-old girl will allow them to do that, but she gave it a try. The first try was an effort, but then the little girl started to enjoy the outline and the mommy did it twice a day: in the morning and in the evening, every day. To her utmost surprise she noticed results much sooner than was expected.



12 days since the mommy started tracing the outline of her body, this little girl was getting her hands into coloured flour and water and made painting strokes with both hands. A few days before that she was willing to play in the sand and started scooping sand into a bucket. She stopped eating soil. The parents were amazed. She then started mimicking her mommy who was playing with blocks and for the first time ever, she did not just break the towers, but tried to stack some of the blocks herself. For the first time ever, she also showed interest in a knob puzzle, trying to put the pieces back in the right spots. She pulled a car on a string and... she uttered sounds trying to say mammammamma. The parents are so grateful.

Dr Melodie de Jager has since then suggested more exercises like doing the Swiss Roll on the bed and rolling a ball over her body – first a smaller one, then a bigger ball, but up to now it was purely the tracing of the body outline that made the difference in this precious little girl's life. How very grateful we are for someone like Dr De Jager to teach us such simple but life changing skills that bring such amazing change.

[The details of this little girl are private, but we needed to share it so that more parents in need, could try out the BabyGym and Mind Moves exercises and experience the difference it can make. The videos that accompany this, was done with a 3,5-year-old to demonstrate to the mommy what she could do.]