

***Some people say you can only use weighted vests for 30 minutes a day or to make sure the vest doesn't weigh more than 10% of the child's body weight. But I have some 30-pound kiddos who really need a little more than 3 pounds in their vest, and some seem to be able to wear this for an hour twice a day. What is your thinking on weighted vests?-from <http://www.spdfoundation.net/newsletter/spring2010/ask.htm>***

No randomized controlled trial ("gold standard") research has been conducted on weighted vests, but there is some new evidence that they do not have the therapeutic advantage people once thought they might. When we do use the vests, we use them 20 minutes on and at least 20 minutes off so the child does not habituate to the stimulation.

Watch your child carefully to observe whether he/she profits from the extra weight. I think sometimes the children need pressure, not weight, but every child is different. Careful observation, astute judgment, common sense, and a cautious approach are advisable.

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[J Autism Dev Disord.](#) 2009 Jan;39(1):105-14. Epub 2008 Jul 1.

### **The use of weighted vests with children with autism spectrum disorders and other disabilities.**

[Stephenson J,](#) [Carter M.](#)

Some research indicates there is no measurable effect of weighted vests for children for the purposes of reducing hyperactivity, clumsiness, inattentiveness, or stereotypic behaviors. (Journal of Autism, Australia) They do recommend further research.

Macquarie University Special Education Centre, Macquarie University, Sydney, NSW, Australia.

[jennifer.stephenson@speced.sed.mq.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.stephenson@speced.sed.mq.edu.au)

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Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders DOI: [10.1007/s10803-010-1104-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-010-1104-x)

(2010).

### **Weighted Vests, Stereotyped Behaviors and Arousal in Children with Autism**

[Hodgetts, S.,](#) [Magill-Evans, J.,](#) & [Misiaszek, J.](#)

This study's results do not support the use of weighted vests to decrease motoric stereotyped behaviors, nor does it support the theoretical basis for this modality.

Although we need studies with significantly more participants so we can firmly establish whether these vests are effective, the best studies to date have failed to show that this intervention is effective in reducing stereotyped behaviors in most children.

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Focus Autism Other Dev Disabl OnlineFirst, published on December 23, 2009 as doi:[10.1177/1088357609353751](https://doi.org/10.1177/1088357609353751)

### **Effects of Weighted Vests on the Engagement of Children With Developmental Delays and Autism**

Brian Reichow, Erin E. Barton, Joanna Neely Sewell, Leslie Good, and Mark Wolery

The use of weighted vests for children with autism spectrum disorders and developmental disabilities is a common practice as part of sensory integration therapy programs. The purpose of the current investigation was to extend the research on the use of weighted vests for children with autism and developmental delays in a methodologically rigorous

study. The study was conducted using an alternating treatment design. This allowed the comparison of three different conditions: weighted vest, vest with no weight (which served as a placebo), and no vest (which served as a baseline). **The results showed no differentiation in engagement between conditions for any of the participants.** Implications for practice and future research are provided.

Practitioners (Champagne) are using weighted vests and blankets with adult acute mental health populations to promote self-nurturance, coping skills development, and reality orientation to calm or relax, self-soothe, distract, or comfort one's self.