

Mia's Healing Space

ABOUT MIA

Mia is 16 years old. She has Prader-Willi syndrome, autism, pica, and developmental delays. Mia gets frustrated easily, doesn't have a sense of danger, and can become aggressive when her needs are not met.

HOME VISIT

During the home visit, we learned that Mia spends much of her time in the living room and dining room. There was a large wooden bench swing in the dining room that she spent a lot of time on. The carpet had tarps taped down because of Mia's incontinence and the couches were covered in sheets. There was no TV because Mia had broken it trying to hit a "bad guy" on the screen. The lighting was broken because Mia pulled the ceiling fixture down and bent the sconces over the fireplace. Mia needs to be kept out of the kitchen due to Prader-Willi syndrome, but the family has struggled to find a gate that works for their needs. They also need more storage.

OBJECTIVE

The goal of the project is to create a space that is safe for Mia. It should be calming and function better for her and her parents.



AT A GLANCE

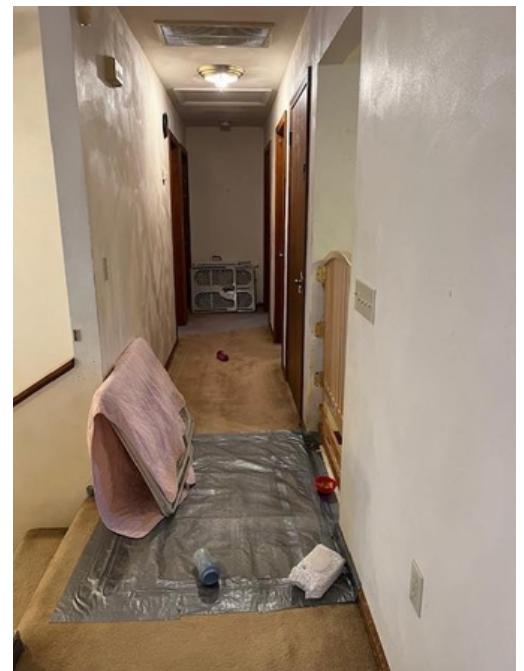
Needs

- New lighting
- Gates that keep Mia out of the kitchen
- Easy to clean flooring
- A sensory activity to replace swing

Challenges

- Family can't be out of the house for long
- Mia does not like change
- Gates will need to be custom designed
- Budget: \$7000

BEFORE IMAGES



SOLUTION

- The walls were given a fresh coat of the existing paint color and the curtains remained. This keeps the space familiar to Mia and avoids the stress of a completely new space.
- LVP flooring was installed, this will make cleaning much easier and create a healthier environment for Mia and her family.
- 3 ceiling light fixtures were replaced with flush mount fixtures so Mia would no longer be able to reach them. The 2 sconces on the fireplace were replaced with flat, heavy-duty, outdoor fixtures and painted the same color as the walls so they would not draw Mia's attention.
- Two members of the team discussed with Mia's father why past gates had failed and brainstormed what would work better. Using this information, they designed two custom gates for the space. The solid design doesn't allow Mia to see through the gates, they are painted the same color as the walls, so they blend in and Mia will not be drawn to them. A slide latch is located on the back of the gate underneath a piece of wood that finishes the top, so even if Mia puts her hands on top of the gate, she won't be able to feel the latch.
- Instead of a TV, the team opted for a projector that shines on the wall. This will allow Mia to watch her favorite shows but is much safer for her.
- Though Mia loved her wooden swing, it was determined that it was not safe to keep in the house. Utilizing the knowledge of an occupational therapist, the team opted for a low rocker with a thick cushion that can double as a crash pad. Thick rubber mats were placed under the rocker.
- Mia likes to lay under the window, so another area of rubber mats was added with sensory pillows.
- A new couch was added to the space. It is extra deep so Mia can comfortably sleep on it. The arms can be adjusted to be vertical or at an angle. Each of the seats lifts for storage. Waterproof covers were added to the cushions because of Mia's incontinence and to make cleaning easier.
- A comfortable chair was also added to the space because Mia likes to sleep in the living room and Mia's mom stays up at night to monitor her.

RESULTS

The finished design is safe for Mia and will allow her parents to more easily care for her.

Mia's dad emailed the project team after the reveal:

"We are grateful for what you have done for our disabled daughter Mia's living area at home for safety improvements on Friday and weekend. You people really make our home to be Mia's comfortable zone and safety for her.

You have been pushing the limits to help us and the jobs are completed much faster than our expectation. It's hard to put into words our hearty appreciation for your help in these improvements.

Mia is enjoying the new couch, rocking chair and rocker, she slept on the couch, it's comfortable and big enough for her, she is playing on rocker and rocking chair, we can see they are safe for her to play. She just one look at all new lights and found no more lights and fan blades for her to playing with, the lighting is good for living room, the floor is easy to clean for us so any foods she dropped we can easily see and clean out this help to keep her healthy

Most of all, two half doors are really good to prevent her go into kitchen for food by herself, no more dangerous turn on natural gas or bring down rice cooker and oven range to hurt her and cause dangerous concerns in kitchen, I understand it took hours to find materials and design the door, now it works very well to protect Mia.

Last, many thanks to Lisa for making arrangements and planning for this project, it's nice you even prepared Mia's favorite snack- cupcakes and bananas for her for celebrations.

My wife and I greatly appreciate all safety improvements you all have been done.

I am a senior citizen but I am the one to make ends meet for us, my wife has poor health conditions but she is almost 24/7 to take care of Mia at home. I am also lacking skills, knowledge and financially for most of the home improvements, only able to do some bandage repairs for our house to keep Mia safe. Under these conditions your help is greatly helpful for Mia.

We don't know how to express our gratitude, we hope you know how we feel."

AFTER IMAGES



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lisa Wilson and the volunteer team for all of their hard work. Ellen and Bob Smith for picking up and disposing of the old furniture. N&M Building and Renovation for donating their time to replace the light fixtures. Home Plus for the discount on the chair The Floyd Hooker Foundation for funding for the project.