

**Client:** Faith

**PT/OT/Supplier:** Michelle L. Lange, OTR/L, ABDA, ATP/SMS

**Location:** Pollock Pines, CA

Faith is a 9-year-old girl with diagnoses including brain injury, cerebral palsy, seizures and blindness. She lives at home with her parents and siblings. Her mother brought Faith for an Assistive Technology evaluation with Michelle Lange, OTR and Jill Tullman, SLP-CCC. Evaluation goals included positioning, access, and communication.



## Movement

Faith loves sensory input, including rocking in her Ki Mobility Focus CR manual tilt wheelchair. Many people with low vision enjoy rocking, often seeking alternative sensory input. Faith rocks even more when she is excited!

Faith is more alert and calmer when she rocks. If her Seating Dynamics Dynamic Rocker Back interface (DRBi) is locked out (latched), she can quickly become either less responsive or agitated. Even though she does not rock with a great deal of *force*, Faith does rock a great deal of the *time*. This constant movement can lead to wear and tear of the manual wheelchair frame and eventual breakage. The Dynamic Back provides both movement for Faith and damage protection for her manual wheelchair.

## Dynamic Seating

Faith first received a Seating Dynamics Dynamic Rocker Back interface (DRBi) approximately 1 year ago. This component was placed on her tilt in space manual wheelchair. Faith uses a linear seating system in this mobility base. Her spinal curvatures have worsened and so a molded seating system was recommended at this evaluation. The one piece molded seating system can be 'articulated' to allow movement of the Dynamic Back.

Much of Faith's rocking is initiated with head movement. Her head rarely contacts the head support, however, and so Dynamic Head Support Hardware is not required. She does not move her legs very often and not with force, and so Dynamic Footrests are also not indicated.

Figure 1:



## Quick Notes

### Challenges:

- ✓ Rocking
- ✓ Wear and tear on equipment
- ✓ Agitation
- ✓ Decreased alertness

### Areas affected:

- ✓ Back

### Equipment Used:

- ✓ [Dynamic Rocker Back](#)
- ✓ [Ki Mobility Focus CR](#)

Figure 2:



Faith often seeks oral sensory stimulation in addition to the vestibular stimulation that rocking provides. She often chews on a 'chewy tube.' During her Augmentative Communication evaluation, Faith was carefully listening to choices of what she could 'speak' through a speech generating device and then making her selection by pressing a switch placed by her right medial knee - all while rocking and chewing. Rather than distracting her, this sensory stimulation helps her attend, focus and do her best.

It is so easy to underestimate Faith! And yet she was communicating using a fairly complex hierarchy of vocabulary choices in a very short amount of time. She is a rock star!

## Results

Our evaluation recommendations included a new molded seating system, single switch auditory scanning using a switch by the inner right knee, and a speech generating device. But this rock star needs to move in order to be as functional as she can. Keep moving, Faith!

**Michaela**  
**Faith's Mom**  
**Pollock Pines, CA**

"Malia has had the dynamic back for one year now and she loves it! It allows her to get the movement stimulation she so craves."

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### *About the Author*

Michelle is an occupational therapist with 30 years of experience and has been in private practice, Access to Independence, for over 10 years. She is a well-respected lecturer, both nationally and internationally and has authored numerous texts, chapters, and articles. She is the co-editor of *Seating and Wheeled Mobility: a clinical resource guide*, editor of *Fundamentals in Assistive Technology*, 4th ed., NRRTS Continuing Education Curriculum Coordinator and Clinical Editor of *Directions* magazine. Michelle is a RESNA Fellow and member of the Clinician Task Force. Michelle is a certified ATP, certified SMS and is a Senior Disability Analyst of the ABDA.

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