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Solace
Bringing parents of people with special needs together

"I **shut myself** from hanging out with normal parents because **they don't get it**. They keep judging your sister and ask annoying questions!"

"We're walking **blindfolded** without any guidance. I'm **stressed**, but what can I do?"

"I **don't** know what to do for her..."

"We did a lot of **trial and errors** without knowing anything. I was too hard on your sister, I think I ruined her. It's **my fault**..."

Background

These are some of the phrases I've heard from my parents. I knew my sister was different, but I didn't know what it meant for them. When I was finally old enough to understand, I began seeing the pain and struggles they went through. With the goal to make getting emotional and practical support easier and more accessible for parents of individuals with special needs, I started this project.

여기있는 것들은 제 부모님께 들었던 이야기입니다. 제 언니가 다르다는 것은 알고 있었지만, 그 것이 부모님께 어떤 의미였는지 몰랐어요. 부모님을 이해할 수 있을 만큼 자라자, 그들이 겪어온 고통과 수난들이 마침내 보이기 시작했어요. 그래서 저는 특수 아동들과 그들의 부모님이 정서적이고, 실질적인 지원을 더 편하게, 또 더 쉽게 접할 수 있도록 하기 위해 이 프로젝트를 시작하게 됐어요.

Problems



Support from people who “get it” is important, but it’s hard to find

Being a parent of individuals with special needs can be isolating, both physically and mentally. Often, they don’t socialize with their friends as much because they are so focused on meeting their child’s needs, or they pull away from friends and families because their journeys are so different. Social support is very important for their emotional state, but often times it’s not something that is immediately available to parents in the early days of diagnosis.

“이해해주는” 사람들로부터의 지원이 중요하지만, 찾기조차 어렵습니다.

특수아동의 부모가 된다는 것은, 물리적으로 또 정신적으로 소외되는 일이기도 합니다. 특수아동의 부모님들은 자녀에게 필요한 것들을 챙겨주어야 하고, 특수아동의 생활 환경은 너무나도 다양하기에 지인들을 만나거나 사회활동을 하기 어렵습니다. 부모들의 마음 챙김을 위한 사회적 지원은 너무나도 중요하지만, 대부분 진단을 받은 초기에 바로 도움을 받기란 쉽지 않습니다.

Not only emotional support, they also need practical education

Parents need to be educated about their child’s condition to support and advocate for them fully. The information they need to know differs by each stage of development—infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Parent education is exceptionally important in the child’s early stages, which is also the most common time when parents feel psychological distress. It is difficult for parents to be proactive in searching for information when they’re emotionally exhausted.

정서적인 지지뿐만 아니라, 실용적인 교육도 필요합니다.

아동의 상태를 지지하고 자녀들을 온전히 대변하기 위해서 부모들은 교육을 필요로 합니다. 영아, 아동기, 청소년기, 성인기까지 아동의 발달 단계마다 필요한 정보들이 달라지죠. 부모 교육은 아동이 초기 단계에 있을 때, 대부분의 부모가 정신적으로 가장 고통을 받는 그 순간, 특히나 중요합니다. 정서적으로 탈진되는 순간을 대비해서 미리 정보를 찾기란 부모들에게 거의 불가능합니다.





Today's Story

Pre-produced short audio where we invite parents to talk about their stories and journeys, as well as advice and encouragement to other parents. Parents can check-in and listen to a new episode everyday to feel comfort and strength to continue their days.

오늘의 이야기

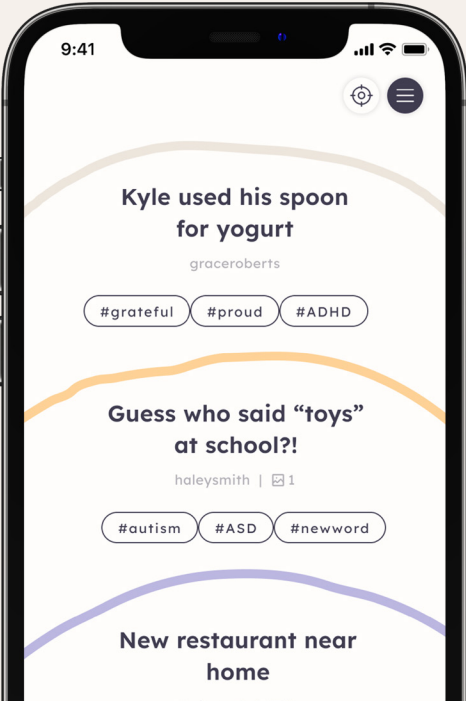
오늘의 이야기는 미리 녹음된 짧은 음성 파일입니다. 오늘의 이야기를 통해 부모들은 자신의 이야기를 나누고, 서로에게 조언과 격려를 합니다. 부모들은 어플에서 매일 새로운 오늘의 이야기를 들으면서 하루를 살아갈 힘을 얻고, 편안함을 느낄 수 있습니다.

Share Your Moments

Every moment is worth celebrating, no matter how small. Parents can share their moments with text, photo, video, and audio. The posts are organized based on their location and similarity of child's condition, so they have a higher chance of continuing their relationship in real life.

당신의 순간들을 공유하세요

모든 순간들은 정도와 관계없이 축하받아야 마땅합니다. 부모들은 자신의 순간들을 글, 사진, 영상 그리고 음성으로 나눌 수 있습니다. 이렇게 소중한 순간들을 담은 포스트들은 위치와 아동의 상태의 유사도를 기반으로 정돈되어 있어, 실생활에서도 다른 부모들과 관계를 이어나갈 수 있는 기회가 됩니다.





Support Each Other

While the smallest thing usually makes parents feel ecstatic, it's not rare that they feel frustrated or in a mentally low spot. Solace provides a safe space where parents can express their frustrations anonymously and get support from each other.

서로를 지지해주기

아주 작은 일들은 때때로 부모들을 무척이나 기쁘게 만들기도 하지만 한편으로 그러한 일들이 부모에게 큰 좌절감을 주는 일도 드물지 않습니다. Solace는 부모들이 익명으로 자신의 좌절감을 표현하고 서로에게 지원을 주고 받을 수 있는 안전한 공간을 제공합니다.

I want to...

☐ Share this and get support from anyone

☒ Request a 1:1 support with a parent mentor

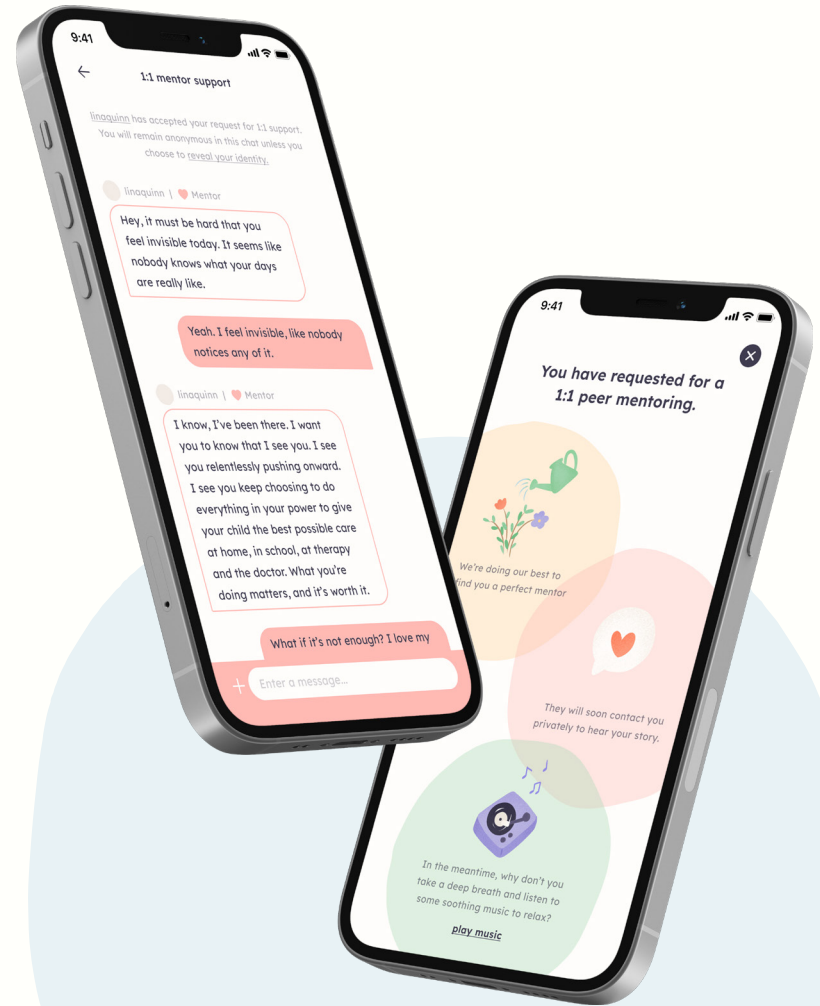
Done

One-on-one Peer Mentoring

Parents can also request a 1:1 support with a parent mentor who has walked their walk. They simply need to write out their concerns, and Solace will find a perfect peer mentor to support them emotionally.

일대일 멘토링

같은 길을 걸어간 부모 멘토에게 1:1 도움을 요청할 수 있습니다. 고민을 간단히 적기만 하면, Solace가 정서적인 도움을 줄 수 있는 딱 맞는 부모 멘토를 찾아줍니다.

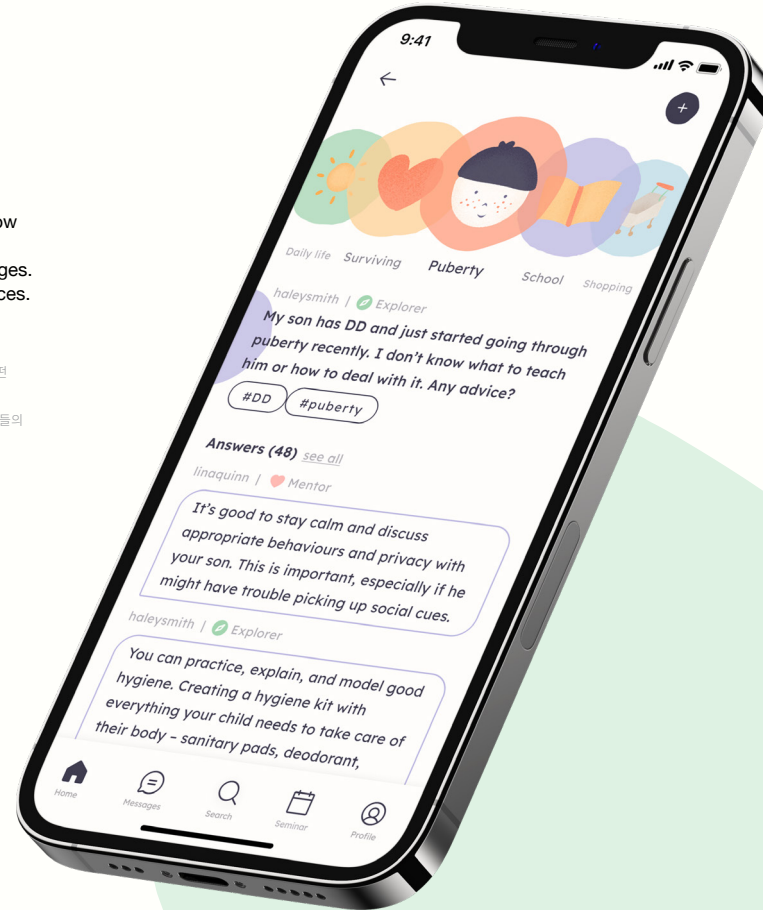


Discuss

Advice from professionals are for sure useful and worthy, but there are just some things that they can't resolve because most of the time, they don't know what it's really like. In Solace, parents can discuss about topics that are not normally discussed elsewhere, including puberty and dealing with false charges. They can ask questions, give answers, and learn from each other's experiences.

의견나누기

전문가에게 받는 조언은 유용하고 가치있지만, 진짜 필요한 것들을 해결해주지 못합니다. 대부분의 경우에는 이게 어떤 상황인지 잘 알지 못하기 때문이죠. Solace에서 부모들은 일반적으로 다른 곳에서는 다루어지지 않는 주제들에 대해 논의할 수 있습니다. 사춘기나 무고한 상황에 대처하는 방법들과 같은 것들이요. 질문하고 답변을 받으면서 다른 사람들의 경험을 통해 배울 수 있습니다.





Learn Together through Seminars

Solace provides paid seminars by verified experts and curates them based on a child's developmental stages. Every seminar is online, so parents don't need to worry about having to make time to go to a venue. Live seminars include a Q&A session with the experts, but parents can also watch the recorded version if they're not available to join the live session.

세미나를 통해 함께 배워가요

Solace는 검증된 전문가가 진행하는 유료 세미나를 아동의 발달 단계에 따라 선별해서 제공합니다. 모든 세미나는 온라인으로 진행되기 때문에 이동할 시간을 따로 만들기 위해 걱정할 필요가 없습니다. 실시간 세미나에선 전문가와 질의응답을 할 수 있습니다. 만약 실시간으로 참석할 수 없다 할지라도, 녹화된 영상으로 시청할 수 있습니다.

Epilogue

How did you come up with the idea of your project?

It was from my personal experience. My sister has ADHD and a Mild Intellectual Disability (she's bright, loving, loves to bake cookies 🍪 and grow tomatoes! 🍅). As I grew up, I came to understand that there are some challenges my parents went through (and are going through), that are not experienced by other parents of typically developing children. I thought it would be nice if there is a platform that can connect parents going through the same experience, to navigate this special journey together.

How could you work on your project for a long time?

I think I was able to do this project for a long time because the topic is what I'm really interested in. Also, people around me are amazingly supportive and care about me a lot, so this is also the reason I still have the motivation to continue the project for a pretty long time.

Any advice for future students of Creative Design 1 and 2?

Choose a topic that you are truly interested in, because during 2 semesters, it's so easy to lose motivation if you're doing something you're not really interested in.

Also, try to do your user study as early as possible, so you have more time to develop your concept and validate it. When you get to Creative Design 2, you will be busy planning the Design Show and preparing your exhibition materials, so you won't have much time to develop the concept.

Lastly, always do your best but don't be too hard on yourself. Eat your meals, take a break once in a while, and enjoy the process!

How did you grow as a designer by doing this exhibition?

I think I learned a lot from this project. Doing a project from start to finish, making my own plan, and doing all the research and user study individually was not easy. I learned how to manage my time between this exhibition project, other projects, and classes. I think I have a little bit better time management skill and I became more independent as a designer through this experience.

If you could turn back time, what advice would you give yourself?

Take it easy. I would tell myself that this is just the first step of many other projects to come, that I don't have to (and won't) make the best service in the world through this project. Don't be afraid to ask for help from people around you, because more often than not, they are willing to help. Talk to people when you are having a hard time, and hang in there :)

Anything else you want to say to anyone?

I'd like to thank Professor Hwang Kim for guiding me throughout this project.

I'd also like to thank my family and all of my friends who cheered me on and encouraged me every time I was feeling down.

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