How to choose and use apps in children's visual rehabilitation

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Digital technologies play an important role to support visual rehabilitation with children, especially visual stimulation and hand-eye coordination activities. The main aim of project conducted is to extend previous studies of team, on usability of digital resources, and to establish an online environment for knowledge sharing among parents, professionals and also teachers.

The project took place from defining criteria that make apps suitable for children with low vision; next phase was selection of apps responding to these validated criteria, and finally release online platform. From a strictly research perspective, the most important aspect was to identify the key elements that make generic apps usable by visually-impaired children in rehabilitative and playful contexts. A group of therapists analyzed mainstream products, in terms of

- apps' rehabilitative potential (e.g., hand-eye coordination, visual scanning, visual tracking),
- suitability for different degrees of low vision (i.e., mild, medium, severe),
- and recommended context of use (e.g., rehabilitation centres, school, home).

This process led to selection of a set of apps for showcasing in the online environment, open to the contribution of all stakeholders.

The main outcome was a hybrid online environment: www.sharehab.it.

The expected impact is to make information easily available for therapists and parents. Application designers, developers they also take into account the accessibility and usability criteria for children with low vision.

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