

# The Airport Experience for Someone With A Hidden Disability...



**ROMPA<sup>®</sup>**

*Life Changing Sensory Solutions For All*

# Hidden Disabilities include conditions such as: Autism, Asperger's syndrome, ADHD, Dyspraxia and Dementia

“ As a parent of someone with autism. There is little understanding or appreciation of what it is like to manage my son's impairment in a busy airport. The crowds, loud noises and the waiting all add to my son's anxiety. We are so stressed at airports that we rarely fly now. ”

Mrs. S Johnson - Parent

## Did you know?

Most people will have already:

- Spent months planning to avoid any potential problems
- Checked the airport's special assistance policy
- Downloaded any relevant information
- Visited the airport on a trial run
- Booked flights at off peak times



For an older adult with dementia the airport process can be a very overwhelming, confusing and stressful experience.



## 1 Check - In

### Noises

I can hear the sound of voices in my ears coming from the crowds around me, it's getting louder and louder, it's starting to make my head hurt. Suddenly there's a loud announcement - OUCH! This is scary.

### Crowds

There are lots of people around me, most of them are taller than me and I can't see above any of them. I'm anxious, what if I lose my parent or carer. If someone bumps into me I'm not sure that I'm going to be able to cope.

### Bag Drop

I'd like to keep my suitcase with me as it has all my belongings in it, I don't want them to be taken away because they are a comfort to me. I don't understand, this is confusing.

# What do I feel...



## 3 Duty Free

### Smells

As I walk through the gate I can smell a really strong perfume smell, I don't like it, it's really overwhelming and I can't get away from it. Now I can smell food too mixed in with the perfume smell, that's horrible. My sense of smell is extremely strong and this is becoming unbearable.

### Sights

There are bright lights coming from shops around me, it's really startling and is making me feel more and more agitated.

### Departure Gates

It looks like this stressful experience is nearly over and we can all sit down, relax and wait for our flight. Ahhh! Another loud announcement in my ear, that made me jump. Crowds of people are beginning to gather, they're sitting too close to me. The lights from the flight screens are hurting my eyes. This is too much to cope with, the last thing I want to do right now is have to get on the plane.

## 2 Security

### Machines

Oh no, I have to part with more of my possessions. Why do they need to take my bag from me? Why does my belt need to be removed? I'm not familiar with that machine and its making me nervous about having to walk through it.

### Touch

I am tactile defensive meaning I cannot bear to be touched. There are people giving body searches, this is my worst nightmare, please don't touch me. My anxiety is building, I'm starting to feel angry too, and I do not want to be touched.



# The solution...

## A Sensory Room by ROMPA®

A sensory room in an airport could be used to achieve a variety of different outcomes, here are a couple of popular options.

### Sensory Quiet Room

Sanctuary from the crowds, bright lights and somewhere to de-stress after all the security checks.



- Reduce Stress & Anxiety
- Benefits All Ages & Abilities
- Flexible Sizes
- Stimulate All the Senses
- Encourage Communication
- Themed Environments

### Interactive Sensory Room

Blow off steam after the sensory overload of duty free



- Entertainment Whilst Waiting
- Aimed at All Abilities
- Release Energy
- Engage Activity
- Relieves Boredom

# Why does my airport need a sensory room?

Making your airport inclusive makes good business sense as well as helping families. Benefits to your business include:

- Increasing your footfall.
- Reinforcing your company values - good PR, prove that you are a business that cares.
- Expanding your customer base.
- Strengthening your brand.
- Gaining competitive advantage - very few airports currently provide a sensory room.
- Increasing your profits.

## Did you know?

### **New Civil Aviation Authority Guidelines:**

Making air travel more accessible for passengers with hidden disabilities



Airports should provide a quiet area to wait for flights and quiet routes through the airport, for example bypassing the retail area. This will make travelling through the airport less stressful and disorientating and will benefit those with sensory impairments in particular.



For many people their experience at an airport is enough to make them decide not to fly at all. By not having a way to help these people you are missing a huge lucrative market and significantly effecting your footfall:

- 1 billion people which is 15% of the world's population experience a disability
- About 1% of the world's population is autistic which equates to approx. 72 million people
- £12.4 billion is spent on trips where a member of the party has an impairment
- The Purple Pound is worth £16 billion to just the UK economy alone
- Businesses lose £2 billion a year by ignoring the needs of disabled people

**The disabled market is one that you can't afford to lose!**



# Gatwick Airport Case Study



## YOUR LONDON AIRPORT *Gatwick*

We worked closely with London Gatwick Airport to install a sensory room in their north terminal. The room is designed for customers with autism, dementia, cognitive impairment and other special needs in order to make the airport experience less overwhelming.

Gatwick is the first UK airport to install a room of this kind. Doing so has generated a lot of PR for them including a feature on BBC news and in several press publications.

The free to use room is designed to not only be a chill out zone but also works as a separate interactive zone which stimulates the senses.

“ Gatwick is committed to providing passengers who have a disability of any kind with the support and services required to ensure their time at the airport is as comfortable as possible and this remains a key area of focus for the Airport. ”

*Andy Pule, Head of Terminal Operations*

## What Gatwick said about Rompa:

“ I cannot thank the whole team involved in this project enough for making it a reality. It is the most amazing Sensory Room I have ever seen. ”

*Autism Ambassador for Gatwick, Maria Cook*

# Choose Rompa®

## Snoezelen®

Snoezelen® is a unique trademarked concept which includes the installation of bespoke, high quality Multi-Sensory environments. Snoezelen rooms can provide a variety of benefits such as relaxation, therapy, stimulation or development. Well established and respected, Snoezelen is a brand that you can trust.

## Free design and consultation service

Our team of in-house designers will provide a room design to fit your specific requirements and budget. We work to bring your ideas to life.

## UK manufacture

Rompa is proud to be a British manufacturer. A large amount of our product offering is made on site at our Chesterfield premises by our wood, sewing, cutting, assembly, electronics and finishing departments. By producing our own products we ensure that we can guarantee consistent quality and durability.

## Over 30 years' experience

Here at Rompa we are experts in our field and have been a long standing market leader. You can rest assured that we provide the highest standards of quality and service.





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