make a move

a multi-sensory, movement coordinated furnishing support system for children with ADHD

a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of
master of design

written and designed by
brigid burnham

Massey University // Wellington // New Zealand // 2012

Key Words

ADHD

ADHDer

Developed Disorders

Disabled Learners

Self Directed

Movement

Body-Brain Connection

Sensory Stimulation

Coordination

Product Interaction

Learning Experience

Classroom Furnishings

The contemporary school chair.

abstract //

> We must allow the time to think more deeply and broadly about our [design] . . . Deep inquiry . . . is critical . . . Broader thinking also helps us break out of our current mindset. Looking [differently] can reveal new opportunities, and challenge more entrenched thinking.[1]

The contemporary school chair is representative of the conflict between established traditional student behaviour in the conventional classroom and the ADHDer's desire and need for more movement and sensory stimulation.

Classroom furnishings, by their active potential, have the ability to change the dynamic embodied in existing classroom environments. New furnishings in the classroom may positively affect the traditional culture of conventionality (standardized classroom behaviours) in a positive way by directly involving students in the interplay between active learning and sensory stimuli. Ultimately, my design approach is to provide a furnishing that responds to the ADHDer's learning experience in the classroom environment.

Using my individual experience of having ADHD as an investigative blueprint, my study took on a design process that overlapped four explorative modes: I examined the context of traditional classrooms (searched for understanding), developed contextualisation (searched for ideas), tested the concepts (searched for solutions), and logically reasoned (searched for meaning) an optimal design. These explorative modes were not done entirely sequentially. There was an ebb and flow throughout my whole design process. The interrelatedness between the explorative modes, and iterative process of learning and knowledge generally, helped generate a reactive design process which was ultimately represented by my design solution.

1. Laurel, Brenda. *Design Research, Methods and Perspectives.* MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England, 2003, 148.

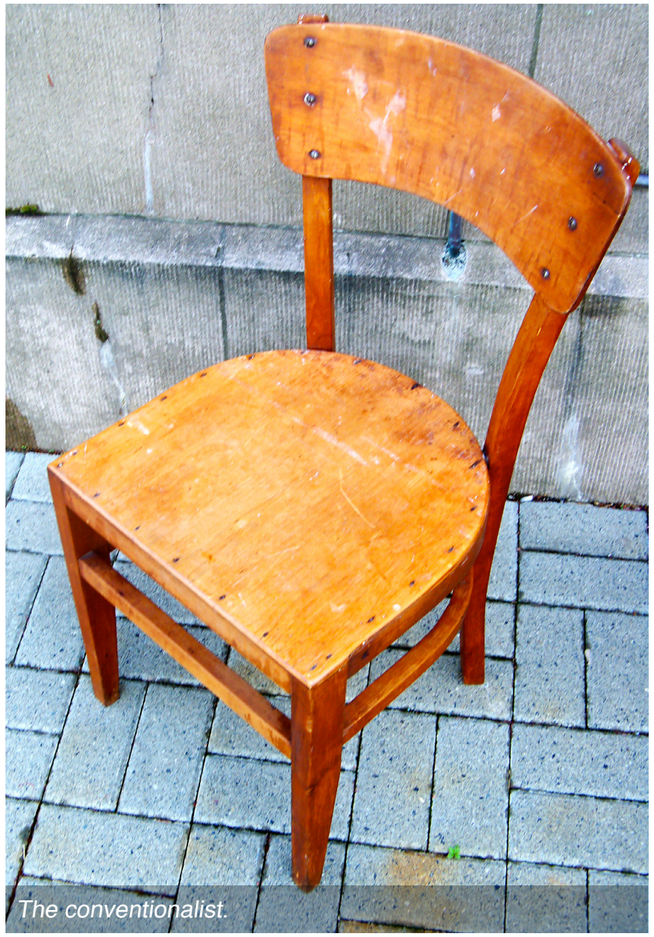
acknowledgements //

I wish to express my gratitude for all those who have offered their support, guidance, time and assistance through the course of my investigation.

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisors, Mrs. Julieanna Preston and Rodney Adank whose advice, direction, and positive reinforcement challenged my abilities as a design researcher and opened my eyes to new aspirations. I appreciate your time, dedication, and unrelenting efforts.

My parents, Tom and Mary Jane Burnham, what would I have done without you? Rob Butler, stepping in as a family figure & mentor, thank you for listening to my weekly rants over a "decaf" coffee! Saveth Man, thank you for your friendship and patience in teaching me the ins and outs to Rhino. To my brother and roommate- Richard- thank you for putting up with me during the challenging parts of this study and keeping me motivated. My editor, best friend, and partner, Brad Marrett, thank you for encouraging me the whole way through and giving me the ongoing support I needed to maintain momentum during the ups and downs of this study.

Finally, a special thanks to those fellow graduate students, the design workshop staff, and other areas of IDIE who made me feel at home here in Wellington. The warmth shown has made up for all the windy days in Wellington.



The conventionalist.

contents //