Puzzle Pieces' Environment Enhancement & Safety Initiative Project

Most of my advocacy is devoted to helping our community see the strengths, gifts, and abilities of individuals with disabilities. That is the story I am proud to tell. Yet this request asks me to tell another truth—one that is harder to put into words.

Some of the people we support also experience significant behavioral, sensory, communication, mobility, and personal-care needs. In moments of distress, sensory overload, loss of balance, or physical escalation, the environment around them can determine whether that moment ends in regulation and dignity or in injury.
That is why this request is not simply about equipment. It is about a lifeline of safety for our clients and for the staff who stand beside them every day.

It is about giving a child a padded place to regain control, giving an adult a stable chair or table that will not break under intense use, allowing staff to assist with personal care without risking injury, and creating homes and program spaces where families can trust that their loved one is protected.

Puzzle Pieces now serves nearly 500 clients across the lifespan, ranging from 18 months of age to 60 years old, and employs more than 110 staff members. More than 60% of our clients are individuals with autism, and many people we serve require intensive sensory, behavioral, adaptive, or physical support.

We have grown from approximately 400 clients in 2023 to nearly 500 today. That growth is a powerful sign of trust and need, but it also places extraordinary pressure on spaces used continuously, often in ways ordinary household or classroom furnishings were never designed to withstand.

Worn seating, damaged tables, inadequate padding, and equipment that cannot safely support transfers or balance work are not cosmetic concerns. They can become hazards during the very moments when a person is most vulnerable and staff are working hardest to keep everyone safe.

Our team can bring skill, compassion, and patience into those moments, but they also need an environment designed to support them.

The proposed $100,126.34 campus-wide initiative replaces those risks with durable, adaptive, safety-conscious environments across four divisions. Puzzle Pieces will cover the $126.34 above the grant amount. Every purchase was identified because it answers a real, daily need, not because it is newer or more attractive.

Safety is what allows ability to emerge. When people feel secure and regulated, they can learn, communicate, build relationships, practice independence, and participate in community life.

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Autism & ABA Services — $27,645.08
For more than 150 children and young adults with autism, the project adds padded wall panels and washable crash pads for safer sensory regulation and de-escalation, along with high-impact “no-break” anchor tables and durable antimicrobial seating made for continuous, intensive-use environments. These are practical safeguards for clients experiencing overload or dysregulation and for staff supporting them through it.

Adult Day Training — $36,518.43
Serving more than 100 individuals annually, this program will receive an electric hi-low changing table that supports safer, more dignified personal care; commercial-grade tables and seating; oversized supportive chairs; and replacements for broken and worn theater seating.

These improvements reduce physical strain, prevent avoidable hazards, and create stable spaces for learning, recreation, meals, and connection.

Physical Therapy — $23,000.00
A Biodex Balance System will provide objective assessments and help clinicians identify weight-shifting and stability challenges that may not be visible to the eye.

A wall-mounted cable machine and interactive therapeutic system will support safer work on balance, strength, coordination, and mobility—helping children and adults build skills that can reduce falls and increase independence beyond the therapy room.

Residential Living — $12,962.83
Across three homes serving 15 residents, aging sofas and recliners, a washer, storage systems, patio furnishings, and respite-room equipment will be replaced.

A safe home is more than a program site; it is the foundation for dignity, stability, belonging, and a life in community.

When our environments are safe and dependable, parents can go to work with greater confidence, families can breathe a little easier, staff can focus more fully on care and skill-building, and our community retains an essential network of disability services.

Durable, specialized products will also extend the life of these spaces and reduce repeated replacement costs, protecting Impact 100’s investment for years to come.

An Impact 100 grant would not simply transform our physical space. It would transform what safety feels like inside it: a safer place to calm, a safer way to receive care, a safer workplace for the people who devote themselves to this mission, and greater peace of mind for every family that entrusts us with someone they love.

That is not an equipment list. It is a lifeline and it would be transformational for Puzzle Pieces.

Puzzle Pieces
CONNECT. EMPOWER. INCLUDE.

Puzzle Pieces' Environment Enhancement Project Itemized Budget

Program Divisions	Total Program Enhancement Cost
Residential Living Program	$12,962.80
Physical Therapy Program	$23,000
Day Training & Autism Program (main campus)	$36,518.43
Autism & ABA Services Program (satellite campus)	$27,645.08
Total Project Cost:	$100,126.34

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