



Heavy Hugs

Annual Report 2025-2026

COY

JA Company
of the Year
Competition



Junior
Achievement™

Executive Summary

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The Mission

What Drives Heavy Hugs

To bring comfort and calm to people struggling with mental health challenges through thoughtful, soothing products that offer both physical and emotional support.

Financials & Performance

Financial Overview

Net Profit: **\$3,070.14**
 Units Sold: **159**
 Profit Margin: **52%**
 ROI: **550%**



The Product

Product Highlights

Heavy Hugs are weighted stuffed animals designed to calm the nervous system using deep pressure stimulation. Each animal comes with a calming pamphlet that utilizes grounding strategies, breathing exercises, and other activities to help calm users when needed.



The Team



Brett Jankowski
CEO



Ethan Kling
COO



Rayan Siddiqi
CFO



Talon Howard
Sales



Ali Evans
CMO



David Wadley
Supply

Teacher:
Nicole Snider



Volunteer:
Diane Pilati



Leadership and Organization

Motivation

What Drives Heavy Hugs

Monthly performance evaluations are conducted by the COO to assess each team member's contributions, review overall operations, and support individual growth and development. In addition, Heavy Hugs establishes clear weekly tasks and **monthly sales goals** to guide performance and maintain accountability. Most importantly, the team is driven by a shared mission to support and uplift others, which motivates each member to perform at their best and fosters a positive, engaged, and purpose-driven work environment.

Structure

Leadership Structure

The CEO of Heavy Hugs was selected through a **class-wide election** following formal presentations. After forming the team, each member was assigned a role aligned with their strengths. This distribution of responsibilities promotes **efficiency** and ensures **accountability** across the business. By working collaboratively within these roles, the team has built a well-structured organization positioned for continued success.

Optimizing Team Operations

Driving Efficiency

To reduce production time, Heavy Hugs designed the specifications of the bear and ordered a first bulk order of **100 units**. Once the inventory dropped below 30 units, they placed another order of **56 units** to maintain stock and keep up with customer demand.

Organizational Chart



Delegation of Duties



Discovery



**Original Idea
(From 2021!)**



Prototype



**Pamphlet
Design**



**Testing
Phase**



**Final Product
Design**



Final Product



**Helping Real
People!**

Problem

Teens Need Help

Across the U.S., **40% of high school students** report persistent sadness or hopelessness, and **one in five seriously considers suicide**. Yet teens are constantly told to "calm down" without being given a real tool to help them do it. Existing solutions like therapy and weighted blankets are often too expensive or inaccessible for everyday use, leaving countless young people to suffer in silence.

In Heavy Hugs' market research survey, over **97% of people said they or someone they know struggle with anxiety.**

Solution

Mental & Physical Support

Heavy Hugs gives teens and young adults an **affordable, accessible comfort tool** designed for real, everyday emotional support. Rather than replacing therapy, Heavy Hugs designed a tool to meet people where they are, something tangible to reach for in the moments that matter most. Heavy Hugs makes comfort easy to access and reminds users they are **never alone**.

Market Analysis

Unfair Advantage

What Sets Heavy Hugs Apart

Heavy Hugs is built on real data. A survey of **400+ people** showed that more than **97% know someone who struggles with anxiety**. Anxious people rely on coping methods such as breathing exercises, calming music, and weighted products, which are exactly what Heavy Hugs delivers. That research-backed origin, combined with **medical professional endorsement** and a high quality product, gives Heavy Hugs credibility and depth that competitors cannot easily replicate.

Competition

Industry Landscape

The mental wellness market spans weighted blankets, stuffed animals, mindfulness apps, and therapy tools, but nothing combines physical comfort with actionable coping strategies in one accessible product. Most competitors offer either a sensory tool or mental health guidance, not both, and comparable weighted stuffed animals range from **\$40 to \$120** without the integrated calming resources Heavy Hugs provides. Heavy Hugs fills that gap.

UVP

Value Proposition

Heavy Hugs is the only weighted stuffed animal that combines **specialist-proven deep pressure stimulation** with a calming pamphlet featuring breathing exercises, grounding techniques, affirmations, soothing music, and crisis resources. Backed by medical professionals and designed for all ages, it provides both physical comfort and practical mental health support in one simple, portable tool.



Experienced Anxiety or Depression?



Would you consider buying a weighted stuffed animal like this?



Product Overview

Mental Health Research

Research-Driven Approach

Weighted items provide deep pressure stimulation that calms the nervous system, reducing anxiety and stress, with studies showing significantly improved mood, sleep quality, and daily energy for those who use them. The Heavy Hug bear is inspired by the science of hugging, which triggers **oxytocin release while lowering cortisol**, the body's stress hormone. Heavy Hugs' calming pamphlet was developed in collaboration with **medical professionals, therapists, psychologists, special education teachers, and school counselors** to ensure every resource Heavy Hugs offers is expertly informed.

Product Growth

From Test to Success

Heavy Hugs' first product, the Cuddle Cub, was introduced as a test product at one foot long and 1.8 pounds to gauge customer interest and gather feedback. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and the suggestions received around size and weight proved invaluable in shaping the next step. Taking that feedback to heart, we developed the Heavy Hug, measuring **two feet long and 2.5 pounds** with an even softer feel. The journey from the Cuddle Cub to Heavy Hug reflects their commitment to listening to customers and continuously refining products to exceed expectations.



Try Some Exercises!

Step 1: Hold the weighted animal wherever it's most comforting

Step 2: Take a deep breath in and count out loud. Ready? 1 2 3 4 5

Step 3: Take a deep breath out and count out loud. Ready? 1 2 3 4 5

Lets try one more thing!
Stay Grounded Using Your 5 Senses

- 5 Things You Can See
- 4 Things You Can Feel
- 3 Things You Can Hear
- 2 Things You Can Smell
- 1 Thing You Can Taste

The Importance Of Mental Health

Positive Thinking Is The Key To Success!

A positive mindset helps you overcome challenges, stay motivated, and turn goals into reality. Believe in yourself, your thoughts shape your success!

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
Call or text 988 anytime for free, confidential support.

Text HOME to 781781 to connect with a trained counselor.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)
Visit nami.org for mental health information, support groups, and resources.

Heavy Hugs



How to use our weighted animal

READY FOR 3 DIFFERENT WAYS YOU CAN USE OUR WEIGHTED ANIMAL TO MAXIMIZE YOUR COMFORT

NUMBER 1
HOLD THE ANIMAL IN EITHER YOUR LAP, CHEST, OR SHOULDER AND LET THE WEIGHT SINK IN AND FULLY CALM YOUR BODY!

NUMBER 2
YOU CAN EVEN HOLD THE ANIMAL AND TAKE YOUR PHONE TO SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW TO LISTEN TO OUR RELAXING PLAYLIST!

NUMBER 3
IF THOSE DIDN'T FULLY BENEFIT YOU, LAY THE ANIMAL ON YOUR CHEST AND TRY TO TAKE A NAP TO FULLY RELAX YOUR BODY.

Why Does it Matter?
Good mental health helps you stay confident, focused, and strong. It supports better choices, relationships, and overall happiness.

What About The Experience?
The experience shows that mental health is important for overall well-being. It involves managing stress and emotions in healthy ways. Open discussions help reduce stigma and support those who struggle.

How To Solve The Problem?
While there is no cure for mental health challenges, there are many ways to manage them. Taking small steps every day can lead to a healthier mind and a stronger you.

You Can Control It

Write It Out
Journaling your thoughts helps release worries from your mind and makes it easier to understand what causing your anxiety.

Take a Short Walk
Moving your body, even for a few minutes can reduce tension and refresh your mind.

Do Something Creative
Drawing, painting, or crafting can distract from stress and let you express your feelings in a positive way.

Keep Going!!



Customer Elements

Segments

Who Heavy Hugs Serves

Heavy Hugs' target market includes **parents and caregivers** of teens, children, and young adults, as well as **schools, therapy practices,** and organizations that support youth development and mental health.

Heavy Hugs' target users are **teens and young adults** who are navigating anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges, and who benefit from accessible, meaningful support. Heavy Hugs have also been shared to the special needs department of the North Canton School District!

Channels

How Heavy Hugs Connects

Heavy Hugs connects with customers through local events, markets, and pop-up shows, while promoting their mission on their website and social media, especially Instagram.

Heavy Hugs focuses on accessibility and values customer feedback through online platforms, helping them build strong relationships and reach customers across **multiple states.**

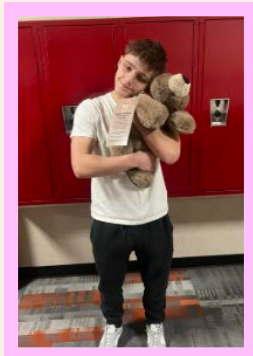
Public Appearances



250+ Followers
Spreading Awareness



@heavyhugsja

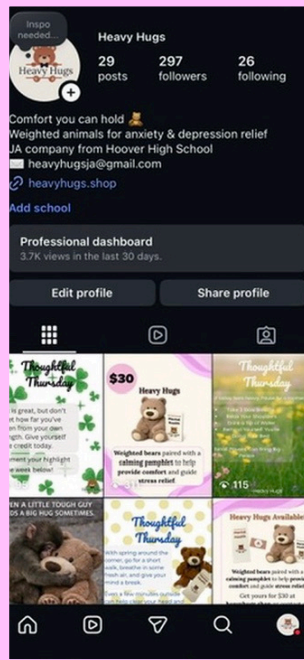


Community Support

Sponsors



Business Performance

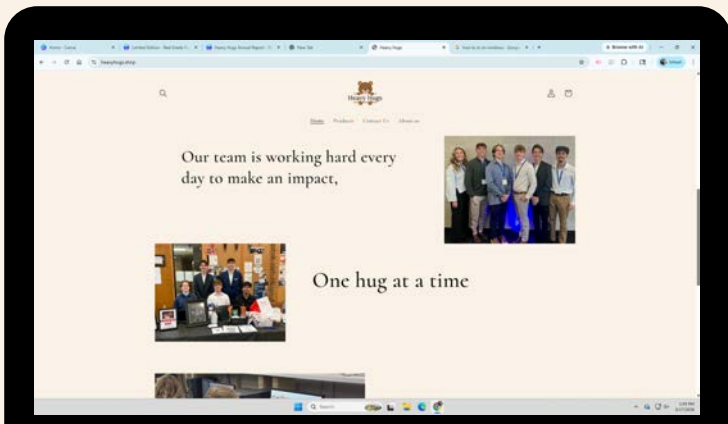


Product Development Research-driven Design

Heavy Hugs selected the optimal plush based on **quality, cost, and shipping efficiency**. The size, weight, and pamphlet were designed using survey and interview research, and calming colors were chosen based on proven stress and anxiety-reducing principles.

Revenue Stream B2B & Direct Sales

Heavy Hugs generates revenue through **B2B and direct-to-consumer sales**, reaching schools, organizations, and individuals at trade shows, competitions, and local events. Instagram and the company website build brand awareness and support both in-person and online sales, with an emphasis on bulk orders and lasting customer relationships.



heavyhugs.shop

In-Person Sales Selling Events



Cost Structure

Fixed Cost.....	\$1,069.78
Total Variable Cost...	\$14.31



Financial Performance

09

Overview

Key Financial Highlights

Heavy Hugs has generated a total income of **\$6,471.95** through **159** bears sold and other income. Heavy Hugs has donated 15 bears to local mental health charities or shelters and has generated a **net profit of \$3,070.14**.

Revenue

Total Income Summary

Heavy Hugs has generated **\$4,730 in net sales** by selling 8 units at \$25 before raising the price to \$30 and selling 151 units. Additional income includes \$1,341.95 from raffle ticket sales and \$400 from competition prize money.

Break Even analysis

Profitability Analysis

The fixed cost for Heavy Hugs is \$1,069.78, with a total variable cost of \$14.31 per unit (\$12.35 COGS + \$1.96 Sales Tax). The break-even point is **\$2,045.47**, or **68 units**. Heavy Hugs achieved this within the **first 2 weeks** of having product.

ROI

Net Financial Results

Heavy Hugs' net profit is **\$3,070.14**. The net profit represents a remarkable **550%** return on the founders' initial \$558 investment, proving that small beginnings can lead to a big impact.

As of 4/8

Balance Sheet	
Assets	
Cash	\$4,960.53
Inventory	135.85
Total Assets	\$5,096.38
Liabilities	
Donation Payable	\$222.30
Accounts Payable	\$10.00
Sales Tax Payable	\$285.48
Total Liabilities	\$517.78
Owner's Equity	
Capital Stock	\$558.46
Sponsorships	\$950.00
Net Income	\$3,070.14
Total Owner's Equity	\$4,578.60
Total Liabilities and Owner's Equity	\$5,096.38

As of 4/8

Profit and Loss Statement	
Revenue:	
Net Sales	\$4,730.00
Cost of Goods Sold:	\$1,963.65
Gross Profit:	\$2,766.35
Expenses	
Advertising Expense	745.01
Charitable Donations Expense	222.3
Miscellaneous Expense	138.35
Shipping & Postage Expense	146.08
Shopify Expense	186.42
Total Expenses	1438.16
Other Revenue:	
Raffle Tickets	1,341.95
Competition Winnings	\$400.00
Total Other Revenue	\$1,741.95
Net Income	\$3,070.14

Sales Summary

In person	Online	B2B
89	68	2

Learning Experience and Future Application

Future Application

Skills That Last a Lifetime

The skills gained through this experience will carry far beyond the classroom. Heavy Hugs developed **business and networking skills** that will serve them in further education and **future employment**, alongside teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and **practical skills** that will benefit them in everyday life. Above all, the core lessons learned through this program will **shape their paths**, influence their approach to whatever they pursue, and **lay the foundation for lasting success**.

Setbacks

Obstacles Overcome

Heavy Hugs' path was not without its challenges. They had originally planned to produce, stuff, and sew the bears themselves, with materials sourced and ready to order, but a **denial from JA Insurance** on their product approval form forced them to reroute to a pre-stuffed, pre-weighted bear. At points throughout the year, team motivation also presented a hurdle; however, Heavy Hugs embraced it as an opportunity to grow, with each member developing **leadership skills** and learning how to **encourage one another** to keep morale high.

Success

Beyond the Bottom Line

Beyond their financial success, Heavy Hugs is most proud of the impact they have made in **the mental health community**. Their customers say it best: "It gets rid of the anxiety in my chest. I fell asleep within a minute with it on," and "A weighted blanket won't make you smile like this does." They are equally proud of the impact made through their donations, and they believe they have created a **meaningful difference in the mental health community** of North Canton and the surrounding areas.

Lessons learned

Growth Through Challenge

This experience taught Heavy Hugs lessons that **extend far beyond business**. They grew in **communication, conflict resolution, time management, and leadership**, but the most unexpected takeaway was personal. Building a brand rooted in **mental health awareness** pushed them to practice what they preach, and they found that **leaning on one another** and **embracing setbacks** without shame were not just good business strategies, but genuine coping tools that kept them grounded throughout the process.



One More Thing...

Beyond the Sale

Community Development and Give Back

Heavy Hugs has made community connection a priority from the beginning by attending local craft shows and spreading awareness about its mission. Giving back is a big part of the company's purpose. For every **10 products sold, 1 is donated** to a local mental health center, charity, or special needs department. So far, Heavy Hugs has **donated 15 bears** to organizations such as **NAMI Lake County, NAMI Stark County**, and North Canton Primary School's special education department. These donations help make comfort and support more accessible to those who may need it most.

One Hug, Unlimited Reach

Connecting to New Markets

While Heavy Hugs started in North Canton, its impact has grown far beyond the local community. The team has expanded throughout Northeast Ohio and the Cleveland area, while their website has reached visitors in over **20 states and 17 countries**, including Australia, Finland, Austria, and Taiwan. Heavy Hugs has already made **sales in 6 states**, showing that its mission connects with people well beyond the Midwest. As the company grows, the team hopes to continue expanding across the U.S. and eventually reach an international audience.

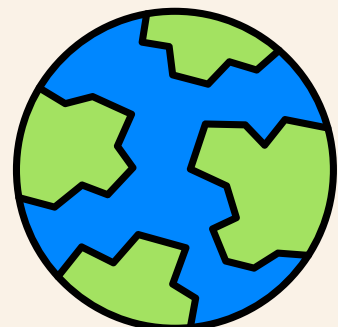
Simple. Powerful. Purposeful.

Driven by Innovation

Heavy Hugs was created to address the often invisible struggles of mental health, including anxiety, depression, and daily stress, by offering an accessible and affordable source of comfort. Their mission is to provide real people with a thoughtful product that supports both emotional and physical well-being. What sets Heavy Hugs apart is the belief that **innovation does not have to be complicated; it just has to be meaningful.**



**NORTH CANTON PRIMARY
SPECIAL EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT**



Thank You



Thank *you*

Sponsors • JA staff • Mentors • and Customers

We are incredibly grateful to all of our **sponsors** for their generous support and for helping us plant the first seeds of our dream. Your belief in us means everything. A special thank you to **Mrs. Pilati and Mrs. Snider** for being such amazing mentors guiding us, encouraging us, and supporting us through every step of this journey.

We also want to thank **JA** for giving us this opportunity. Heavy Hugs wouldn't exist without it, and we are so thankful to be part of something that allows us to grow, learn, and create something meaningful. And finally, thank you to our **customers**. Your support, belief, and kindness remind us why we started Heavy Hugs in the first place to spread comfort, connection, and care.

“*From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for helping us share one hug at a time*”

Sincerely,

The Heavy Hugs Team

