



Sensory Supports For Autistic Students

Presented by Ellie Hamilton, Autism Specialist and Barb Niessink,
Occupational Therapist

Tell us about you on Padlet.

tinyurl.com/y6f7m4e8

Share

1. Name
2. District
3. Why are you interested in Sensory?



Learning Outcomes

- Participants will recognize the sensory needs of Autistic Students in PK-12 educational settings.
- Participants will identify a collaborative team in their educational setting to support the sensory needs of Autistic students.
- Participants will determine and reflect on the sensory supports available in their PK-12 education setting for supporting Autistic students.

Why sensory support for Autistic learners?

About 56% to 70% of learners with Autism are estimated to have sensory processing challenges (Baranek, David, Poe, Stone, & Watson, 2006; Ben-Sasson et al., 2007).



Let us know about you on Padlet.

- Padlet

New Smells and Overstimulated examples by Young Sheldon

Link to video 1:20

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_Qwng_M07Q&t=80s

Link to video 1:55

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMXRRKsg7jA&t=115s>

Note: Please keep in mind each individual's sensory experiences are unique and the media does not always portray how Autistic people think and feel accurately.



The Pyramid of Learning

Perkins.org

The Pyramid of Learning & Development*



*Adapted from Taylor & Trott 1991; *The Alert Program*

The Pyramid of Learning and Development (adapted by Livingston) provides a framework to think about the flow of learning and development in relation to sensory systems and skill-building.

Do not begin a sensory routine without consulting the support of an Occupational Therapist.

- Follow district procedures for parent permission and implementation guidelines



Sensory Planning

Positive Partnerships:

- [Planning Tool](#)
- [Diversity Wheel](#)

Hands on as we grow Blog:

- [Sensory Planning](#)
- [Sensory Activities](#). Sample week of activities
- [Water](#)
- [Cardboard Tube Activities](#)

Sensory Planning

Sensory World

Sensory Planning form

Time	Daily Events	Activities/Accommodations	Comments
	Wake-Up		
	Self-Care		
	Breakfast		
	Arrival at School or Childcare		
	Mid-Morning		
	Lunch		
	Mid-Afternoon		
	Arrival Home		
	Dinner		

Support Team:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Student: _____

Daily Schedule:

Time	Activity or supplies needed	Sensory Support	Team member providing support or independent

Sensory Sensitivity

- [Link \(from South West Central Service Cooperative\).](#)
- Page two has suggestions to try



What A Sensory Sensitivity May Look Like

Visual	Auditory	Tactile (touch)	Taste/Smell	Proprioceptive (difficulty interpreting sensations from muscles, joints, ligaments & tendons)	Vestibular (over or under sense of balance & movement sensations)
<p>Stares at spinning objects. Spins their body Turns opposite direction from where the teacher is lecturing Demands to wear sunglasses indoors Extremely organized or unorganized room (knows when an object has been slightly moved) Loses place when reading Gives no eye contact or looks beyond a person's face Trouble locating desired toy on a cluttered shelf Turns or tilts head</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers ears for a fire drill or when the class is loud. • Runs from loud areas • Complains of noises in room or outside of window (ie lawn mower, student writing) • Covers ears in the cafeteria or cannot go into the gym when there are many people in it. • Doesn't like the sound of windshield wipers • Doesn't respond to verbal prompts when putting on noisy clothes • Talks louder than anyone else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throws arms back when about to be picked up by adult or pulls away when trying to hold child's hand • Is always hanging on adult or laying between his box spring and regular mattress • Avoids touching certain textures (fabrics, carpet, slime) • Preference for touching specific objects (silk) • Dislikes getting hands or meet messy • Touches everything in sight • Avoids being touched on the face/ hair/head (trouble with washing hair/face) (Hygiene) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Won't eat certain foods or eats extreme tasting foods (lemons/hot sauce) • Gags when told to eat food they don't like • Licks or tastes playdough or toys • Notices smells of perfume, cologne, onions, coffee, on individuals. • Smell everything • Won't visit certain environments due to the smell (zoo, farms, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulls, twists, or chews on things • Leans, bumps, or crashes into objects • Walks along touching walls • Too much pressure when writing • Stands too close when talking to others • Walks stiff and uncoordinated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May seem to be seeker (jumping high places, driving fast) • May be sedentary, cautious or hesitant to take risks • Difficulty coordinating movements of eyes • Trouble staying seated • Constantly leans on hands or arm • Prefers to lie down than sit upright • Feels seasick when riding in a car, bus, train, airplane, escalator, or elevator • Extreme loose or tense grip on pencils or scissors • Enjoys being upside down

Sensory Suggestions for the Classroom

- [Link \(from South West Central Service Cooperative\)](#)

Sensory Suggestions for the Classroom

Journal and Handwriting

Typical Activities:

- Draw a picture in a journal/notebook and write about what you drew.
- Handwriting or tracing pages

Alternatives:

1. Add some vestibular input: Break into small groups or partners, act out a story or idea and then write about it in a journal.
2. Add some vestibular input: Allow children to complete their writing in different positions around the room-sitting or lying on the floor or sitting in a beanbag chair with a clipboard, standing with their work taped to the wall, or lying under a table with their work taped to the underside of the table.
3. Add some auditory input: Listen to a story on headphones and draw a picture while listening.
4. Add some tactile input: Practice letter formation in a sand or salt tray with colored paper at the bottom or try tracing/writing using a squiggle writer.
5. Add some visual input: All students to use different pens, markers, and colored pencils for writing and drawing.
6. Add some olfactory (smell) input by using smelly markers.

Flashcards

Typical Activities:

- One on one drills for sight words, math facts, or other concepts-showing one flashcard at a time and having the student answer.

Lessonpix Sensory Visuals

- [Sandtable Topic Board](#)
- [Bubbles Topic board](#)
- [Blocks Topic Board](#)
- Offer choices and use a visual picture or choice board.
- [Choice Board Intervention Strategy by Ocali/ Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence](#)

The Many Faces of Autism by Ocali Chapter 3 Sensory

- Link to video 8 min
autismcertificationcenter.org/course/1/chapter/146
- Keep in mind that sensory experiences may impact other disability areas



Connect and Redirect

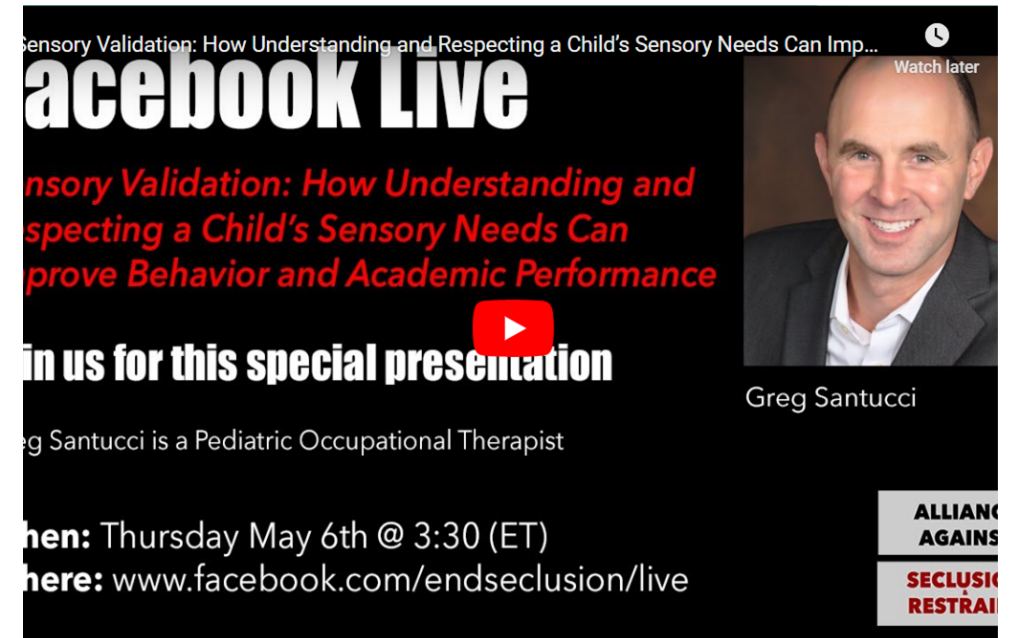
Link to video 14:34

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGseTSLY3cl>



How can we do better for our kids?

- Trigger warning this video discusses restraint and seclusion in the school setting.
- Link to video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsQ7XbKbpeY>
- 7:50 and 11:34



Sensory Validation: How Understanding and Respecting a Child's Sensory Needs Can Imp... Watch later

Facebook Live

Sensory Validation: How Understanding and Respecting a Child's Sensory Needs Can Improve Behavior and Academic Performance

Join us for this special presentation

Greg Santucci

Greg Santucci is a Pediatric Occupational Therapist

When: Thursday May 6th @ 3:30 (ET)
Where: www.facebook.com/endseclusion/live

ALLIANCE AGAINST SECLUSION & RESTRAINT

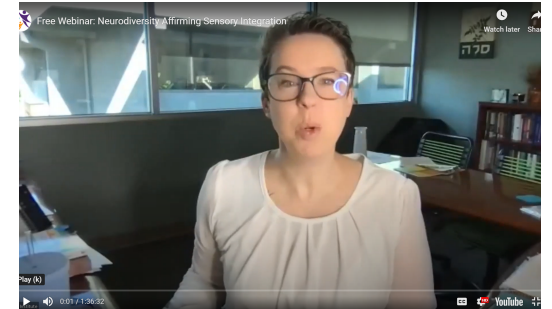
Neurodiversity Affirming Sensory Integration

Link to video 1 - 23:41

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MV7kIFMUHJU&t=1421s>

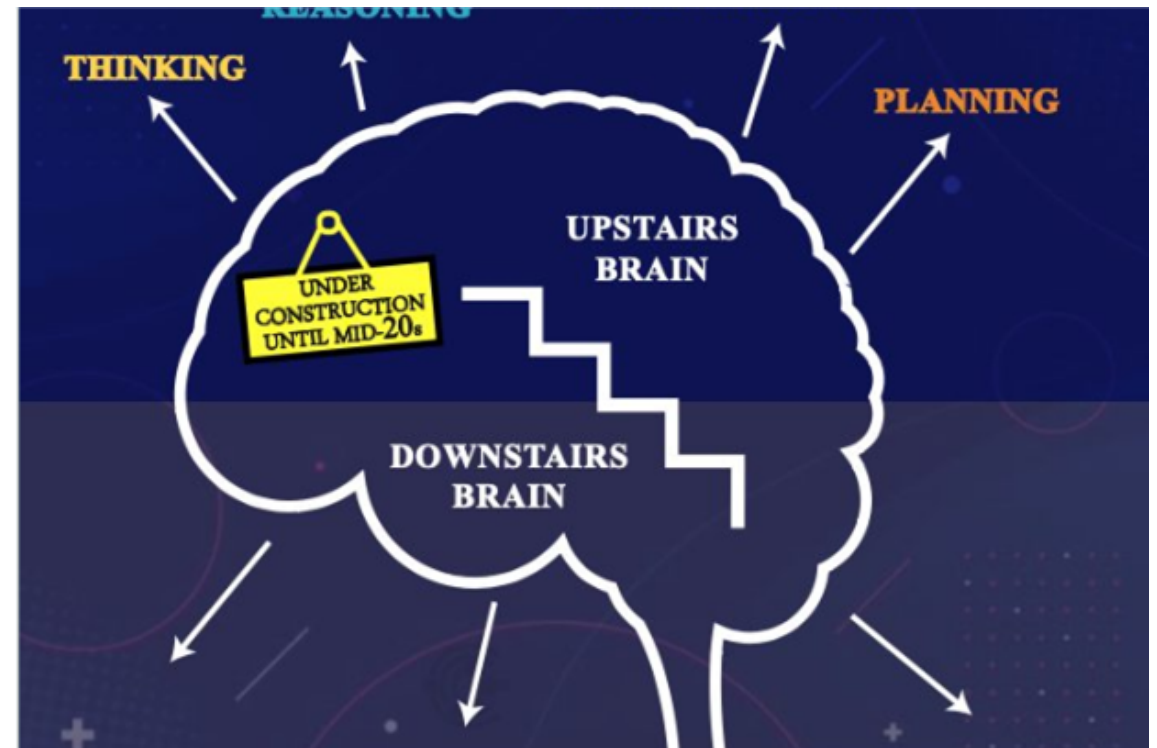
Link to video 2 - 27:50

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MV7kIFMUHJU&t=1670s>



Brain Article

gregsantucci.com/infographic/upstairs-brain



Upstairs Brain

We need to be able to monitor the sensory input coming from our environment, think and problem-solve. When our kids are having a hard time, they're in their "downstairs" brain. They can't access their "thinking" brain, and no amount of yelling, threatening, or punishment is going to get them there.

How do you help a child when they are in their downstairs brain?

- First, lower expectations. Help them get regulated. This could be as simple as a hug or just being present. Once regulated only then can head upstairs.

Brain Breaks and Sensory Breaks

Gwen Wild, MOT, OTR/L & Sherry Steeley, PhD developed a “Model for Classroom Based Intervention for Children with Sensory Processing Differences” and completed a research study in a rural school district in TX. They incorporated “Brain Breaks” and “Sensory Breaks” into the children’s daily routines.

Improvement was noted in these areas:

- Social Participation/Social Skills
- Visual and Auditory Processing
- Planning and Ideas
- Adaptability
- Functional Communication Atypicality
- Leadership
- Attention Problems
- Hyperactivity

Brain Breaks

- Brief (30-60 seconds) opportunity for whole body movement
- Primary purpose is to get in touch with one's body and where it is in space.
- For Pre-K through 1st grade, "Brain Breaks" can easily be built into transitions
- Recommended frequency:
 - Pre-K through 1st grade: every 15 minutes
 - 2nd through 5th grade: every 30 minutes
 - 5th grade to 6th grade: every 45 minutes

Ideas for Brain Breaks

- Desk stretches
- Chair Push-ups
- Cross Crawls
- Coffee Grinder
- Pressure push
- Drink from water bottle
- Animal Walks
- Ear massage
- Self-hug
- Hop on one foot
- Row Boat
- Finger pulls
- “Make the room bigger” - Wall push-ups and wall sits
- Yoga poses
- Action songs
- Belly breathing
- Gallop
- Isometrics (push hands together, pull apart, push legs against one another)

Tips for Brain Breaks

- Allow the student to select and lead the “Brain Break”
- Fill a poster board with “Brain Break” picture options and allow them to choose from them
- Follow each “Brain Break” with two deep breaths of “belly breathing”

Sensory Breaks

- Goal of sensory breaks is to regulate the neurochemicals in the brain.
- Optimal: at least 10 minutes of moderate to high intensity sensory input every 2 hours for ages 10 and up.
 - Pre-K to 1st grade = every hour
 - 2nd to 4th grade = every 1 ½ hours
 - 5th grade and up = every 2 hours
- Recess, PE, art, music and lunch can usually count as sensory breaks
- Need to be at least 10 minutes in length. Sensory seekers may need longer.
- Stick with activities that are primarily proprioceptive or “just right” challenge

Cari Bert Seminars

caribertseminars.com



Re-thinking Classroom Expectations

- What are the classroom expectations?
- How can we adjust for students with sensory needs?

RE-THINKING EXPECTATIONS

WHAT WE ASK FOR...

ALTERNATIVES FOR SUCCESS...

GREGSANTUCCI.COM

"Criscross Applesauce"

Apple Sauce

* Difficult to Maintain

* Promotes Slouching

* Uncomfortable

* Nothing to do with Applesauce

* Flexible Seating

* Change positions often

* Frequent movement breaks

* Feet on the ground when sitting

OR

LET KIDS POSITION THEMSELVES TO MEET THEIR NEEDS

COMFORT AND MEETING A CHILD'S SENSORY NEEDS WILL IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT

#THINKSENSORY

GREG SANTUCCI, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

The infographic is a vertical poster with a green header and footer. The left side is orange and features a cartoon boy holding a jar of 'Criscross Applesauce'. Below this are four orange boxes with negative points. The right side is white and blue, listing 'ALTERNATIVES FOR SUCCESS...' with an illustration of a girl sitting on the floor reading. Below that is a green box with the text 'LET KIDS POSITION THEMSELVES TO MEET THEIR NEEDS' and an illustration of a teacher and students in a circle. The footer is green with white text.

Try a chair or bilibo seat

[moluk.com/
bilibo.php](http://moluk.com/bilibo.php)

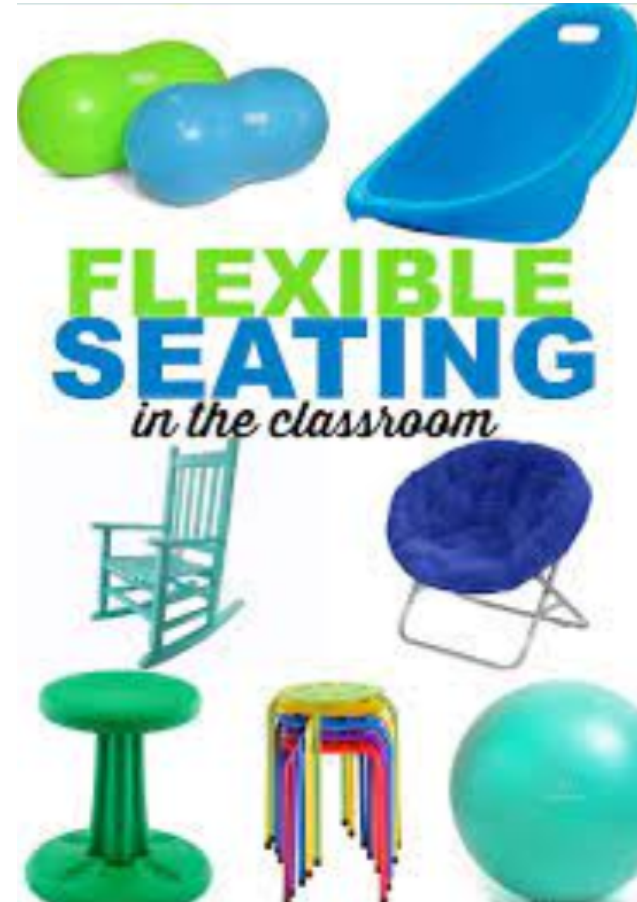


Cube Chair Options



Flexible Seating

Offer a [Choice Board](#)



Wiggle Seat

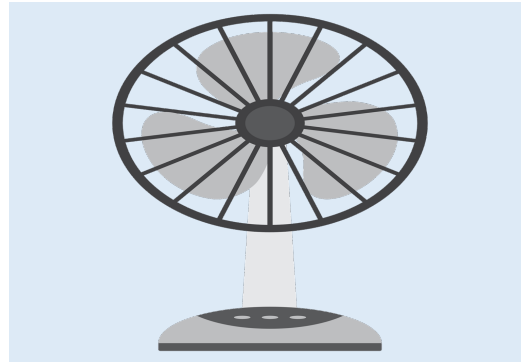
teacherdirect.com



What is the behavior really telling us?



Autistic Students may have heightened senses













Autistic Students may have heightened senses

A student may have hearing abilities that make lights, fans, or other items sound like a helicopter.

Close your eyes and see if you hear any sounds.

Check the room for smells. The lunchroom and essential oils are biggies!
Perfume can be a trigger too.

Occupational Therapy association 2023

* Deep Pressure Activities *		
(to help prepare the brain to work!)		
	1. Self Hugs	Squeeze up and down the arms, from hands to shoulders
	2. Chair Push-Ups & Chair Pull-Ups	Position hands on chair and push up, hold for 5 sec; position hands under chair and pull up, hold for 5 sec (2x each)
	3. Arm Reaches	Stand up and reach with the left arm as high as you can, then reach with the right, then reach with both and wave in the air
	4. Hand Pulls	Grab fingers with closed hands and pull as hard as you can
	5. Prayer Push	Position hands in prayer position with elbows out, pushing palms together; switch hands so fingers touch forearms and push palms together with elbows out
	6. Desk Push-Ups	Lean on the front edge of a desk, take one step back, and do 10 push-ups (keep elbows out)
	7. Wall Push-Ups	Press open palms on a wall, keeping feet shoulder-width apart and elbows out; then push away from the wall
	8. Tip Toe Clunk	Stand on tip toes and fall back on heels (you will feel a "clunk" if you do it right!)
	9. Partner Pulls	(groups of 3) Grab each other's wrists, gently lean/pull out, then have the outside people turn around and grab with opposite hand and repeat
	10. Shoulder Muscle Push	Teacher pushes firmly on student's shoulders, then does hand hugs (squeezes) up and down the arms

Sensory Environment

THE SENSORY SAFE ENVIRONMENT
CHECKLIST

gregsantucci.com

AUDITORY

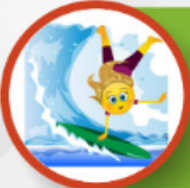


- Too Much Background Noise? Too Loud?
- Can they Hear Inner Voice? Hear the Speaker Clearly?

VISUAL

- Too Bright? Too Dark?
- Overwhelming? Visual Clutter?

MOVEMENT

- Opportunities to move? Heavy work opportunities?
- Flexible seating that supports body needs?



Structured Breaks

[Autism Internet Modules](#)

A structured break may include, but its not limited to:

- headphones or earbuds
- blankets
- music
- drawing paper and markers
- puzzles
- fidgets
- magazines
- waterbottle

Structured Breaks

[Autism Internet Modules](#)

A structured break is NOT:

- Time out
- Seclusion
- Punishment
- Escape from work

Structured Breaks

[Autism Internet Modules](#)

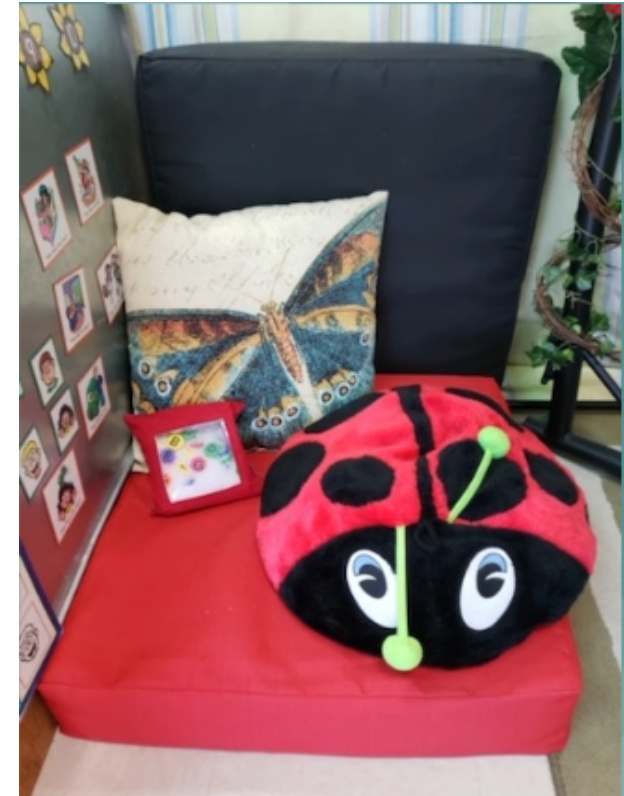
Visual supports for structured breaks may include:

- Breathing cards
- Timer or countdown
- Wait card
- Stress Thermometer
- Power card

Examples of Structured Break Areas



Examples of Structured Break Areas



Examples of Structured Break Areas



Structured Break Area in a job site location



Structured Break Area in a job site location



Private work space with dim calming lighting and music.

Visual Supports

[Ocali Stress Thermometer Visual](#)

[Box Breathing](#)

[Breathing Cards](#)

[Power Cards](#)



Sensory Differences

Most individuals with Autism do not experience sensory stimuli the same way as neurotypicals. Some are overly responsive whereas others are under-responsive to sensory experiences in the environment and within their bodies.

Individuals with sensory processing disorders benefit from services from and occupational therapist who can provide assessment and intervention strategies to help them manage their sensory differences and improve their access to successful home, school, social, and work experiences.

[Autism Internet Modules](#)

Cover Lights, turn off, or use lamps.



PVC DIY Bead Bar

[Paths to Literacy](#)



Star Autism Support & Ocali Visual Supports

[Request Template](#). “I want” giving choices

[Food Icons](#)

[Choice Board Sensory Activities](#)

[Choice Board Snack](#)

LED Color Changing Glow Balls

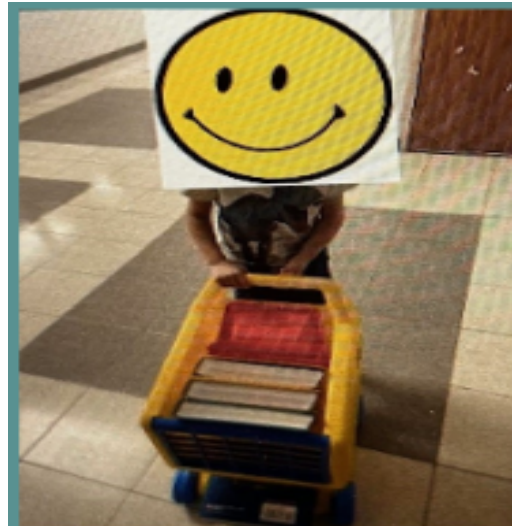
enablingdevices.com



DIY/Do It Yourself Swing



Weighted Shopping Cart for Mobility and Sensory



Weighted Cart for Mobility and Sensory



Hallway Obstacle Courses

www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4q8dNwsR3E

Pair with goal content or core content.



Obstacle Course Outline

1. Helicopter Spins x5 each direction
2. Alligator crawl across mat
3. Move across floor on ladder
4. Find 2 hidden items in the sensory bin
5. Blow 2 cotton balls across the table one end to the other.
6. Walk across the balance beam, stepping over small stickers or obstacles.
7. Place 3 beads onto a string or pipe-cleaner to copy pattern displayed
8. Listen and identify animal sound
9. REPEAT

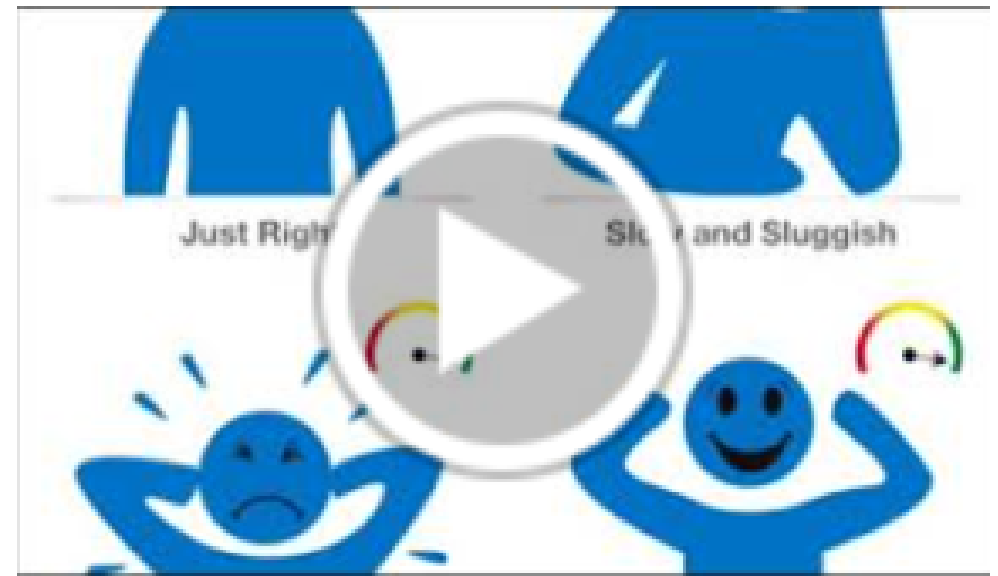
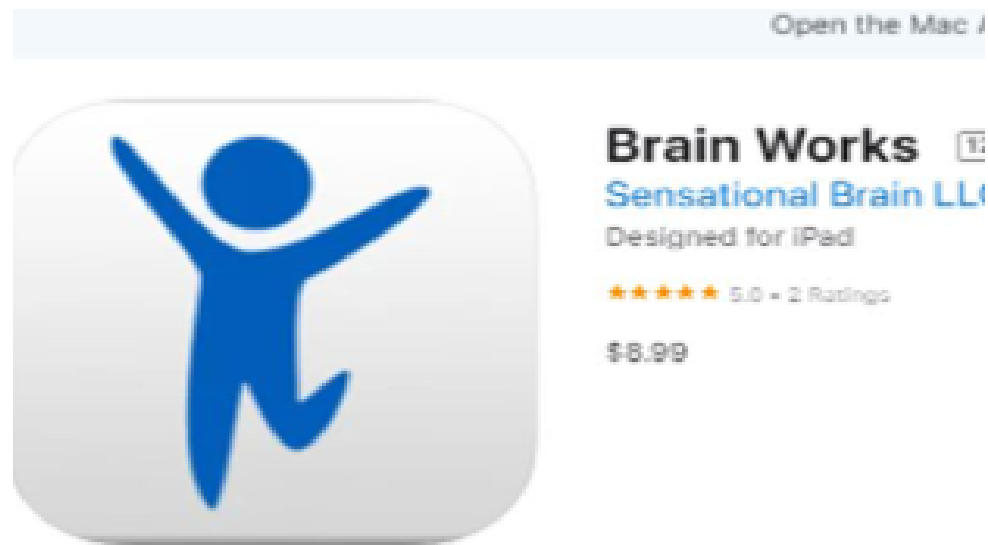
Obstacles Course Ideas for Older Students

1. Forward and backward rolls (somersault)
2. Jump rope
3. Balance Beam
4. Jumping Jacks
5. Snow angels on the floor
6. Shooting baskets
7. Bean Bag toss
8. Lift a certain amount of weight for specific repetitions
9. Specify amount of time on treadmill or stationary bike
10. Repeat sequence work on memory, following directions, etc.
11. A learning or functional task such as an age appropriate puzzle, writing activity, or math skill can be incorporated and adjusted to the child's age and developmental level.

BrainWorks by Sensational Brain LLC





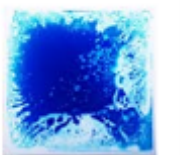



Link to video 2:41

www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOnr_oBVUa0



50 Best Sensory Toys for Toddlers and Kids with Autism

Sensory Stuff:

 <p>SANHO Yoyo Dynamic Movement Sensor...</p> <p>\$25.99 \$42.00 ✓prime ★★★★☆ (255)</p>	 <p>25 Pack Sensory Fidget Toys Set Liquid Mot...</p> <p>\$14.99 ✓prime ★★★★☆ (372)</p>	 <p>MarvelBeads Water Beads Rainbow Mi...</p> <p>\$7.99 \$15.00 ✓prime ★★★★☆ (5079)</p>	 <p>Calming Autism Sensor LED Light Projector To...</p> <p>\$36.90 \$49.00 ✓prime ★★★★☆ (422)</p>
 <p>Art3d Fancy Floor Tile for Kids Room Liquid...</p> <p>\$19.49 ✓prime ★★★★☆ (148)</p>	 <p>Sensory Weighted Lap Pad for Kids 5 pou...</p> <p>\$29.02 \$34.00 ✓prime ★★★★☆ (306)</p>	 <p>Shark Tooth Chew Necklace for Kids,...</p> <p>\$11.99 \$13.00 ✓prime ★★★★☆ (371)</p>	 <p>AMAZEYOU Kids Swing Hammock Pod Chal...</p> <p>\$33.95 \$35.05 ✓prime ★★★★☆ (319)</p>

Sensory Break Ideas

- Playground play-gallop, skip, run, walk backwards: encourage a built in obstacle course using the playground equipment, encourage heavy work game with others.
- Classroom or hallway obstacle course
- Go Noodle www.gonoodle.com
- Brain-breaks <https://brain-breaks.com/>
- You Tube movement videos search “brain breaks” watch content and check district procedures before using with students.
- Bouncy activities need to be followed by deep pressure or heavy work activities.
- End with deep breathing

Sensory Break Ideas Continued

- Sensory path in hallways
<https://thesensorypath.com/about-us/>
- Make your own sensory path
<https://www.pinkoatmeal.com/diy-sensory-path-and-motor-path/>
- Obstacle Course Video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXb9zBs6OBk>
- Use materials and equipment available to you-look around your school for items.
- Older students may be able to use equipment in the weight room, machines, lift weights, etc., with supervision and following district procedures.
- Run errands, clean, and work on adaptive skills such as vacuuming, sweeping, dusting, etc. with supervision.
- Talk to the occupational therapist at your district/building and ask for ideas for your specific student

Sensory Toys for Middle School High School Age Students

Find a space for the student

Body Sock



Sensory Toys for Middle School High School Age Students

[Calm Strips](#)



Build in sensory with play introduce sensory in daily routine

Gloves, socks, or latex gloves can be good protectors for sensitive hands.

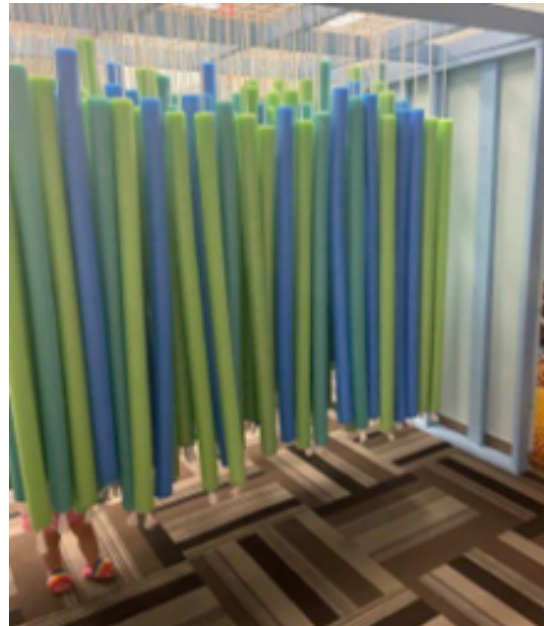
[Green Pea Sensory Squishy Bag](http://happytoddlerplaytime.com)
happytoddlerplaytime.com



Low Cost Fidgets



Fun Fabrics and Pool Noodles



Shaving Cream Writing



Sensory Routines or Breaks

Zones of regulation training calls it “sensory lifestyle” all day supports versus single break periods. Think about all day!

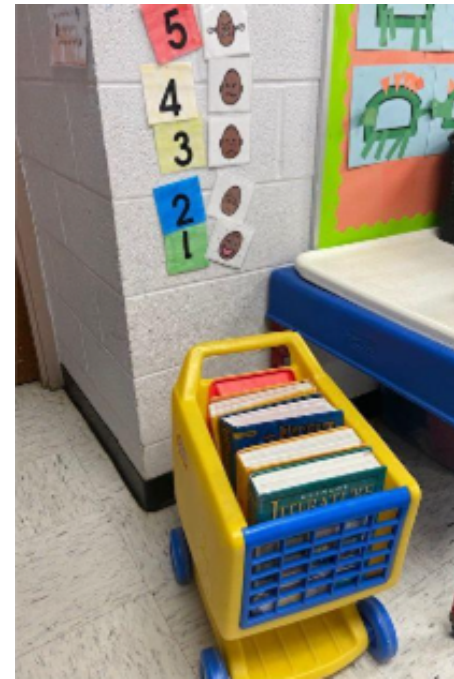


Simple Fidget Ideas



Heavy Work Task Examples

Early Childhood/
Elementary



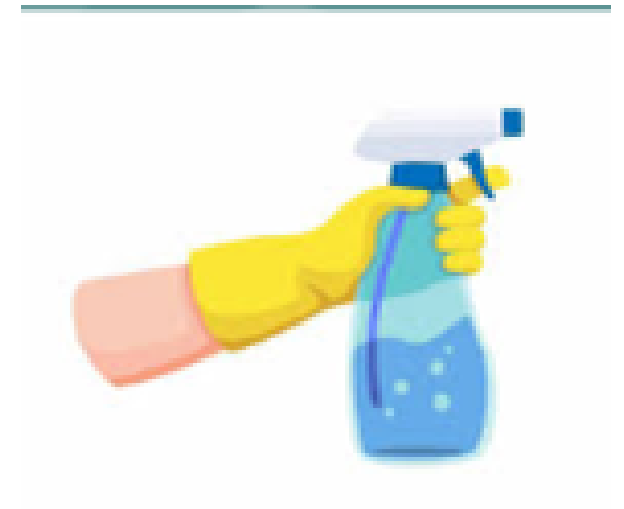
Heavy Work Task Examples

Elementary/Middle
School/ High School



Heavy Work Task Examples

Elementary
Middle School
High School



Jellyfish Live Video

Link to video

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMlf71t2oV0



Eloping (running away) Sensory Connection

Scenario: Student elopes and runs off school grounds

Support Ideas:

- Build a relationship
- Give options where to run with visual pictures
- Place visual signs go here or written plan where to go when running (track, hallway, gym)
- Create a running plan before school or determine an area safe for running when needed. This could be a treadmill, hallway, or track.
- Individualize based on student's needs



Fake Jellyfish Aquarium

Calming

Battery operated or plug in options

Works as a nightlight or lamp for darkened room



Structured Breaks by Autism Internet Modules

- Do It Yourself baggies with food coloring
- Do It Yourself [Hair Gel Sensory Baggies](#)



- [Liquid Tile](#)



Sensory Pans

pathstoliteracy.org



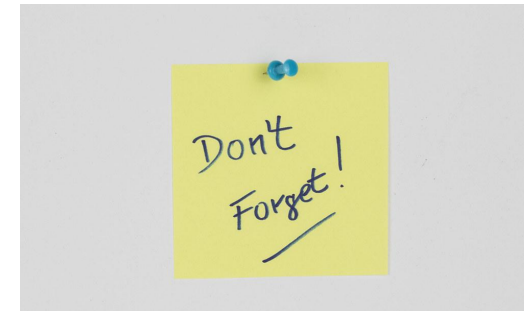
Food Support

- [Trying new foods choice wheel](#)
- [Meal Time Rules Poster](#)
- [Autism and Food Aversions 7 ways to Help a Picky Eater](#)
article by Autism Speaks

Treatment and Accommodation Ideas

Created by Barb Nessink Occupational
Therapist

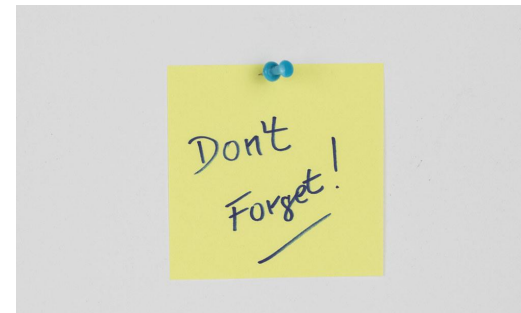
Barb.Niessink@swwc.org



Check with district procedures and
Occupational Therapist before
starting any sensory programming

Pressure Touch Model

If tactile defensiveness is severe contact your district Occupational Therapist about possibly utilizing the pressure touch model.



Check with district procedures and Occupational Therapist before starting any sensory programming.

Vestibular: “Seeker”

- Move-N-Sit or Wiggle cushions, therapy ball or deflated beach ball at table
- Cut slits in tennis balls and place on the end of opposite chair legs to allow “wobble”
- Allow child movement breaks during class or homework time
- Jump on trampoline
- Playing on tummy with therapy ball
- Swinging
- Bike Riding

Vestibular: “Avoider”

- Make sure feet can reach the ground or a surface when seated in chairs or allow standing
- Provide proprioceptive or “heavy work” before and after vestibular activities
- Go slow with introducing movement activities or allow compensatory technique
- Allow child to choose and be involved in the activity to provide sense of control

Proprioceptive System (input into the joints)

- This input helps “seekers” and “avoiders”
- Heavy work system; Encourage any jobs around the classroom such as carrying milk crates, moving heavy books or furniture, erasing/washing chalkboard, stapling on bulletin boards, stocking pop machine, return library books, empty wastebaskets, water plants, sweep floors, sharpen pencils, etc.
- Wearing weighted items, such as lap pad, backpack, hat, collar, blanket, heavy book on lap, etc.
- Any jumping exercise such as jumping on trampoline, jumping jacks, running, jumping on bubble wrap packaging, etc.

Proprioceptive System (input into the joints) continued

- Arm strengthening with wall push-ups, chair push-ups, scooter board, tug of war, “painting” with water on the fence or side of building, completing work on chalkboard, etc.
- Complete activities on tummy when able in class or during homework or play time at home
- At Home: Vacuuming, shoveling snow, moving furniture, carrying groceries, washing the car, etc.
- Deep Massage, “squishing” in bean bag, rolling in mat.

Tactile System: “Seeker” or encourage “Avoider”

- Host a “Messy” Day
- Fingerpaints; shaving cream, foam soap, pudding, “slime,” play-doh, theraputty.
- Hiding toys in buckets of rice, sand, wet or dry noodles, dry beans, styrofoam peanuts, etc.
- Working with projects requiring gluing, sandpaper, fabric, wood, and other textures.
- Provide basket of fidget toys or common objects (paper clip, eraser, etc.) for child to choose from to help maintain attention during classroom activities

Tactile “Avoider”

- Place paint or gel inside a ziplock bag and allow child to “paint” without getting messy
- Purchase tag-less clothing
- Massage scalp before haircuts
- Place x-ray vest over child during dentist visit (for proprioceptive input)
- Soak nails and press on nail bed before cutting nails
- Utilize t-shirt sheets

Visual System: “Seekers and Avoiders”

- Evaluate classroom and reduce amount of visual distractions hanging from ceiling and walls (avoider)
- Complete activities on a raised surface such as a easel or chalkboard
- Provide outlines at a desk or letter/number lines taped to desk to decrease amount child has to copy from board
- Color code notebooks and book covers to help with organization (i.e. green for math, blue for science)
- Teach child to take a visual break (“avoider”)
- Ask parents if child has had a recent full visual assessment with eye doctor

Auditory System: “Seekers and Avoiders”

- Warn children when able before fire drills, morning announcements and other loud noises in school
- Close the door to your room to decrease hallway distractions
- Allow headphones or earplugs if needed
- Playing soft music in background during independent work may help with calming (but should be evaluated closely as it may also be too distracting)
- Create a small area in the corner of the room where the child can go to take a sensory break
- May need to position self in front of child and touch hand or arm to get attention when calling child’s name (“seeker”)

Oral “Seeker”

- Proprioceptive input for the mouth
- Chewy foods are “heavy work” for the mouth and are organizing (bubble gum, granola bars, dried fruit, bagels, jerky)
- Crunchy foods are alerting (pretzels, baby carrots, crackers, crunchy cereal)
- Sucking and blowing are also organizing (sucking yogurt or applesauce through a straw, blowing cotton balls on a table or blowing a whistle, blowing bubbles, etc.)
- Battery operated or vibrating toothbrush may be helpful for “seeker” or “avoider”

Oral “Avoider”

- Encourage age appropriate oral play (whistles, blowing, chewing, tasting/licking new foods)
- May need to touch and play with food before they even consider tasting it
- May be able to be encouraged to lick the new taste or put in mouth only briefly and then spit it out
- If it is causing weight loss (failure to thrive) or other health concerns, may need to see a person specializing in treating oral aversions and/or nutritionist to ensure diet is adequate.

Treatment Activities Accommodations Interoception

- Heavy work activities/input to the large joints of the body
- Deep Diaphragmatic breathing
- Identifying emotions
- Meditation
- Mindfulness programs
- Yoga
- Tai-Chi
- Body scan to connect body signals to feelings
- Biofeedback

Books + 12 Books to read if you teach Autistic Students Article

[12 Books to read if you teach Autistic Students](https://www.weareteachers.com)
[weareteachers.com](https://www.weareteachers.com)



Support for Families

- [Support For Sensory Needs Facebook Group](#)
- [Sensory Processing Disorder \(SDP\) Support Facebook Group](#)
- [Project Sensory](#)
- [Sensory Processing Parent Support Group](#)
- [Sensory Processing Advocacy](#)

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Additional References

[References Continued - Google Docs](#)



What questions do you have?

If you have concerns about a child's development contact:

[Help Me Grow Minnesota](#)





Thank you!



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