

## Sensory Processing Disorder **Do's** and **Don't's**

### DO....

- Provide a quiet work space
- Provide alternative options for an activity
- Tell the child you understand and it is okay
- Take a step back and think about YOUR OWN body language and words
- Notice behaviors and coping mechanisms the child creates, or does not create
- Acknowledge that it can be frustrating
- Ask the child what they need
- Be aware of “triggers” for child for adjustment BEFORE reaction
- Help them label their emotions with words

### DON'T

- Say “It is not that hard”
- Undermine the child and their feelings
- Tell them they are being “bad”
- Dismiss or ignore this aspect of the child
- Make the child feel like something is wrong with them
- Only offering a solution and not working with the child

### 20 Quick and **Easy** Sensory Break Ideas

1. Jumping on a mini trampoline
2. Crawling through tunnels or under objects
3. Wall or chair pushups
4. Animal Crawls (Bear, crab, frog, seal)
5. Ball Pits
6. Ball Pass
7. Climbing
8. Sliding
9. Scooter board activities
10. Bouncing on a therapy or exercise ball
11. Listening to upbeat OR calming music
12. Swinging
13. Crash pad
14. Using weighted balls to pass back and forth
15. Heavy work activities
16. Jumping Jacks
17. Skipping
18. Obstacle course
19. Give big bear hugs to stuffed animal
20. Play dough

## 5 Sensory Myths

From Inspiredtreehouse.com

### MYTH #1: Sensory Means getting your hands messy

**TRUTH:** Use a child's whole body! Do not just think about their hands because this is just one aspect of the child, and also of sensory processing. Try all different kinds of activities that allow the child to explore their body and their environment!

### MYTH #2: Sensory activities are so easy! You just set them up and the kids know what to do!

**TRUTH:** Some kids will explore their environment without prompting, but others will avoid what they do not want. You have to ask yourself what you are trying to promote to the child. Ask yourself what specific purpose the activity is supposed to serve, and think through all aspects before presenting it to the child.

### MYTH #3: All sensory activities are equally beneficial to every kid.

**TRUTH:** Every child has different needs and ways to promote exploration will vary. Again, ask yourself the purpose of any activity, and what each specific child needs. Observe the child and decide on an activity based on the observation.

### MYTH #4: If a child is cautious about participating in a sensory experience, just make them jump in and give it a go....they'll like it once they try it!

**TRUTH:** The easiest way to lose a child's trust and willingness to participate is through force. Remember! Some of these children may respond as if sensory input is painful or irritating. Take cues from the child, and allow them to explore at their own pace.

### MYTH #5: More sensory input is always better!

**TRUTH:** KEEP IT SIMPLE! You can overwhelm and overload a child. Remember the signs of overstimulation. Be purposeful and intentional on movement breaks. Prevention of sensory-based behavior is key because sensory input is not a "cure".

Heffron, C. (2017, January 28). *SENSORY PROCESSING: 5 THINGS OTs WANT YOU TO KNOW*. Retrieved April 09, 2017, <http://theinspiredtreehouse.com/sensory-processing-myths/>

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