

## Sensory and/or Physical home learning ideas

Sensory activities provide essential feedback to the brain for children with sensory differences. They help to stop anxiety and can help children to stay calm and happy. There are lots of ways that you can provide sensory activities at home for your child.

- **Massage** - use lotion that you know they like the smell of. Use the child's response to help you decide how much pressure to use. Some children like it when you blow air on their feet and respond to this with eye contact, a smile or a giggle.



- **Deep Pressure Touch** - this can also help to regulate the input the brain is getting when children are feeling a little overloaded. It is touch using the palm of the hands - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT9NT6\\_mu-c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT9NT6_mu-c). This video on YouTube will help to explain.

- **Crunchy Snacks** - snacks such as crisps, carrot sticks, cereal like corn flakes or rice pops, dried fruit or fruit crisps, rice cakes, plain crackers. This can help to give the brain sensory feedback if your child is becoming anxious and/or biting. If your child does not like snacks you can give them a new toothbrush for chewing



- **Explore Textures** – play with sand/rice/lentils/black eyed peas/popcorn kernels/porridge oats/shredded paper/shaving foam in a large tub. Provide a range of containers and scoops or spoons. Help your child to pour, tip and sprinkle.



Change the experience by adding water, so the feeling changes. Change the colour of rice/sand/porridge oats by adding small amounts of food colouring (use an old container to avoid staining). You can find a recipe for dyeing rice on the website below: <https://happyhooligans.ca/rainbow-rice/>. Keep items you have used in a container for another day. Make sure your child washes their hands before and after playing, make sure they don't their hands in their mouth whilst exploring.



- **Sensory squishy bags.** Take a plastic zip lock bag, add paint or washing up liquid into the bag (you can also add glitter). Zip it up, take all the air out, add selotape over the opening. Get your child to push and squeeze the bag keeping it on a flat, washable surface. Place two colours in the bag and see what happens! Ask



your child to write on the bag using a finger or a cotton bud. Make patterns, numbers, shapes or letters. You can also use the side of an old cereal box, cling film and paint to create the same effect. Open out an old cereal box, cut one side of the box so you have a big piece of cardboard. Place blobs



of paint in the cardboard and cover it with cling film, sealing the edges with selotape. Then push and prod the paint and see what happens.

- **Playdough or Goop** – there are two recipes below. Keep in an airtight container or a plastic food bag and store in the fridge. Your child can squeeze, pull, knead, roll the dough/gloop. You can place items in the dough or gloop for your child to remove, then they could push them into the dough/gloop for you to remove. You could use marbles, small stones, old buttons.



<p><b>Goop Recipe</b>  <b>Ingredients:</b>                  2 cups bi-carbonate soda (baking soda)                  1 ½ cups water                  1 cup of cornflour (corn starch)                  Food colouring (optional)  <b>Instructions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Combined all ingredients into a saucepan.</li> <li>2. Mix the ingredients together using a whisk to remove lumps.</li> <li>3. Heat on stove stirring with a wooden spoon.</li> <li>4. Bring the mixture to the boil continuously stirring.</li> <li>5. Small lumps will begin to appear, continue to stir until a thick mixture has formed.</li> <li>6. Turn out onto the bench. Be careful the Rubbery Goop will be very hot!</li> <li>7. Knead together to form a smooth ball of Rubbery Goop.</li> <li>8. Store in a plastic zip-lock bag or air tight container.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Playdough Recipe</b>  <b>Ingredients</b>  <b>Serves: 4</b>                  250g plain flour                  50g salt                  140ml water                  1 to 2 tablespoons cooking oil                  few drops food colouring (optional)  <b>Instructions</b>  <b>Prep: 1hr › Ready in:1hr</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mix together the flour and salt in a large mixing bowl. Add the water and oil.</li> <li>2. Knead well until mixture is smooth about 10 mins. You might need to add a bit more flour or water until the consistency is smooth but not sticky.</li> <li>3. Add food colouring and knead until the colour is fully blended.</li> <li>4. Store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator until chilled enough to use.</li> </ol>
---	--

- **Blowing** – blow bubbles or blow through a straw. You could blow through the straw into the air or into a drink like milkshake and see what happens.



- **Water play** - some children like to put their feet or hands into water. Provide a water tray or make puddles in the garden to splash in. They make like to take off their shoes and socks.

- **Push and Pull** - push and pull wheelbarrows, walkers, pushchairs, boxes. Change the amount of push and pull needed by placing items into the wheelbarrow, pushchair, box to give your child a range of weight to push and pull.

- **Rainmakers or Sensory Bottles** - add materials into a bottle leaving a little space at the top for air. Replace the lid of the bottle and let your child move the fluid or items inside to explore the sights and sounds they make.



- **Mirror Play** - some children like to reflections and light in the mirror. Encourage them by making a range of faces in the mirror to see if they can copy you or copy the faces your child is making.
- **Foot Painting** - paint on large paper with your feet. You could wrap your child's feet in bubble wrap and see how this changes the experience.
- **Quiet Time** - sometimes your child may need a break from all the sights, sounds, smells, fun activities and may just want a moment of peace and quiet. Too much sensory feedback can lead to meltdowns, as the brain can become overloaded, so quiet time is important too.



The websites below also have lots of other ideas:

<https://www.learning4kids.net/category/sensory/>

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/sensory-processing-issues/8-sensory-friendly-indoor-games-and-activities>

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids/life-skills/joining-in-with-sensory-differences/>

The Bumble Bee Physio facebook page is offering video sessions that you can do at home to support your child if they have physical needs.

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/bumblebeephysio/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/bumblebeephysio/videos/?ref=page_internal)

**Claire Goulding**

**SENDCO**