



## Therapy Ideas for Parents



**We have more than 5 senses;**

**Visual** (see), **Auditory** (hear), **Olfactory** (smell), **Gustatory** (taste), **Tactile** (touch), **Proprioception** (muscle and joint receptors), **Vestibular** (balance), **Interoception** (sense of internal organs)

In order for sensory strategies to be effective they need to be **consistent**, **regular** and **embedded** into the child's daily routine. They also need to be **changeable** and **varied** according to the child's needs.

Below are some examples of activities you can try with your child;

### **Sensory Strategies**

- Chewy Tubes / chewlery (chewy food)
- Blackout tent (safe area/space)
- Hand and wrist fidgets (tactile) - blu tack/playdough
- Digging in play sand or soil
- Ball chair (bouncing on a therapy ball)
- Wobble Cushion (sit discs) - sit or stand
- Under Armour

### **The Power Senses**

#### **Tactile Input**

- Sensory bags– plastic/ zippy wallets taped up (tight) with paint in, food colouring and water, glitter etc.
- Playdough (1 cup flour, 1/2 cup of salt, 1 cup hot water, drop of oil and as much paint added for your desired colour)
- Finger painting
- Massage, tight pressure, squeezes. Weighted activities & blankets

#### **Proprioceptive Input**

- Bear hugs (getting or giving), tight squeezes and massage (getting or giving)
- Trampolines (alerting)
- Animal walks
- Yoga stretches
- Carrying or lifting heavy boxes, weighted backpacks.
- Play dough, bread dough kneading

#### **Vestibular Input**

- Swinging, spinning and freeze games
- Jumping (trampoline - linear motion (straight up & down)), 20 Star-Jumps
- Riding bikes/ scooters
- Hanging upside down



## **Movement Breaks**

### **Bear Crawl**

Put hands on the floor, bend the legs but don't go onto your knees-crawl around in this position for 20 seconds, rest & then go again.

### **Frog Leaps**

Squat low on heels and place hands on floor. Move the hands & feet forward together with a squat jump. Do 10 in a row.

### **Crab Walking**

Reach backwards with arms and put both hands flat on the floor behind you. Raise up until the head, neck and body are in a straight line. Walk around in this position without touching your back off the ground for 20 seconds, rest & then go again.

### **Wheelbarrow Walks**

Hold your child around the lower leg/ankle. Get them to walk around the room in this position.

## **Heavy Muscle Work**

- Jumping (Space Hopper, Rock n Hopper)
- Climbing and walking
- Pushing/pulling– tug of war, row your boat, moving furniture, hoovering, trolley loaded with heavy goods
- Crawling through tunnels (enhance with a weighted item placed on the child's back (turtle)) (*organising*)
- Carrying - box or bag with heavy goods in

## **Deep Pressure Touch (calming regulation)**

- Lying under heavy objects, such as: couch cushions, pillows, Weighted Blanket
- Sitting with Lap pad, Shoulder Weights or weighted toy
- Weighted Backpack
- 'Steam roll' - Use a large therapy/yoga ball over your child's body (press the ball down firmly and roll it over your child's back side from their feet to their shoulders and back down again)
- 'Sausage Roll' - rolling your child up tightly in blanket or towel, log roll (*alerting*)

## **Types of Touch for Secure Emotional Development**

- Swaddle - deep pressure tactile
- Hold firmly - deep pressure tactile (tight hugs), massage, vibration
- Rock gently back and forth - rhythmical linear vestibular (swinging/rocking)
- Pat/bounce firmly on knee - proprioception



### **Calming Sensory Motor Strategies**

- Sucking and blowing (thick milkshake through a straw), twisty straws, blowing games (bubbles), blowing instruments (whistles)

### **Alerting Sensory Motor Strategies**

- Sitting / bouncing on a therapy ball
- Crashing play (jumping off a bench onto a crash mat/ padded surface, place a large soft beanbag beside a trampoline for a crash)
- Ball pit
- Fast, high, stop, start, irregular movement
- Scoot board
- Crunchy foods, citrus flavoured foods and smells
- Tickle touch
- Ice lollies
- Spinning - rotational movement
- Bright lights
- Music – loud bass, fast paced
- Walking on uneven surfaces

TYPE OF INPUT	SENSORY MODULATION-OVERRESPONSIVE	SENSORY MODULATION-UNDERRESPONSIVE	SENSORY MODULATION-CRAVING	SENSORY DISCRIMINATION
<b>TACTILE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids touching messy textures, such as shaving cream</li> <li>• Rigid with types of clothing worn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not notice when hands are messy</li> <li>• Does not notice when clothes are twisted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeks out experiences to touch things</li> <li>• Constantly fidgets with an object</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constantly runs hands through a certain texture</li> <li>• Puts non-food objects in mouth</li> </ul>
<b>VISUAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids being in a room with bright lights</li> <li>• Difficulty focusing on a busy/disordered picture, such as "I Spy" images</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complains eyes are tired when looking at a book</li> <li>• Difficulty focusing on a still image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stands in front of the mirror or reflective surfaces for long periods of time</li> <li>• Spins wheels, fans (or self) and intently watches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confuses the letters "d" and "b" frequently</li> <li>• Difficulty finding a specified object in a busy/complex picture</li> </ul>
<b>AUDITORY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covers ears in noisy environments</li> <li>• Makes noises to drown out other loud noises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not respond to name being called</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requests music that is fast and/or loud</li> <li>• Makes noises in quiet environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a hard time differentiating words: "think" vs. "thing"</li> <li>• Poor ability to adjust the volume of voice</li> </ul>
<b>PROPRIO-CEPTIVE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to sit for long periods of time due to discomfort</li> <li>• Avoids jumping or bouncing activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slouches when sitting in a chair or on the floor</li> <li>• Sits in one position for long periods of time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seems to always be jumping or bouncing</li> <li>• Crashes into couch cushions or bed mattress at home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Falls or bumps into objects</li> <li>• Does not use the right amount of force to push/pull/grasp</li> </ul>
<b>VESTIBULAR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refuses the swing, slide, and spinning</li> <li>• Anxious when climbing or when feet leave the ground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not get dizzy when spinning</li> <li>• "Wakes up" with intense movement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoys climbing or jumping from tall heights</li> <li>• Constantly spinning, climbing, rolling, running, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not adjusting posture when on a swing to prevent falling off</li> <li>• Trips when walking up the stairs or falls when climbing</li> </ul>
<b>TASTE/SMELL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eats limited number of food textures</li> <li>• Eats bland foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prefers tangy, spicy, sour food</li> <li>• Doesn't seem to notice foul odors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overstuffs mouth</li> <li>• Smells perfumes/colognes on other people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overstuffs mouth</li> <li>• Prefers foods that are one consistent texture (i.e. not mixed)</li> </ul>