

uncommon sense
PARENTING
with Allana Robinson

The

BIG

List of Sensory Regulation Strategies

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Proprioception: Heavy Work

Activities where the body has input to the muscles and joints. This may involve lifting, pushing, pulling objects and a child's own body weight.

- ✓ Jumping on the trampoline
- ✓ Leapfrog over another child
- ✓ Jumping from one stepping stone to another
- ✓ Jumping off the stairs onto the floor
- ✓ Jumping from a bench onto the grass
- ✓ Swinging on monkey bars
- ✓ Swinging on overhead zip bar
- ✓ Pulling wet clothes from the washing machine
- ✓ Pulling dry clothes from the dryer
- ✓ Tug-of-war pulling on a rope
- ✓ Pulling against a towel (someone else holding on)
- ✓ Hopscotch
- ✓ Animal walking (crab, bear, snake, etc) forward or backwards
- ✓ Wheelbarrows on hands with someone else holding legs
- ✓ Commando crawling
- ✓ Stamping feet
- ✓ Running (forward or backwards)
- ✓ Crawling on knees (forward or backwards)
- ✓ Stirring a pot of food
- ✓ Vacuum the floor
- ✓ Wipe the table
- ✓ Clean the windows
- ✓ Wiping clean a whiteboard
- ✓ Lifting school chairs onto the table
- ✓ Wrapped up in a blanket or towel and be squeezed (standing or on the floor)
- ✓ Squeezed between pillows or mattresses (standing or on the floor).Using a weighted blanket or weighted vest
- ✓ Massaged by someone else
- ✓ Bear hug from someone else
- ✓ Hiding under blankets on bed
- ✓ Hiding in small spaces

Proprioception: Heavy Work

Activities where the body has input to the muscles and joints. This may involve lifting, pushing, pulling objects and a child's own body weight.

- ✓ Squashing under therapy ball
- ✓ Carrying shopping bags
- ✓ Carrying heavy books
- ✓ Carrying a backpack with a phone book inside
- ✓ Carrying beanbags on head
- ✓ Carrying sand or water in a bucket
- ✓ Carry furniture around the house (size appropriate)
- ✓ Throwing and catching therapy ball
- ✓ Digging dirt or sand with a spade
- ✓ Pull rubbish bins to and from the curb
- ✓ Pushing a therapy ball up and down a wall
- ✓ Pushing furniture
- ✓ Pushing against a wall
- ✓ Chair push-ups (lift whole body up from a chair with arms straight)
- ✓ Pushing wheelbarrow full of leaves (kid size for young kids)
- ✓ Pushing a box full of toys
- ✓ Pushing or pulling a stroller, wagon, shopping trolley
- ✓ Pushing hands against a grownup who pushes back
- ✓ On the floor, pushing feet against a grown up pushing their feet back (cycling motion)
- ✓ On the floor, cycling own feet in the air
- ✓ Push-ups on the floor
- ✓ Climbing up a slide
- ✓ Climbing over furniture or pillows
- ✓ Climbing up a ladder (suitable for child)
- ✓ Child-safe rock climbing or
- ✓ Climbing on nets at the park

Proprioception: Hands & Fingers

- ✓ Squeeze wet sponge
- ✓ Squeeze soft toy
- ✓ Squeeze theraputty or play dough
- ✓ Squeeze bath toy
- ✓ Squeeze a water pistol
- ✓ Squeeze a water spray
- ✓ Playing with a hand fidget toy
- ✓ Pinch pegs {clothespins}
- ✓ Pinch and pull theraputty
- ✓ Pulling theraband
- ✓ Playing "thumb wars"
- ✓ Messy play with rice, cloud dough, Kinetic sand, play
- ✓ dough, sand, et
- ✓ Finger Puppets
- ✓ Finger push ups on the table
- ✓ Catch and throw a ball
- ✓ Play a bat and ball game (eg. table tennis)
- ✓ Play an instrument (eg. piano)
- ✓ Play hands stacks with someone (applying pressure as you stack)
- ✓ Clapping games
- ✓ Cooking with hands to knead dough, roll meatballs, etc.
- ✓ Finger play nursery rhymes and songs

Proprioception: Oral

- ✓ Chewing on chewing gum
- ✓ Chewing on commercial "chewy" products
- ✓ Eating crunchy food (apple, carrot sticks, corn on the cob, rice crackers, celery sticks, dry cereal, pretzels, ice, frozen ice block, etc)
- ✓ Eating chewy food (steak, fruit roll ups, etc)
- ✓ Blow into a straw to push a table tennis ball
- ✓ Poke out tongue
- ✓ Puff up cheeks and squeeze out air
- ✓ Push tongue into cheeks
- ✓ Use a vibrating toothbrush
- ✓ Blow bubbles in water, with a bubble wand, using a straw
- ✓ Blow up a balloon

Vestibular: Sense of Movement and Balance

Movement stimulates the receptors in the inner ear {including spinning, swinging and hanging upside down}. Head position is an important consideration during these activities.

Vestibular: Linear (up/down, side/side movements)

- ✓ Spring see-saw
- ✓ Ball hopper
- ✓ Bouncing on grown up's legs
- ✓ Bouncing on therapy ball
- ✓ Piggy back ride
- ✓ Flying fox sitting or suspended
- ✓ hanging Skipping with a rope
- ✓ Lying over therapy ball on stomach
- ✓ Swinging at the park sitting
- ✓ Swinging at the park lying over the swing
- ✓ Swinging on a rope or tire swing
- ✓ Rolling down a hill or lawn
- ✓ Grown up holding child's body and swinging them forward and backward
- ✓ Lying on a scooter board and moving
- ✓ Swinging on a hammock
- ✓ Rocking horse
- ✓ Lying on stomach on a therapy prone board

Vestibular: Rotational (spinning around)

- ✓ Grown up holding child's body whilst swinging legs around in a circular motion.
- ✓ Sitting on a swivel chair and spinning around

Vestibular: Sense of Movement and Balance

Movement stimulates the receptors in the inner ear {including spinning, swinging and hanging upside down}. Head position is an important consideration during these activities.

Vestibular: Rotational (spinning around)

- ✓ Scooter board spinning on stomach rotating with hands to push
- ✓ Twisting around on park swing and then untwisting
- ✓ Merry-go-round park equipment
- ✓ Spinning self in circles
- ✓ Sitting on a spinning toy (eg. Sit 'n spin or Bilibo)
- ✓ Spinning park equipment

Vestibular: Upside Down

- ✓ Forward or backward somersaults
- ✓ Handstands supported by wall or unsupported
- ✓ Cartwheels
- ✓ Gymnastic classes using parallel bars
- ✓ Wheelbarrows on hands

Tactile System: Sense of Touch

The tactile system discriminates touch (what and where touch occurs on the body) and processes for danger (fight or flight response). Tactile input can involve deep pressure of the skin, muscles and joints (see Proprioception activity suggestions). It may also involve modification to the environment.

- ✓ Avoid touching or approaching your child from behind;
- ✓ Make sure your child can see you before giving them an instruction;
- ✓ Avoid clothing fabrics which appear irritating;
- ✓ When using physical prompts, instructions or guidance, use a firm touch;
- ✓ Encourage your child to brush their own body with a natural sponge during bath time;
- ✓ Allow a child to go first or last in a line to minimise tactile contact with others;
- ✓ Provide a quiet corner for the child to retreat to when required
- ✓ Use markers to help designate personal space when sitting on the floor or allow the child to choose their position.

Visual System: Vision

The visual system can be overwhelmed by what is seen. The most helpful way to assist the visual system is to modify the environment.

- ✓ Reduce clutter,
Present one item at a time,
- ✓ Remove unnecessary information
from a whiteboard,
- ✓ Position the child at the front of the
classroom,
- ✓ Watch a snow globe, etc

Auditory system: Hearing and listening

The auditory system is required to process what and how something is heard.

- ✓ Find soothing sounds for your child
(eg. music, waves, white noise, etc)
- ✓ Use headphones to listen to
instructions and block out other
noises
- ✓ Find a sanctuary in a noisy environment if
possible (eg. lift, library)
- ✓ Listen to audio books (with or without
headphones)

Auditory system: Hearing and listening

The auditory system is required to process what and how something is heard.

- ✓ Play commercial listening games (eg. Cock- a-Doodle Moo)
- ✓ Play listening games with sounds from the environment (eg. garbage truck, siren, bell, clapping)
- ✓ Help your child to manage unpleasant sounds by anticipating them (eg. turning on the vacuum, counting before using hand dryer)

Olfactory: Smell

The sense of smell can also affect emotions, behaviour, memory and thinking as the nose receptors are connected to both the limbic system as well as the cortex. Finding the smells that calm, arouse and over arouse will help to plan how to avoid or incorporate these smells into your child's routine.

- ✓ Essential oils can be added to homemade play dough or cloud dough.
- ✓ Dried flowers can be made into sachets for clothes.
- ✓ Washing powder can be chosen or avoided.
- ✓ Essential oils or scented bath products can be added to bath time or avoided.

The taste sense is also strongly linked with the sense of smell and oral sensitivities (see also Proprioceptive Oral activities). Taste is also linked with experience as many flavours may be accepted after repeated trials

- ✓ Involve children in meal preparation: icing cakes, making smoothies, popping popcorn, trail mix, and pizza.
- ✓ Use taste-safe art supplies such as whipped cream, pudding, jello, and food colouring.

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