

Sensory Diet Suggestions for the School Environment

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***consult with your OT!**

Tactile

This is our sense of touch. Touch receptors on our skin, in our mouth, tell us about temperature, pressure, texture and if something is threatening or safe. It's how we receive information about the world. When we process this information effectively, we feel safe and aware of our surroundings. We can then socially bond with others and develop emotionally.

Some of the activities I use in school to provide tactile input:

- ❖ Completing simple 3-6 piece puzzles with eyes closed.
- ❖ Drawing pictures, letters, numbers in sand, glitter, rice or pudding. I use baking trays to reduce spilling.
- ❖ I draw roads (with lots of twists and turns) on paper with glue. Let the glue completely dry. The next day the students "drive" their fingers on the glue roads. Try it with eyes closed.
- ❖ Use spray bottles to water plants daily or make designs outside on the playground.
- ❖ Gather common objects such as paper clips, marbles, small blocks, crayons, etc and place them in a paper bag. Have the student reach in and try to identify an object using only their sense of touch. Some students may do better if they hold an identical object in one hand while reaching in the bag with their other hand.
- ❖ I like to hide pennies, small pegs in therapy putty. The more resistive the putty, the more information we receive as we pull it apart.
- ❖ Finger painting using paint or shaving cream is always a favorite. I also like to paint with potato mashers, apples cut in half and maybe even little matchbox cars. It's fun to dip the wheels in paint and "drive" them on the paper.
- ❖ Popping balloons on finger at a time.
- ❖ Using paper punchers, staplers, tape, glue to create fabulous creations!
- ❖ I challenge my students to scrunch their paper scraps into tight, little balls. I periodically check garbage cans and reward with stickers!
- ❖ Preschool classrooms usually have great sensory tables. I'm always amazed at what our wonderful preschool teachers put in them! Try dirt, rice, uncooked pasta, cornmeal, oatmeal, flour (if you are brave), pea gravel, water with soapsuds, etc. Be creative! Be daring!