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Sensory Activities

Sensory diet activities are usually quite simple. The following lists offer a few examples of activities that may be done at home....

Games (alerting activities)

- Obstacle Courses including dragging/sliding things
- Silly Walks (e.g., crab walk)
- Red Light/Green Light
- Running Races
- Tug-of-war
- "Stop Dancing" where you freeze and hold your body posture at breaks in the music

Swinging/Bouncing (alerting activities)

- Inside swings
- Trampoline
- Hanging or pull-up-bar
- Outside swings/hammocks
- Exercise ball
- Jump Rope
- Stilts/Roller Skates

Exercises (organizing activities)

- Climbing
- Tumbling/Head Stands
- Wheelbarrow/Camel Play: Have the child carry loads on the back like a camel.
- Pushing a loaded box/wagon/cart
- Running/jogging/biking/Stair Climbing
- Horsey and Leapfrog: These are great contact sports. Leapfrog is where one person jumps over the other. Next the other person does the same
- Roughhousing: This can be a good all over sensory experience especially if you push, pull, tug, roll, and tumble. Make sure to use proper safety precautions.

Other Sensory Stimulation (organizing activities)

- Dumping and Pouring: Give the child a cup and bucket. Put blocks, dry beans, sand or water in the item. Then have the child dump the material back and forth from one to the other.
- Paper Ripping: Let the child have some type of paper material. Allow them to tear strips, squares, or circles from the paper.
- Music listening/dancing/singing
- Pushing and pulling activities: playing with a "stretch " toy or stiff clay
- Finger painting with plain paint first then adding in; sand, cereal, rice, or other textures.
- Cooking Play: When you are cooking let the child play in the cookie dough, bread dough, etc.
- Dress-up: Collect a box of dress-up items for the child to use. Items can include hats, gloves or mittens, scarves of different materials, etc.

Calming Activities

- Cuddling with pillows in a "hideout"
- Making a "kid burrito" by rolling the child up tightly in a blanket, or a "kid sandwich" by squishing the child between two sofa cushions.
- Deep pressure massages, back/neck rubs, cuddles or hugs
- "Heavy work," such as moving furniture, carrying heavy bags, or lifting weights.
- Hideaway: Use towels, sheets, blankets, and other materials for placing over a table or two chairs put together to make a fort for the child to play in.
- Quiet music listening, books on tape
- Warm bath or shower
- Pushing on walls with, back, buttocks, hands, head, or shoulders.
- Sucking on something... it can be ice water from a squeeze bottle, a Popsicle, or anything else the child enjoys