



# Sensory Magic!

## Development of Our Sensory Systems

- Children explore the world and discover themselves through their senses. Any activity which stimulates the senses creates a **sensory experience**.
- Sensory experiences facilitates maturation of the **5 basic sensory systems**, touch, auditory, visual, taste, smell, with **joint sense** (proprioception) and the **sensation of movement** (kinesthesia).
- **Stimulation of senses and its integration is fundamental** to the development and facilitation of perception, cognition and movement abilities.

*The more the sensory systems are used,  
the more they develop,  
and the more it stimulates other developmental areas.*

### Sensory Bins

#### What is a Sensory Bin?

A simple container filled with sensory fillers e.g. fabric, balls, coloured rice/sand, beans, cotton balls/pom poms, **Anything at all!**

#### Putting a Sensory Bin Together

##### Choose size/type of containers

- Any type of containers may be used as your bin!
- If your child sits on an adaptive seating system, consider width and depth of bin so that your child can easily reach in
- **Ideas!** Cardboard box, baking tray, baking pan, plastic containers

#### What goes in the bins?

**1. Base sensory fillers:** Fabric, water babies, beans, pasta, sand/salt, etc

If your child is still in the mouthing phase, small parts as sensory fillers may be unsuitable. Use larger items such as large pieces of fabric or big textured toys!

**2. Additional toys/materials**

**3. Tools or instruments:** Scoops, cups, etc



### Sensory Bottles

#### What is a Sensory Bottle?

A plastic bottle filled with various sensory fillers

#### Making a Sensory Bottle

- Use a **clear recycled bottle**
- Use a **funnel** and spoon to feed materials into the bottle
- **Fillers** - any of the following (or a combination) of these:
  - Water, marbles, colourful buttons, pompoms, glitter, rhinestones, pipe cleaners, googly eyes, etc.
- **Duct tape** around the bottle cap for a complete seal



Glitter bottles

Sound makers

## Sensory Bags

### What is a Sensory Bag?

A ziplock bag filled with various sensory fillers. It is also known as a **squish bag**.

**No-mess sensory play!** Ideal for children who do not like sticky or messy sensations on their hands, or children in the mouthing phase

### Making a Sensory Bag

- Use **clear ziplock bags!**
- **Fillers** - any of the following (or a combination) of these:
  - Small, flat plastic toys, alphabet pieces, foam shapes, confetti, water beads, hair gel, beans, glitter, coloured water, paint etc
- **Squeeze** out as much air as you can, when sealing the bag
- **Duct tape** around the edges to reinforce the bags
- Some **fun themes** to consider:
  - Ocean, beach, colours, tropical fruits, alphabets etc.



Styrofoam balls and water babies



Water babies



Colourful paint



Coloured water and confetti

## Other Sensory Play Ideas

### **Movement**

- Animal walks
- Wheelbarrow walks
- Playground equipment



### **Sound, Sight, Smell**

- Sit quietly, listen to the sounds of nature/ background sounds
- Make shadow finger puppets
- Using blindfold on children, have them smell and guess the scents (e.g. honey, lavender etc.)
- Musical instruments



### **Is sensory overload possible?**

Consider possibility of sensory overload, especially if your child presents with sensory processing difficulties.

Begin with familiar objects first. Introduce sensory elements one at a time, adding more when your child is ready.

### **What if my child appears disinterested?**

Adult supervision and guidance is recommended to facilitate successful exploration of sensory play for some children. It is also okay if your child prefers to simply explore for brief durations!

*"The world is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper."*

- W. B. Yeats