

Pediatric Development Center



~ Newsletter ~



2009

We provide occupational therapy evaluation, treatment and consultation for children with developmental delays, autism/Asperger, cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, sensory processing disorders, attention, behavioral concerns, handwriting, and other areas of weakness. Contact us for further information:

125 Presumpscot St. Portland, ME.
(207) 699-5531.

Good Resources:

www.southpawenterprises.com

www.mommypoppins.com

Tactile Fun in the Sun *Deanna Macioce, MS, OTR/L*

"So, you have a child who hates to get messy. Maybe he is the one who chooses not to participate in the finger painting activity at school or the one who wipes his hands clean as soon as anything gets on them. Or does she choose not to walk on the grass or even play in the snow, or even requests to have all of the tags cut out from her clothing? If any of these descriptions fit your child or someone you may work with, the child may be labeled as "tactile defensive". Tactile defensiveness is a condition that describes a child who reacts negatively or with alarm to a tactile input which is generally considered harmless or non-irritating to a person with a typically developing sensory system.

To help children overcome tactile defensiveness suggestions are given to include various play activities to help increase a child's tolerance to tactile stimuli. Often these activities tend to be messy and goopy, and therefore many parents are left to pick and choose the ones suitable for home. This does not truly allow a child to become engulfed in the whole experience. That is why summer is a great time to bring all those tactile activities outside. Being outdoors to do these activities will provide some good quality playtime for those children who are tactile defensive.

Now is the time to bring out the shaving cream. Using a vinyl table cloth or tarp, allow your children to create an entire art masterpiece, or better yet, whip off the shoes and go 'ice skating' in summer. And once you are all done, use the hose for easy clean up.

This is also a great time of year to spruce up those flower beds or plant a vegetable garden. Allow your child to help dig up the dirt and begin planting. Begin with using gardening gloves, moving then to thin, medical gloves, and if you can get them to go bare handed. This will really let them get dirty while exploring the earth.

Take some time to just play in the grass. Take off their shoes and let them run! Feeling the grass with their hands, and allowing the blades to touch their skin is a great experience. Make your playtime in the grass fun with tossing or kicking a ball,

log rolling, or having races, including running, hopping, crab walking, and bear walking.

Get creative with some full body painting using pudding. Not only with this provide a sticky, wet, soft tactile input to the skin, it is also very yummy to lick your fingers clean. And then enjoy a trip through the sprinkler for a fun way to clean up.

Fill a baby pool with dry media-beans, rice, sand or pasta allowing for more of a full body experience. Hide items in the pool and give your child a treasure hunt list to find the items. Placing a tablecloth under the pool will also make clean up a breeze. If you want to get really adventurous, fill the pool with cooked spaghetti allowing your child to take a 'swim'.

Any type of water play is a great activity, especially for those children who do not enjoy the bathing ritual. Provide cups and bowls of various sizes for scooping and dumping the water out. And using any type of squeeze toy also helps with fine motor strengthening.

So, now is the time to take advantage of the summer weather and the ability to be messy outside. This will be truly beneficial for the child who is tactile defensive. And these activities are also great and lots of fun for any child."

99 Vestibular Activities

From: www.mommypoppins.com

1. "Jump (on a mini-trampoline, from a chair to a sofa, on the bed, etc.)
2. Wheelbarrow walking or races
3. Donkey Kicks
4. ABC Pushups (Push-up plank position, touch chest with hand and say a letter of the alphabet, all the way up to the letter Z. Each letter said, the student changes the hand that touches the chest)
5. Bear walk
6. Crab walk
7. Play leap frog
8. Tummy time push ups (for babies)
9. Toddlers can push their own stroller, the laundry or grocery cart

10. Have your toddler or child carry a backpack full of their own toys and books
11. Hammer ice cubes in a plastic bag (then use them for lemonade!)
12. Pillow Fight
13. Stuffed animal catch
14. Hanging from a chin-up bar
15. Bouncing on hopping ball
16. Tug-of-war
17. Hopscotch
18. Wrestling
19. Tickle fight
20. Drumming
21. Banging on pots and pans
22. Have a parade and march
23. Wiping the counters
24. Sweeping
25. Swiffering
26. Dustbusting
27. Unloading the washing machine and the dryer
28. Taking out the trash
29. Water balloon catch
30. Beanbag catch
31. Push-o-war (put palms against each other and push as hard as you can)
32. Animal footsteps (Child lays down and chooses an animal and using your fingers or hands try to make it feel like that animal walking over back and limbs..)
33. Swinging: Try different types of swinging to see how it feels (tire, rope, belly, etc)
34. Spinning
35. Run in circles
36. Hang upside down
37. Swing your child around from their arms or legs
38. Drag them on a sheet or blanket
39. Rock in a rocking chair
40. Make a kid sandwich by pressing down on him between two pillows or couch cushions
41. Make a kid burrito by rolling her tightly in a blanket
42. Roll out the cookie dough by rolling a big ball firmly over the back and limbs
43. Make your own sandbox with a bowl full of dry beans or Styrofoam peanuts.
44. Pour salt on a cookie sheet and paint with your fingers.
45. Spread beans out in a baking tray or pan and make a construction site for trucks. Bury small toys in rice and have them do an archeological dig
46. Go on a texture walk
47. Have a texture scavenger hunt at home/in the bath.
48. Add food coloring to the water
49. Ladles, cups, strainers, squirters, funnels
50. Play with shaving cream
51. Soap crayons or bath paints
52. Rub with different textures while in the bath, a smooth washcloth, a loofah, a nail brush.
53. Put shaving cream on a placemat to squish around
54. Mix cookie dough or cake batter with hands
55. Make play dough
56. Make a touch book of different textures from your home
57. Put single items in paper bags and let kids try to guess what they are
58. Play with face paints
59. Repot the plants
60. Use a vibrating toothbrush
61. Sip seltzer
62. Lick lemons
63. Crunch ice
64. Use chewelry
65. Make smoothies and suck through a straw
66. practice chewing gum and blowing bubbles
67. Use crazy straws
68. Blow whistles
69. Make and blow pinwheels
70. Blow feathers off your hand
71. Play soccer by blowing a cotton ball across the table scoring if you can blow it off the other person's end.
72. Have a cotton ball race.
73. Make bubble mountains in a bowl with a straw and soapy water
74. Blow gently on each other's faces (see who can blow the longest)
75. Sit quietly and listen to nature. (You can also use nature sounds recordings)
76. Play a listening game. Sit very quietly and try to guess the sounds you hear.
77. Let them play with the stereo dial to experiment with loud and soft sounds.
78. Play by candlelight
79. Turn off the lights and play flashlight tag
80. Shadow puppets
81. Build a fort or tent
82. Hide under a blanket and read by flashlight
83. Play catch with a balloon
84. Do mazes or dot to dots
85. Trace your body or hands
86. Wear sunglasses Smells
87. Explore how your child reacts to different smells. If you find some are soothing or alerting, get lotions, soaps, or candles to help regulate mood.
88. Using a blindfold have them guess different smells. (peanut butter, maple syrup, apples, etc)
89. Try giving a child a strong flavored candy or gum before trying a new food at dinner.
90. Eat sensory savvy snacks
91. Tickle Fingers (trace fingers lightly over the skin)
92. Put on lotion
93. Pet the cat
94. Butterfly kisses (eyelash kisses)
95. Give each other massages
96. Make extreme faces
97. Practice blowing out birthday candles on play dough cakes
98. Put dollops of different colored paints in a baggie and squish around to mix the paints.
99. Create a sensory savvy spot (beanbag chair or pile of pillows with soft lighting, soothing items such as books and stuffed animals, music with headphones and a snack)"