

## Whole Class Sensory Strategies to incorporate sensory and self-regulation strategies throughout the day

### *Alerting (Great for under-responsive nervous systems)*

- To facilitate engagement and attention:
  - Encourage frequent movement breaks
  - Use Move 'N Sit cushions or inflated wedges; they offer the opportunity for dynamic sitting
  - Repeat directions; provide multi-sensory input when providing directions (i.e., firmly touch shoulder while providing verbal instruction)
  - Use strong scents or tastes such as mint to alert students
  - Encourage proper upright posture for good looking and listening

### *Environmental Modifications (Great for over-responsive nervous systems)*

- Reduce stimuli and distractions to improve focus and attention by:
  - Decreasing clutter in the classroom (e.g., cover bookcases with plain fabric)
  - Positioning the child close to the source of instruction
  - Carpeting on the floors can decrease noise levels
  - Using a sturdy carrel to reduce visual distractions when completing independent work
  - Allowing the child to wear headphones to block out extraneous noises
  - Closing doors and windows to reduce outside noises

### *Calming (Great for over-responsive nervous systems)*

- To facilitate attention and focus, try:
  - Offering fidget tools: Koosh Balls, paper clips, straws (can be used for bending or chewing), Play Doh, etc.
  - Using a sports water bottle (with straw for heavy work of the mouth)
  - Teacher's Helper
  - Carrying a weighted backpack when walking in the hallway
  - Thera-band wrapped around chair legs
  - Placing Velcro strips underneath the desks for tactile input
  - Move 'N Sit cushions offer dynamic sitting opportunities
  - Using weighted items (e.g., lap pads, neck wraps, weighted vests, and blankets)
  - "Balloon Breaths"/counted breathing (e.g., "breathe in for three, out for four")
  - Peace Jar
  - The 4 B's of Calming - Brake, Brain, Body, & Breathe
  - Isometric exercises:
    - Pushing hands together
    - Hooking fingers
    - Chair push-ups

### ***Accommodations (Great for difficulties in motor planning)***

- Chunk directions
- Provide visual cues on the child's desk
- Allow for a peer buddy for the child to follow
- Allow for increased time to complete fine motor tasks, such as cutting, coloring, or handwriting
- Practice motor planning skills through gross motor games like Simon, Hokey Pokey, playground play, etc.
- Allow for practice, practice, practice!

### ***Daily Routines (Great for organizational skills)***

- Daily routines:
  - Picture or word schedules on the board
  - Specific picture or word schedules on students' desks
  - Allow the child to be first or last to unpack in the morning or pack up at the end of the day to minimize distractions
  - Small picture reminders on the desk
  - Slow your speech and your movements
  - Utilize space to organize the room in distinct sections
  - Use a timer or special music to indicate change or transition time

### ***Organizing Sensory Activities***

*(Great for over- and under-responsive nervous systems)*

- Organizing sensory activities can be both **alerting** and **calming**, depending on the individual
- Encourage students to try:
  - Yoga poses, such as downward dog and tree pose
  - “Warm Ups”
    - ❖ *Rub your hands together and then cover your ears; rub your hands together and then cover your eyes; rub your hands together and warm up other body parts for work*
  - Exercise Wheel
  - Sorting objects at least two ways (use 10-15 objects per bag)