



Quick Sensory Activities

Quick Ideas

- Tearing paper (either to glue onto something, or just to tear up)
- Crumpling newspaper
- Play-dough
- Bubble wrap popping
- Aluminum foil sculpting or squishing
- Cutting with scissors- either on a line you've drawn, randomly, cutting up drinking straws
- Blowing with straws- blow a cotton ball or kleenex off the table, across the floor, etc.
- Play 'lotion hands' squishing lotion on each others hands or rub your child's back or feet with lotion

Heavy Work

- Push or pull a basket with books or toys. Carry the grocery bag
- Shovel dirt
- Push a chair
- Push or pull a wheelbarrow or garden cart
- Take out trash
- Carry laundry basket
- Go for a walk wearing a weighted backpack

Sensory Tubs

- Any of these items for tactile stimulation, drive toy cars through or hide small treasure.
 - Cornmeal, Oats, Rice, Beans or Salt
 - Shaving cream- Some kids are hesitant to get fingers messy- you may want to try just a little bit of shaving cream at first, or get out a plastic animal or toy car they can dip in. We keep a napkin nearby for at first, but soon the kids don't care about the mess.
 - Water and cornstarch
- You may lay out a blanket or put a sensory tub inside a larger tub to help contain over-spill.

Scents

- Smell different spice jars
- Let your child smell the vanilla, lemon, garlic etc. that you're cooking with.
- Drip some scents onto cotton balls or paper towel bits (Use scents such as vanilla, lemon, vinegar, almond extract; basically, anything that can be transferred to a cotton ball.) Make two of each scent and have your child match up the scents

Indoor Gross Motor Activity Toys:

- Rody Pony or a hopping ball that has a handle on a big bouncy ball
- Mini Trampoline
- Bilibo-a toy that encourages spinning, rocking and pretend play.
- Ikea Swing or other indoor swing
- Sit 'n' Spin
- Couches- for forts or indoor obstacle courses with the cushions
- Large Tube of Knit Fabric- Two and a half to three yards of tubular knit fabric for crawling through, pushing a ball through, laying in and stretching with arms and legs, and if you have a smaller child swinging your child in.
- Beanbag chair
- Tent

Water

Warm water is calming for these activities.

- Bath time
- Finger paint the tub- A natural extension of bath time, or a way to extend bath time: give lops of finger paint on the tub side and have the kids paint the sides. It cleans up right down the drain.
- Car or doll wash- Have the kids grab a few of their toy cars or dolls and put soap in the bathroom sink. Use rags or sponges to give the toys a bath.
- Wash dishes- Set up a stool at the kitchen counter and let them wash
- Blowing bowl bubbles- Get out the largest mixing bowl you have and fill it part way with water. Add a spurt of dish soap and get out the straws and show how to blow out to make bubbles. Once you have a mountain of bubbles you can do fun things like blowing into a bubble and making it bigger or hiding a toy under the bubbles. This can be very calming and organizing activity.
- Water play on the kitchen floor-Towel on the floor with bowls and scoopers. Add food coloring to the water to make it extra exciting.
- Sponges- Get out bowls and a sponge to transfer water from one bowl to the other- lots of good squeezing. Add soap for bubbles
- Mop the floor- Give kids rags to 'ice skate' on to dry

Hint

Take note of what is calming for your child and what they crave so you can know how to help them get centered when they seem out of control. With creativity you can do a "sensory activity" anywhere. Include a variety of sensory activities throughout your day for a more even keeled child. Finally, never underestimate the value of a good hug for every sense.