

HOME LEARNING: SENSORY ACTIVITIES



- Making a sensory squish bag – fill a zip-lock freezer bag with ½ cup of hair gel and some food colouring. Zip up the bag and mix the colouring and gel together then unzip and add small plastic objects such as animals, beads, letters or numbers. Zip up the bag up again and use duct tape to secure the opening of the bag. The child can then push the items around in the bag. See websites such as www.growingajeweledrose.com/2013/01/sensory-bag.html for ideas.
- Coffee filter painting – colour the filter with felt pens or markers then use a small squirty bottle to dampen the filter and this will make the colours blend. You could then use a template to cut out the shape of a butterfly from the filter.
- Finger painting or making hand and footprints with paint.
- Toilet roll printing – dip the end of the toilet roll into the paint and use it to make circular patterns on paper e.g. make a row of circles to create a caterpillar.
- Sensory trails – make a trail for the child to walk along e.g. bubble wrap, a wet towel, different textured materials, and/or trays of cooked spaghetti, uncooked rice, sand, feathers, water, cotton wool balls etc.
- Rice bucket – half fill a deep bucket or box with uncooked rice and hide small objects in it. Encourage the child to dig in it with their hands to find the objects. This can be a messy activity so it may be best to allocate a particular space in the room for it and put down a sheet on the floor. You could also try this activity with things like uncooked pasta or rice crispies.
- Fill a large box with shredded paper and hide small toys such as cars or plastic animals in the paper. The child must dig around and find the toys in the paper.
- Make a sensory bottle – half fill a clear plastic bottle with coloured water. Then top up the bottle with vegetable oil. Put the lid on tight and glue it to make it more secure. Shake the bottle to mix the oil and water and create a lava lamp type effect. Or fill the bottle ¼ full with water, add glitter and small, light plastic items such as sequins or bead. Then add clear liquid hand soap to fill the bottle and put the lid on tight/glue it on. Shake the bottle to mix the contents and then let it settle for a while before using. Look on the internet for other ideas for making different sensory bottles.
- Make a Find-It bottle – fill a clear plastic bottle with uncooked rice and small objects such as different shaped buttons, small erasers and/or Lego pieces. Glue the lid on to make it more secure. Encourage the child to shake and turn the bottle to try to find the different objects.
- Hide small plastic toys in cooked spaghetti and encourage the child to dig around in the spaghetti with their hands to find them and/or pick up the spaghetti using tongs.
- Set small plastic toys in jelly and encourage the child to use a spoon or their fingers to dig them out.
- Edible playdough e.g. www.therestfulhome.com/edible-playdough-recipes/ or www.thekitchn.com/edible-playdough-22994248
- Corn flour sensory activities e.g. mix 1.5 or 2 parts corn flour with 1 part water and add some food colouring. The child can play with it by picking it up, squeezing, pouring, scooping it etc. Also try freezing it for a different sensation on a hot day.
- Shaving foam activities e.g. fill a plastic tray with shaving foam and put small plastic toys into it. Place an empty plastic tray next to it. The child removes the items from the shaving foam and uses a spray

bottle of water to wash off the foam. Or spray shaving foam onto a window – the child wipes it around and then uses their fingers to make patterns, draw pictures and/or write in the foam. Then get the child to wipe the window clean with a towel.

- Bubble volcano – put a small amount of washing up liquid and water in a large bowl. Use a straw to blow into the liquid and create a mountain of bubbles.
- Bubble foam – mix 2 parts water with 1 part bubble bath (preferably something that is tear free) in a big bowl and add a couple of drops of food colouring. Now whisk it up with a hand mixer on medium-high for about a minute, until you have stiff peaks. Hide suitable toys in the foam or spoon it from one container to another etc.
- Bubble snake – cut the bottom off a small plastic bottle then fasten an old sock over the bottom with a bobble or tape. Pull the sock all the way up the bottle so that it fit over the end with a tight fit before you fasten it. Now dip the sock end into bubble mixture then blow through the bottle opening (at the opposite end to the sock). You should create a bubble snake!
- Frozen toys – good for a hot day. Quarter fill a plastic container with water and put in a number of plastic toys. Put the lid on and place in the freezer until frozen. Once it is frozen, tip it out onto a plastic tray and encourage your child to free the toys e.g. with toy hammers, spoons and/or a water spray.
- Paint with wet food substances such as ketchup, yogurt (add food colouring for different colours), sour cream, jam, Angel Delight etc. Use fingers and/or other food items as painting utensils e.g. celery, bread sticks, carrots, chocolate fingers etc.

Manchester Occupational Therapy Services Ltd
34 Station Rd
Urmston
Manchester
M41 9JQ

t: 0161 749 7727

e: info@manchester-occupational-therapy-services.co.uk

w: www.manchester-occupational-therapy-services.co.uk