

Our 8 Senses:

Far senses: Vision, Hearing

Near senses: Taste, Smell, Touch, Proprioception, Vestibular

Plus: Interoception

Vestibular: Sense of balance, maintaining head and body posture, determine direction and speed of movement, sense of body movement through space, inner ear.

Proprioception: The sense that helps a child with body awareness. Senses of effort, determine body's position in space, control limbs, sense of force or of heaviness.

Interoception: The sense of knowing what is going on inside your body.

We use the NEAR senses to feed the senses

Proprioception Activities = Resistance Activities

Yoga, body sock, trampoline, therapy ball, weighted ball.

- Used to get into the JUST RIGHT state
- Used to organise brain and body
- Used to create body awareness

Vestibular Activities = Activities where the head moves out of the upright position – running, jumping

Swing, animal walks, scooter board, bounce on therapy ball.

- Used to alert children (moving head out of many positions)
- Used to calm children (head moving in one linear direction)

Tactile Activities = Activities involving touch

- Use increased tactile input to increase our ability to accept tactile input
- Used to gain regulation and reduce stress (deep pressure)
- Use to alert children (light touch)

Sensory Strategies for Home:

- Use a **picture schedule**
- Avoid **getting in a rush**. Minimize screen time (tv, video games, computers). No screen time 1 hour before bed.
- Allow for a **variety of movement activities** in the schedule.
- **Safe place** to access at home.
- Activities that provide **deep pressure to the muscles and joints** are always helpful to the nervous system.
- **Use less speech** when child is becoming distressed or de-regulated.
- Watch on You Tube Mrs. Menin's Sidewalk Chalk Sensory-Motor Pathway #2.

Sensory Strategies for the Classroom:

Calming:

- Allow the use of **stress balls or fidget toys**.
- Avoid **rushing** the child.
- Allow **frequent position changes**.
- Provide **“heavy work” chores** when child appears to be escalating.
- Allow child to **wear headphones** if bothered or distracted by background noises.
- Refer frequently to the **visual schedule** so child can mentally prepare for what comes next and look forward to sensory breaks.
- Provide a **“time in”** safe area in school for them to access.

Strategies to improve focus:

- Keep a **metronome** on in the classroom to give the brain something rhythmic to assist with concentration.
- Encourage child to keep a **water bottle (the kind with a straw is optimum)** at desk.
- Allow **snacking** during seat work.
- Allow **sucking on mints** while listening or working.
- **Minimize visual distractions.**
- Provide **weighted lap pads**.

<https://sensationalbrain.com/free-resources/>