

SENSORY ESSENTIALS:

Sensory Diet Template + 25 Sensory Diet Activities

In this printable you will find several helpful resources for creating a sensory diet for your child or one you work with as a therapist. The first is the actual sensory diet template. It includes a sample and 2 types of templates. One with a schedule and one that allows you to write in your own unique schedule.

Before you get to the 25 sensory diet activities, make sure to read some basic but critical tips for using sensory activities. If used incorrectly they can do more harm than good! As you consider trying the sensory activities, watch for your child's response – more on that inside...

Sensory Essentials


Sensory Diet Sample Template

Use this worksheet to plan your child's sensory diet. Look through the activities list on the next page and select 4-5 to try at a time. Remember to look for activities that your child responds positively to. Does it help them pay attention better, be less aggressive, get their teeth brushed, fall asleep quicker, etc.? Use the last column to check what is working, remembering to try/offer multiple times! The first page is an example of a schedule, and the first 4 lines give you a sample. [Find an even bigger list of sensory diet activities here.](#)

Daily Activity	Challenge	Sensory Activity	Helpful?
Wake up	Bad mood, irritable	Thick cold smoothie	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Dim lights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Little to no talking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Go to school	Anxious about going	Big hugs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Squeeze ball in pocket	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Supplies organized night before	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nap	Can't fall asleep	Room darkening blinds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Weighted blanket	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Story time in rocking chair first	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dinner	Won't sit still	Jump on trampoline beforehand	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Sit on a wiggly cushion	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Sensory Diet Template



Daily Activity	Challenge	Sensory Activity	Helpful?
Wake up			
Breakfast			
Transition to school/daycare/activities			
Lunch			
Nap/activity			
Snack			
Homework			
Free-time/activity			
Dinner			
Bath/shower			
Bedtime			

Sensory Essentials

Using Sensory Activities Well



There are countless sensory activities all around us at any moment, but as an occupational therapist, I wanted to share some that I believe tend to be beneficial to the most kids. It's very important to realize that using sensory activities to calm, focus, or regulate a child is rarely a formula.

What your child responds to will vary from day to day.

Not all activities will be effective or helpful for your child.

It's very important to experiment and present these activities as something fun—not something that has to get done.

Sensory seeking kids typically love many of these activities and can't wait to do them.

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Before Proceeding, You Must Know...

Sensory activities should NEVER be forced. If your child isn't interested or refusing, it could be that they are busy with something else at the moment. If they consistently seem upset when you try an activity, then it could be an indication that they're sensitive to that type of sensation.

When children show sensitivity with touching different textures or with movement like swinging or rocking on a ball, it is important to slowly help them learn to tolerate it. The really cool thing is that their sensory processing can change.

If you need to help your child get used to rolling on a ball, then start as small as you can while creating a positive experience for them. For example, maybe they'll push the yoga ball back and forth. Or maybe they'll roll forward a little with their knees still on the ground.

Focus on baby steps. Learn more about how to handle sensory sensitivities [here](#).

When your child has finished a sensory activity, watch how they respond:

- Are they calmer?
- Are they more focused?
- Are they more joyful or grounded?
- Are they more energetic?
- Are they irritable?
- Are they struggling to follow directions?

If you answer yes to any of the first three bullets, then they've responded well and you'll want to try these sensory activities again.

If you answer to the last two, then you'll want to think about using the activities at different times, altering them, or not trying to use that activity again in the near future.

If you noticed they were more energetic, you'll have to decide if that's a good thing or a bad thing. Some kids are very low energy—almost lethargic most of the time—so more energy is good.

But for kids who are bouncing off the walls non-stop, energy is not the goal.

Use these activities as often as your child needs or requests them. Teach your child to do these activities themselves whenever possible. Talk to them about listening to what their body needs and how their body feels after they participate in a targeted sensory activity.

Sensory is powerful and amazing. It can change everything.

Want to learn about which activities will be the most helpful for your sensory kid? [Join me in the free sensory workshop](#) to learn powerful strategies and get more support!

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Sensory Diet Activities



1. Jump on a trampoline, couch, or bed (some kids will benefit from counting or singing to a beat to help calm and not wind them up further while jumping)
2. Put a pile of pillows on the ground, climb over the pillows, and jump into them
3. Hang upside down over the couch, the side of a bed, or monkey bars
4. Climb up a ladder, slide, rock wall, or even a set of steps
5. Lay on your belly and get squished under a pillow or by rolling a yoga ball over top of them
6. Get wrapped up tight in a blanket like a burrito
7. Push or pull a heavy wagon or laundry basket
8. Swing on a porch swing, playground swing, or while laying in a blanket that two adults hold the ends of
9. Wheelbarrow walk
10. Do all sorts of animal walks: slither like a snake, walk like a bear, crawl like a crab, soar like a bird, leap like a frog, hop like a bunny, etc.
11. Chew on teething toys (even for older kids) or chewy necklaces
12. Drink from a straw (try cold, warm, and thick liquids)
13. Play in a large bin of dry rice, sand, or birdseed
14. Bake and make sure to mix the ingredients, knead, and roll out dough
15. Paint with cinnamon, cumin, ginger, and other ground spices by mixing a little water with a tablespoon of the spice. Talk about the smells and colors
16. Find different objects around the house and play a game of guessing the smell of the object with eyes closed
17. Watch a lava lamp, illuminated fish tank, or color-changing night light in a dimly lit or dark space
18. Lay under heavy blankets, a weighted blanket, or a weighted lap pad
19. Toss a weighted ball back and forth
20. Play music and have a dance party
21. Create a silent space with no noise and a cozy spot to sit and look at books or just relax
22. Ride a bike, scooter, or rollerblade
23. Blow bubbles
24. Do yoga poses like downward dog, cat-cow, tree pose, and cobra
25. Use a handheld massager that vibrates on arms and legs



Hey, I'm Alisha



I'm a mom like you, with a sensory kiddo of my own. But, truthfully in all of my children I've seen various sensory needs at one point or another. That's because our sensory processing is a huge part of development and how we all experience life!

When a child's sensory needs are so big, they can make it difficult for kids to pay attention, sleep, eat, get dressed, wash their hair, and so much more. While this printable is a great start, I have another free resource that's *even better* in helping you figure out what sensory activities to use to help your child calm and focus!

In our FREE 1 hour workshop: **3 Expert Secrets To Calm & Focus Your Child With Specialized Sensory Activities!**

When you snag a spot, you also get a free workbook!



yourkidstable.com/workshop