

Early Years Inclusion Team

Sensory Room

Who can benefit from a sensory room?

Sensory rooms are specially designed environments that provide a sensory experience to people, young and old, with a wide variety of different abilities. Traditionally, a sensory room was used for relaxation and de-escalation, when people with autism, emotional and behavioural difficulties, sensory processing disorder, or other special needs would find themselves overwhelmed and in need of a safe and distracting place to return to a state of calm.

What are the benefits of a sensory room?

- help a child feel safe
- engage the senses and provide sensory input (sensory diet)
- improve balance and coordination
- work on fine and gross motor skills
- support therapeutic treatment
- better manage challenging behaviours
- encourage exploration
- increase sensory experiences and tolerance
- build confidence
- increased vocabulary and communication opportunities
- improved caregiver relationship
- reset mood
- reduce stress



Creating a Sensory Room on a budget

The first step in planning any sensory space begins with the child/children who'll be using it. ...

If you have no space at all to devote to a sensory area:

- make a sensory board and store it under a couch, under a bed, or behind furniture to pull out when needed.
- create a sensory box that is filled with fidgets and calm down tools.

If you have limited space to devote to a sensory area:

- make a sensory corner in your classroom, playroom, child's room, or living room.
- use a closet or storage room as the sensory room.
- convert a shed or an area of the garage.

Sensory Room activities

Although the list is endless, below are a few examples of activities you can try

- Touch textured wall panels for tactile and visual experiences
- Use small sensory balls to get hands and fingers moving
- Jump on mats to work on gross motor skills or for calming and organizing



- Sit on a comfy chair for calming and relaxing.
- Rock or bounce on a therapy ball for core strengthening and to improve balance



- Roll across the room on a mat for whole body sensory input
- Blow bubbles for visual input and for improving eye tracking
- Sit in front of a bubble tube to improve visual perception and eye tracking and to increase relaxation
- Lay on a mat and drape fiber optic lighted across your body for a soothing and relaxing experience. Also great for providing a visual and tactile experience
- Sit in a tent for cooling down.
- Jump in a ball pool for a multisensory experience – tactile, visual, gross motor
- Snuggle with a weighted blanket for calming and proprioceptive input
- Sit with a weighted gel lap pad for help with fidgeting or for calming and relaxing
- Put a vibrating tube around your neck, arm, leg or waist for help with relaxation or for stimulation.
- Give a massage with a vibrating massager for great proprioceptive input
- Hug a vibrating stuffed animal for a sense of security and for calming
- Place an LED Light Illuminator on your lap and watch the slowly- changing colours for a mesmerizing experience
- Squeeze a vibrating pillow to release energy and receive vibro- tactile input
- Listen to music from a soft, lighted plush toy
- Have fun pushing the soft gel around in Gel Mats. Great for fine motor development as well as for calming
- Have a dance party with a lighted disco ball

