The Importance of Sensory Play: Start Engaging the Senses!

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#### Goals



- What is sensory play?
- Why is it important?
- Let's Brainstorm!
  - Sensory Bases
  - Accessories
  - Bins
- Clean Up Ideas
- Resources

## What is sensory play?

Sensory Play is play that engages children's senses: touch, hearing, sight, smell, and even taste.



## What are the developmental benefits of sensory play?

- Fine Motor Skills
- Spatial Awareness
- Pre-Math Skills
- Science
- VocabularyDevelopment
- Social and Emotional Development

#### **Fine Motor Skills**









#### **Spatial Awareness**







#### **Pre-Math Skills**





#### Science









#### **Vocabulary Development**







#### Social and Emotional Development







## Sensory Bases

Let's brainstorm a list of sensory bases together!

### Water







#### Ideas:

Freezing and melting with animals in ice and pipettes

Car wash with soapy water, toothbrushes, nasal aspirators, sponges, and foam rollers



Ping pong balls with kitchen utensils
Pom poms with citrus presses and
salad spinners







A new use for salad spinners!

# Additional Water Play Ideas

Washing babies
Foam blocks with water
Buoyancy (what objects sink and float)
Mud kitchen
Paint with water
Fill empty bottles and dump
Use tubes to create water slides/pipes

### **Kinetic Sand**







### **Food Bases**







\*some centers do not allow food based sensory bases

## Accessories

What types of accessories do you add to your sensory bins?

For:

Dumping, scooping, pouring, imaginative play, etc.

### **Types of Bins**







What types of sensory bins do you use?

This may depend on whether you're using sensory bins in a

preschool/childcare setting or at home

## Modifications Based on Children's Needs

- Utilize larger items for younger children/those who mouth objects, make sure nothing is small enough to choke on
- Offer sensory bags or bottles that can be sealed
- Use taste safe materials (water, oatmeal, cornmeal, cereal, etc.)
- Provide opportunities for imaginative play/small world play
- Change bases and accessories to match children's interests and classroom themes

# Ways to make clean up easier

Cover floors and tables with tarps or drop cloths to contain small pieces

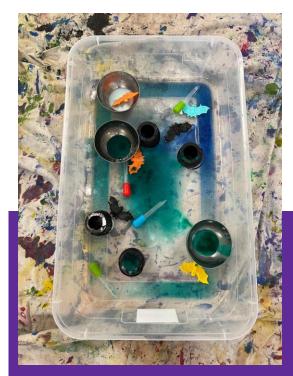
When using wet materials (paint, etc), cover surfaces with plastic shower curtains

Keep clothing clean by covering with smocks or old shirts

Add dish soap to your paint to help it wash off more easily

Take the messiest projects outside!

#### Tarps!





Shower Curtains and Soapy Paint!



Smocks!



Take it outside!

## Resources

https://bostonmoms.com/motherhood/beat-the-summer-heat-and-embrace-thefun-and-educational-world-of-sensory-play/

https://health.clevelandclinic.org/benefits-of-sensory-play-ideas/

https://www.earlyyearsresources.co.uk/blog/2018/02/sensory-play-importance/

https://www.shopbecker.com/resource-cafe/beckers-blog/arts-and-crafts/messyplay-without-the-mess/