

Tools for Calming Children

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Definition of Play

Play is a self-selected and self-directed activity and will end when the sheer pleasure of doing it stops. Play is the only activity that unifies the whole person: mind, body, and spirit.

Multiple Intelligences

- Kinesthetic
- Linguistic
- Logical
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Musical
- Visual/spatial
- Naturalistic

Learning Styles/Modalities

1. Visual

- Print
- Picture

2. Auditory

- Listening
- Verbal

3. Tactile-Kinesthetic

- Hands on
- Whole Body
- Sketching
- Writing

Movement

6 Types of Movements: These movements are either alerting or calming.

- Oscillation – up and down (alerting)
 - Rotary – spinning/rolling (alerting)
 - Linear – back and forth (calming)
 - Inverted – upside down (calming)
 - Crashing – what it sounds like (alerting)
 - Heavy Work – pushing, pulling, lifting (most calming)
- *When bodies are out of control look to movement. 5 minutes of movement gets you 25-30 minutes of focused energy. Not all children like all movement. Which ones are best for different children?

8 Senses

- See
- Hear
- Smell
- Taste
- Feel
- Proprioceptive
- Vestibular
- Interoception

How do I change my state of alertness?

How can I make curriculum sensory rich?

- Put something in my mouth (oral motor input) – Supporting Sense
- **Move (Vestibular & Proprioceptive input) – Fundamental Sense**
- **Touch (Tactile input) – Fundamental Sense**
- Look (Visual input) – Supporting Sense
- Listen (Auditory input) – Supporting Sense

- Don't rush children out of sensory experiences as those are necessary for self regulation!
- Smell is the fastest way to get people to calm. Scent goes immediately to the limbic system (emotions part of brain) where everything else is filtered cognitively.

Oral Motor Input

- Straw activities
- Chew gum
- Drink water
- Eat popcorn
- Whistle
- Chew on button, clothes, inside of cheek
- Take slow deep breaths
- Chew on pencil/pen

Tactile Input: can aide in emotional security, learning disabilities

- Twirl hair
- Play with coin in pocket
- Use hands to learn
- Massage
- Pet a class pet
- Drum pencil or fingers on desk
- Employ a fidget
 - Straw, paper clip, pen/pencil, earring/necklace, put fingers near mouth, eye, nose

Visual Input

- Watch a fish tank
- Visuals
- Looking out the window
- Watch “oil and water” toys
- Calming bottles
- How do you react to:
 - Dim lighting, fluorescent lighting, lamp lighting, rose colored room, a “cluttered desk” when needing to concentrate

Auditory Input

- Listen center
- Head phones
- Walkmans and cassette tapes
- CD players
- Work in a quiet/noisy room
- Sing/talk to yourself
- How do you react to:
 - “squeak” of a mechanical pencil, nails on a chalkboard, fire siren, snoring, constant dog barking?

What role does behavior play? (not all behaviors respond to behavioral intervention)

- Behavior Norms: An action that follows the rules of society.
- Behavior Excesses: Something that is done with too much force, for too long or with too much intensity.
- Behavior Deficits: Something that is done with not enough force, for not a long enough period of time or with not enough intensity.
- What someone views as a behavior norm may be seen as a behavior excess to someone else. Nonjudgement is important.

What do I need in my classroom for ALL children to learn?

- Dominant kids: blocks, outside, woodworking
- Interactive kids: dramatic play, storytelling, creative messy
- Sensitive kids: board games, books, writing
- Cautious kids: puzzles, science, math/manipulatives, Lego

Subjects not suitable for thematic units: These are everyday lessons!

- Safety
- Kindness
- Emotions/Feelings
- Friends
- Manners
- Bucket filling
- Community
- All about me