



## Environmental Modifications Using Tactile Activities

| <b>TACTILE DISCRIMINATION</b>             |  |
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| <b>Desk work</b>                          |  |
| <i><b>Sensory diet</b></i>                | <p><i>Writing tool alternatives:</i> grippers, pencils requiring different pressure, felt-tip pens, ballpoint pens, vibratory pens.</p> <p><i>Writing surface alternatives:</i> blotters, layers of paper, raised-line paper, textured papers.</p> |
| <i><b>Environmental modifications</b></i> | Provide more time for note taking and fine motor activities, oral tests, writing alternatives (e.g., word processor, tape recorder), do not grade on fine motor performance if it is an area of weakness, use peer for note taking.                |
| <b>School break time</b>                  |  |
| <i><b>Sensory diet</b></i>                | <i>Discriminatory play activities:</i> feely boxes, hide objects in sandbox, write letters on back   |
| <i><b>Environmental modification</b></i>  | Breaks for sensory diet activities, especially before fine motor activities.   |
| <b>Snack and meals</b>                    |  |
| <i><b>Sensory diet</b></i>                | Weighted spoons.   |
| <i><b>Environmental modifications</b></i> | Self-checking during and after meals to ensure cleanliness; mirror for self-checking; weighted, unbreakable dishes stabilized with a dycem.  |
| <b>Dressing</b>                           |  |
| <i><b>Environmental modifications</b></i> | Self-checking while dressing and toileting, hook-and-loop fasteners.   |
| <b>TACTILE DEFENSIVENESS</b>              |  |

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| <b>Desk work</b>                   |  |
| <i>Sensory diet</i>                | Deep pressure input (e.g., weighted vest, backpack, lap tray), active resistance activities, finger fidgets and resistive hand activities (e.g., cutting, erasing, hand grippers).   |
| <i>Environmental modifications</i> | Separate space areas to prevent incidental touch by others; designate spaces for circle time (e.g., carpet square); approach the child from the front and warn the child before touch; avoid touch to sensitive areas (e.g., hair, face, neck, abdomen); use firm touch and avoid light touch; minimize other possible overwhelming environmental stimuli (use natural lighting; shut the classroom door; use blotters on desks; use rubber bottoms on the chair and desk legs; provide curtains, blinders, and room dividers; eliminate aromas in the classroom). |
| <b>School break time</b>           |  |
| <i>Sensory diet</i>                | Play and break activities that provide resistance and heavy work input, “How Does Your Engine Run?” program (Williams & Shellenberger, 1994).  |
| <i>Environmental modification</i>  | Frequent breaks during the day.  |
| <b>Gym</b>                         |  |
| <i>Sensory diet</i>                | Regular calisthenics (e.g., push-ups, sit-ups, jumping jacks, wheelbarrow walks, crab walking), self-imposed deep touch and active resistance activities before gym class (i.e., log rolling on the mats)  |
| <i>Environmental modification</i>  | Minimize touch contact with other children when engaged in physical education activities.  |
| <b>Arts and crafts</b>             |  |
| <i>Sensory diet</i>                | Use a variety of tactile art media; never force children to do more than they are ready to do; allow children to wash their hands; have children rub their finger/hand on the rug to “warm up” before touching mediums   |
| <i>Environmental modifications</i> | Use a glue stick instead of glue or paste; use a paintbrush instead of finger paints.  |
| <b>Riding the bus</b>              |  |

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| <b><i>Sensory diet</i></b>                | Backpack, weighted vest, or heavy jacket.  |
| <b><i>Environmental modifications</i></b> | Child has own seat, is first or last in line to board bus, and wears headphones to filter out extraneous sensory stimuli.  |
| <b>Play</b>                               |  |
| <b><i>Sensory diet</i></b>                | <i>Deep pressure and resistance activities:</i> rolling up with a blanket to make a hot dog or burrito, rolling a large ball over the child to make a pizza, playing tug-of-war, crawling under couch cushions, using a chin-up bar, crawling into a stretchy pillow case. |
| <b><i>Environmental modification</i></b>  | Teach family members about the child's sensory needs and the need to avoid unwanted touch.   |
| <b>Snack and meals</b>                    |  |
| <b><i>Sensory diet</i></b>                | <i>Deep pressure techniques before meals:</i> biting down hard on teeth and releasing, pursing lips and releasing, sucking in cheeks, flapping tongue, blowing balloons, clicking tongue; thick liquids to drink with straw; chewy and crunchy foods.                      |
| <b><i>Environmental modifications</i></b> | Experiment with different utensils (e.g., plastic, weighted, rubber coated); explore different textures acceptable to the child and reinforce those textured foods for nutrient intake.  |
| <b>Dressing</b>                           |  |
| <b><i>Sensory diet</i></b>                | Provide deep touch pressure to limbs and torso before dressing, body hugs, hand squeezes.  |
| <b>Bathing</b>                            |  |
| <b><i>Sensory diet</i></b>                | Heavy rubdown before and after bath; towel wrapped tightly after bath with heavy hugs; lotion applied firmly, if tolerated.  |
| <b><i>Environmental modifications</i></b> | Experiment with different sponges, wash mitts, cloths; have child wash self.   |
| <b>Hair care</b>                          |  |
| <b><i>Sensory diet</i></b>                | Deep pressure to torso, limbs, and scalp before hair care; heavy blanket worn during haircuts.   |
| <b><i>Environmental modifications</i></b> | Conditioner and detangler, different combs.  |

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| <b>Nail care</b>                   |  |
| <i>Sensory diet</i>                | Deep pressure and finger exercises before nail care.   |
| <i>Environmental modification</i>  | Soak nails before cutting.   |
| <b>Tooth care</b>                  |  |
| <i>Sensory diet</i>                | Deep pressure activities before brushing teeth (e.g., eating, water pick, gum massage); deep pressure techniques while in the dentist's chair; weighted x-ray blanket worn while at the dentist. |
| <i>Environmental modifications</i> | Experiment with different toothbrushes, use electric toothbrush, use of a washcloth initially.   |
| <b>Sleep and bedtime routine</b>   |  |
| <i>Sensory diet</i>                | Provide deep pressure hugs and slow rocking before bedtime; give a bath and a massage; no roughhousing and TV before bedtime; use a heavy blanket; sleep under couch cushions or pillows.        |
| <i>Environmental modifications</i> | Prewashed soft sheets, sleeping bag.   |