

## B7- Sensory play strategies

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### For time out and explore environments use:

- soft natural lighting
- reduced sounds and noise
- reduce visual overwhelming affect with neutral or calming colour walls
- soft equipment such as beanbag to snuggle into, physio or padded mat for floor
- movement equipment- to promote vestibular movement sensations and promote a unifying effect on the senses, eg gentle rocking, swinging, rotation action
- compression type touch to help with reassuring or hug affect safe feeling

### Various sensory play items with sensory visual, tactile, proprioceptive stimulus such as:

- bubble tubes or rainmakers or preferred visual calming options
- ball refuge or pool
- crawl tunnels or tactile stepping stones to add greater complexity in obstacle courses, for greater attention or interest to explore
- body sox-stretchy type fabric envelope to pursue resistance or sensation feedback in movement
- peanut-shaped therapy ball (various diameter size) to sit and bounce or lay on front (as in wheelbarrow walk) to encourage weight bearing through trunk, upper and lower limbs with sensation feedback and further explore stability in movement
- try propping the ball against furniture (to fix the position) and encourage high kneeling against the ball, to drum the ball with both hands
- weighted blankets or snakes: to add greater proprioceptive feedback to provide calming reassurance (hug affect) and promote stillness and attention to fine motor play
- shiny and tactile fabrics eg, space, thermo sheet or off-cuts of coloured lycra or fur fabric to pull, stroke, wring, hide under, etc
- graduated squeezums -wooden rack with various size and colour wooden or memory foam sandwich inserts or simple memory foam or an eggserciser, to encourage grasps and in-hand strength with tactile and proprioceptive qualities
- wooden grooved maze-with Perspex cover and magnet slider inserts (that can't be cast away) to promote fine motor pincer grasp development

### Activities to improve the sensory awareness of both hands

- Finger painting or any form of messy play. Use a stable seat with tray or desktop to enhance sitting and attention skills
- Sand or bean tray to rummage around in and find interesting objects hidden inside
- Furry toys with various tactile fabrics or crunchy feel or sound properties

- Use finger puppets to promote hand regard, highlight isolated finger use and explore imaginative play
- Use the 'feely box' full of natural and fun products (loofahs, pine cones, satin ribbon, corks, bottle tops, etc)
- Use big and bright toys against a contrasting background
- Vibrating toys
- Cause and effect toys with push button or posting or lever actions
- Apply stickers on their hands and encourage them to take off and redo
- Use jewellery or clothing to place on or take off independently and promote body awareness
- There are lots of companies where you can find toys and play equipment
- [www.rompa.com](http://www.rompa.com), [www.elc.co.uk](http://www.elc.co.uk), [www.specialneedstoys.com](http://www.specialneedstoys.com)

### **Activities to develop hand strength (working against resistance)**

- Play dough, plasticine or theraputty activities to squeeze roll into different shapes
- Encourage use of a sponges or flannels in the bath to squeeze or wring out
- Squeeze soft balls such as juggling balls or eggsercisers
- Opening containers with screw on lids to find interesting items inside
- Push and pull games such as Lego or Duplo blocks, pop beads, stickle bricks
- Scrunching up paper into balls to throw at target
- Folding heavy paper or card into different shapes
- Squeezing glue or gel pens
- Trigger toys such as water pistols, plant sprayers
- Wind up toys that provide resistance
- Push button toys