

My sensory play box

Age: 4+ Years

Resources:

A box of your choice that your child can safely access and that can easily be cleaned.

Here is a list of items which you might wish to include in your child's sensory play box.

Resistance bands, fabric tunnel, blanket, fidget tool, stress ball, scented playdough, spiky ball, squishy gel toy, harmonica.

Tips:

Vary the items you include to meet the needs of your child. This will help to create a very personal range of activities which you can grow and develop as your child's needs change.

Activity:

Children with vision impairment are continuously working hard to learn about their world. Visual and general fatigue can be challenging and regular breaks are essential. Having a set place to go and special toys and activities which provide a visual break, or tactile experience, give an opportunity to relax and recharge. Regular breaks with 'go-to' activities and stress relieving toys can provide rest and rejuvenation for your child; helping them to maintain their emotional resilience and well-being.

Create a box for your child to go to when they need a break. The toys included in the sensory play box should give your child the opportunity to use the senses other than vision and should be useful in helping to relieve the stress of their day. Use these toys only for rest breaks.

Remember, having a rest may not be sitting quietly, some children benefit from some heavy work – squeezing dough, pushing against a heavy object or pulling against a resistance band. Others may find that sometimes blowing and sucking helps provide different sensory feedback and so rest. For example, blowing bubbles through a straw or playing the harmonica!

Use your **imagination** to make this time fun, adjust to your child's needs and judge when physical or calm activities are best at any one time. A set time each day to enjoy sensory play with no other expectation may be best for your family. Alternatively, reacting to your child's needs and behaviours may be best.

Make the time fun with a set beginning and end. Always give a verbal warning that the time is going to finish soon and when it does, put all of the toys away in the box together.



Notes:

For safety reasons, start the activity by having someone sit or stand behind your child for support until they become confident with their balance.

Please supervise your child at all times while completing any of the activities outlined on this sheet. Stop any activity if your child becomes upset, unwell or you are unsure if you are completing it correctly.

If you would like any further advice or support, please contact the advice line on **0800 7811444** or via email **children@guidedogs.org.uk**