



# Sensory fun!

A toolkit of resources, ideas and approaches for sensory learning at home.



# Introduction

In these unprecedented times we are aware that many families will be self-isolating at home with their children who are sensory learners. We want you to know that we are here to support you and give advice from a distance.

With this in mind, we have put together this toolkit which we hope will help you get through this challenging time. It sets out a suggested routine and provides ideas, resources and lots of links

Stay safe.

Stockport sensory Support Service

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# Setting a routine.

Like all learners, sensory learners love to have a routine. and this will be even more important during this time of change and uncertainty.

I have set this toolkit out so that it follows a basic recommended routine. However it is flexible enough that you can change it around and complete it in a way that suits you, or add other activities you may know your child likes and try a different order within this. Also at this time of isolation it may not be possible to get all you need for the activities so feel free to substitute items

I'm also aware of other commitments that you may have in terms of work and other childcare responsibilities. So the activities can be completed alone as well.

Also, depending on your child's energy levels and whether they have other medical/feeding / physio routines, they can be slotted in at the time required.

Sensory learners need time to process and learn. It is therefore beneficial if you repeat things on a weekly basis, so they are getting used to the activities, and building up anticipation/ preferences.

It is also important for every sensory learner to have some independent time within their day. I have suggested some ideas for this within the toolkit

If it is possible to wear a black top or apron and present activities and resources on top of black paper or cloth, this will help reduce visual clutter, enabling your child to focus more easily. .

# Setting a routine.

The routine I recommend follows the contents page:

Daily scent  
Activity object of reference  
**Let's get active!**  
**Let's get creative!**  
**Let's have some 'me' time**  
**Let's relax!**  
**Let's celebrate!**  
**End of day**

Each key section has a colour with various activities you can choose from.

Below is an example of a daily routine that you may find useful.

**Monday daily scent: Orange**  
**What's happening today?**  
**Let's get active: Wake 'n' shake**  
**Morning activity: Light stim**  
**Relaxation: massage story**  
**'Me' time**  
**Afternoon activity: sensory play**  
**Let's celebrate**  
**End of day:**

# Daily Scent.

## Daily scent:

As sensory learners tap into their senses, it's lovely to have a daily scent, allowing them to associate the scent with the given day. You can easily collect smells from around the house... E.g. perfumes; fruits; spices; herbs; moisturising creams etc. Once you have decided on the smells for the days, make sure they stay the same. You could also make this a joint activity between you and your child, allowing them to demonstrate their preferences.

Monday: 🍊 orange

Tuesday: cinnamon

Wednesday: coffee

Thursday: thyme

Friday: strawberry 🍓 hand cream

Saturday: mint toothpaste

Sunday: chocolate coco powder

.

# What's happening today?

## Activity: Using objects of reference.

Objects of reference are used to help sensory learners know what is happening. They are concrete items that relate to the activity you are about to do. When you state the activity you're about to start, present them with the object of reference, and support as touch and explore.

Below, I give examples you can use when introducing the type of activity to your child. Again, once you have chosen your objects of reference for each activity, make sure you always keep them the same. This builds up recognition anticipation and routine.

**Let's get active !** : A ball / stretchy band

**Let's get creative!** : sensory feely bag

**Let's relax:** a massage roller/ bubbles

**Let's celebrate!** a celebration hat/ headband/ card crown they feel and then placed on their head.

**End of day** : piece of blanket/soft material

# Activities

This next section of the toolkit lists ideas and examples of the different activities you can do for each section of your Child's daily routine.

**Let's get active!**

**Let's get creative!**

**Let's have some 'me' time**

**Let's relax!**

**Let's celebrate!**

**End of day**



# Let's get active!

It is really important for sensory learners to be stimulated as part of their morning routine. It engages their brains and bodies and prepares them for the day ahead. These activities can be adapted to your own child's needs.

The key message is to keep these activities lively, energetic and motivating!

**Have lots of fun together!**

Wake 'n' shake

Jabadao

Dough Disco

# Let's get active!

## Wake 'n' shake

Simply make a playlist of two or three songs from youtube. All need to be upbeat such as:

- Happy (Pharell Williams)
- Wake me up (Avicii)
- Can't stop this feeling (Justin Timberlake)
- Lips are Moving (Megan Trainor)

Support your child to move as much as possible ( arms, legs, head) and if in wheelchair and there is room, spin on the spot and move around. Build up the energy in the room.

Use lots of happy vocals and sing along too!

# Let's get active!

The logo for Jabadao, featuring the word "JABADAO" in blue capital letters with a yellow swoosh underline.

Jabadao is the national centre for movement play. Please visit their website for more information.

<https://www.jabadao.org>

It works best if your child is out on the floor supported by cushions but can be completed in a wheelchair.

You can adapt a session in your home and here is an example:

Collect five different resources eg: a light scarf, a small ball, bubbles, using strips of tissue paper make a little cheer leader pompom. See image below.



# Let's get active!

## JABADAO

Create a playlist from youtube with varying speeds and styles of music and use one resource with each track:

### Example:

- **Uptown Funk ( Bruno Mars )** Whilst track is playing, use the ball to roll over your child's body, tapping over legs and arms, or supporting them to hold it and lifting arms up, to the side etc.
- **Cheerleader (Felix Jaehn)** Whilst track is playing use the pompoms and swish then up and down, over your child's body and again support them to hold and shake them.
- **Lets twist again ( Chubby Checker)** Whilst the track is playing, take your child's hands and complete a light twisting action.
- **Raindrops keep falling on my head ( BJ Thomas)** Whilst track is playing, blow the bubbles and allow to fall on your child as if raindrops.
- **Finish with a calming track: Let her go (Passenger)** and whilst music plays, waft the light scarf over your child's body and face lightly.

# Let's get active!

## Dough Disco

Dough Disco is a fun, activity where children squeeze, squash, mould, shape and poke dough in time to the music. There are lots of examples on youtube of sessions you can look at.

For Sensory learners it is about them being supported to feel the dough and use different actions with their fingers or just to feel it. It supports hand movement and strengthens hands and fingers.

There are names for each finger that you may want to refer to:

Tom Thumb

Peter Pointer

Toby Tall

Ruby Ring

Baby Small

All you need is four music tracks on You Tube and a ball of play dough or salt dough ( you can make form the list at back of toolkit)

# Let's get active!

## Dough Disco

**Here is an example:**

**Track one:** Mission impossible Theme tune: Whilst track is playing support your child to feel the dough between their fingers

**Track two:** Circle of life (The Lion King) : Whilst music is playing support your child to roll the dough or feel it in their palms in the shape of a ball/circle

**Track three:** Cotton Eyed Joe (Starsound) Whilst music playing support your child to poke each finger into the dough

**Track four :** Sail away (David Gray) whilst track is playing support your child to your child to press the dough with back and front of hands alternately

# Let's get creative!

The aim of the next selection of activities is to build on and develop skills including:

- fine motor skills
- sensory preferences
- sensory tolerances
- hand/ eye coordination
- choice making
- anticipation

# Let's get creative!

## Sensory feely bags:

These are great for children to explore with you or during an independent time. It is great to make them with your child too so that they can feel everything that you are putting in them

Use clear food bags or Ziplock bags and, tape it across as well to ensure no leaks!

The following are examples but once you have the base liquid you can add all sorts of different objects or cut up card pieces, pieces of shaped foil, shells etc.

### 1) baby oil

lots of baby oil first

Few drops of blue food coloring

Blue shiny stones

Blue glitter

Add a few drops of water ( to try and keep like a lava lamp look)

### 2) Blue hair gel

Lots of hair gel

Blue glitter

Cut up fish ( any color) out of card





# Let's get creative!

## Sensory feely bags:

3) Clear gel

Lots of gel

Green glitter

Other shapes from collage glitter pot

4) Clear gel

Lots of gel

Red glitter

Google eyes

Glitter string



You can also store these bags in the fridge and having them cold adds to the sensor experience

# Let's get creative!

## Texture balloons

These are easy to make and provide a great sensory experience . Really good for strengthening hand and finger muscles.

- Balloons
- Fillers: Sand, Salt, Cornstarch, Marbles, Play Dough, Rice,
- Air pump or a good set of lungs
- Funnel



Texture Balloons



# Let's get creative!

## **Sensory stories**

Sensory stories are a great way to spend quality time with your child. Through repetitive and simple scripts, they tell a story using all the senses including movement, smell, taste, touch, sight. In this way, a child can access the story in the best way that suits them. Sensory stories encourages skills including positive listening, anticipation, choice making and shared experiences.

At the back of this toolkit there is a list of websites where you can download scripts and add your own resources.

# Let's have some '*me*' time.

Having some independent '*me*' time is really important. Sensory learners also need time on their own to feel independence and have time to just '*be*'

The following activities can be adapted and very much depend on your child's abilities. The aim is to choose things that they can access on their own without any intervention from yourself.

# Let's have some 'me' time.

- Having ipad/tablet/phone in easy reach, using a sensory cause and effect touch app ( please look at lists at back of toolkit) that your child can access easily themselves by touching. If you have a TV you can put app on the screen and lie your child down on their side so that they can look at use their arms, hands , feet to touch the screen.
- Tying toys/bells/ shakers etc in front of your child so that they can grasp out for them. Always have them presented in the same order.
- Having 2/3 noisy toys or cause and effect toys in front of your child within easy reach they can access. Again try to put them in the same place each time so that they get used to where each is positioned.
- Allow your child to listen to two short clips from music artists that you know they like and say ( **“Child's name. You choose...** (Play small clip of one again) **OR** (play small clip of other one) **You may already use symbols with your child or other forms of communication aids but if not just watch closely for any vocals or expressions, body language that show preferences. Repeat regularly.**

# Let's have some '*me*' time.

Some stories online that are great to listen to:

## Storyline Online

[https://www.youtube.com/user/Storyline  
Online](https://www.youtube.com/user/StorylineOnline)

The story time family

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvd  
UKabPU](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvdUKabPU)

Toadstools and Fairy dust

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCU  
oyp4uaOPKb2aWybd7XKiw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUoyp4uaOPKb2aWybd7XKiw)

Animated children's books

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpl  
FBuCpJRJeYTrB2sGGGqw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCplFBuCpJRJeYTrB2sGGGqw)

# Let's have some '*me*' time.

Some stories online that are great to listen to:

Illuminated films

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC12bW2PEn1Ot-arl\\_ZaPrFQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC12bW2PEn1Ot-arl_ZaPrFQ)

Caterpillar Shoes | Sweet rhyming bedtime story for kids!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYa6OLQHrEc>

Room on the Broom Oscar Nominated 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWB0goTWZic>

# Let's relax .

As well as being stimulated and being active it is very important for sensory learners to have relaxation time.



# Let's relax .

## **Massage Story**

The idea is to speak quietly and take your time to read each line of the script and complete the massage movement. You may want to repeat each line.

Take your time.

Turn the lighting down.

You may want to put some very quiet relaxing music on in the background too or just keep the room silent.

Using any body cream or oil, work through this story and the massage movements that go with it.

# Let's relax .

## The grey cheeky squirrel

'Oh look Jack' said Mum 'The birds need feeding. Can you do it today?'

'Ok Mum' replied Jack.

Jack opened the back door and felt the fine rain on his face (lightly touch your child all over with fluttering fingers depicting the rain)

He grabbed the round tin of bird seed (Make soft circular movements depicting the circular tin)

And then he walked over to the bird table (Place the flat of your hand on your child's body and pat up and down depicting walking steps)

He opened the tin of bird seed squeezing the lid off (Place both hands on top of your child's shoulders and gently squeeze and release. Repeat this gentle squeezing several times)

As he poured the seeds into the bird feed, he noticed a large grey squirrel jumping from a tree towards him' (With both hands working at the same time, place the pads of your fingers and thumbs on your child's body and gently squeeze your fingers and thumbs together and lift off quickly to depict jumping. )

# Let's relax .

'Oh no you don't!' exclaimed Jack as the squirrel landed by the tin of birdfeed.

(With both hands held in loosely clenched fists and with hands moving one after another gently drum all over your child's body or back depicting the squirrel landing).

But the cheeky squirrel with its sharp claws....

(Place both hands in the shape of claws with fingers slightly bent and fingers slightly ridged and move across child's body staying in contact with them depicting the squirrels claws. )

...used its teeth to quickly grab the tin of seeds and then ran up a tree, squealing with delight as it went!

(Place the palm of your hands at the end of each of your child's arm and move gently up depicting the squirrel running up the tree.)

Jack shook his head as he saw the cheeky squirrel in the tree munching away at all the seeds. (support your child's head and gently move it left and right)

I'll catch you next time! Shouted Jack

# Let's celebrate!

This is a wonderful part of the day and should really be encouraged. It is a time for you and your child to reflect on what you have done together and what they have achieved.

# Let's celebrate!

How ever you choose to celebrate the day it is important that you repeat the same every time to build anticipation and excitement.

## **Here is an example of a celebration session:**

- Put on youtube 'Celebrate good times' Kool and Gang
- Support your child if needed to move their arms in the air and move to the music....Use lots of happy vocals and sounds.
- Explain that it is time to celebrate the successes and achievements of the day.
- Allow them to feel their crown/hat/hairband and place on their head.
- Use shredded paper to sprinkle over them as if celebration confetti.
- Then share their successes and cheer. ( you can also use cheering soundbite on youtube with crowd cheering)

# End of day.

It is important to mark the end of the learning day like they would do at school.

After celebration you could simply place a cosy blanket over your child, dim the lights and allow them to listen to some relaxing music to signify the end.

# Additional Activities .

## Light Stimulation session

Completing these activities with lights off in a room or even just placing a dark sheet/blanket over an umbrella so you can put above your child's head to create darkened area. Remember to not shine light directly into your child's eyes. Usually 15 minutes is long enough as your child can tire easily during this activity.

Just having any glow/fairy tree lights, torches or light up toys or lights on your mobile you may have in this darkened area will encourage any vision.

You can also use one of the sensory apps ( listed at end of this toolkit) and have it on so that the colours and lights can be moved around the area.

## Awareness of Light and Dark

Use a torch, switch light on and off, making no sound, you can depress switch gently.

## Gaze

Reflect torch into mirror say 'can you see yourself?' angle the mirror so that it reflects onto face and repeat any vocalisations back to child

## Reach and grasp

Hold some beads in front of your child, shine torch onto them and ask "Where are the beads?" Encourage reaching and grasping, if child looks, give beads to them, rattle beads to get their attention if necessary, give lots of praise. Instead of beads you can use anything shiny that you have...tinfoil, jewellery, saucepan lids.

# Sensory recipies .

## **SALT DOUGH**

4 cups of salt 1 cup of corn flour  
Water

1. Mix salt and corn flour in pan
2. Add enough water to form a paste.
3. Cook over medium heat stirring constantly

## **Sand dough**

1 cup sand  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup corn flour  $\frac{3}{4}$   
cup hot water

Mix ingredients in pan 2. Cook,  
until very thick. 3. Let models  
dry in sun for 12 hours



# Sensory recipies .

## **Modelling Dough**

**2 cups salt 1 cup corn flour 1  
cup warm water**

**Mix in pan on a low heat. 2.  
Model. 3. leave to harden or  
cook on low heat.**

## **Corn Flour Dough**

**1 cup corn flour 1 cup warm water  
1 tbs oil**

**1. Mix in pan, cook until thick. 2.  
Makes a smooth dough.**

# Sensory recipies .

## **Cloud Dough**

8 parts flour 1 part baby oil

Mix together, it will be soft yet holds together like wet sand

Add a splash of food colouring

## **Goop**

1 cup corn flour Water

1. Put corn flour in tray/ bowl 2. Slowly add water until runny but malleable

Let children play with corn flour before adding water. Add colouring and peppermint or vanilla essence for smell. Use instant custard powder- no need to add smell or colour Cloud

# Useful sensory apps.

Here is a list of apps:  
(free unless cost shown)

- Heatpad
- BrainWorks ( has an inbuilt timer which can be good too)
- Miracle Modus
- Dropophone
- Wa Kingyo goldfish pond
- Fireworks arcade
- Pocket pond
- Fluidity
- Balloon animals (cost 1.99)
- Peeping musicians ( costs 2.29)
- Somantics
- Ooze
- Otsimo
- Black and White ( From BabyShapes 0.99)
- Popping bubbles
- Sensory plazma
- Magic Fluids
- Touch follow
- Sensory Magma
- Sensory just touch
- Sensory Electra
- Sensory imeba

<http://www.sensoryapphouse.com>

# Useful sensory story links.

Below is a list of useful websites that you can copy or print off sensory story scripts from and then add your own resources.

- Bag Books [www.bagbooks.org](http://www.bagbooks.org): download some scripts and add your own resources!
- [Kickstarter.com](http://www.kickstarter.com)
- <http://jo.element42.org> ( The Sensory projects)
- [Mencap.org.uk](http://Mencap.org.uk) ( Create your own sensory story in 7 steps ) They have: We are going on a Bear Hunt to download
- [www.sparklebox.co.uk](http://www.sparklebox.co.uk)
- [www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)
- TES have some sensory stories you can download: eg: Autumn Winter Sensory story <https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/autumn-winter-sensory-story-11793497>
- TalkSense Sensory stories : theory and practice: <https://talksense.weebly.com/sensory-stories.html>
- Sensory story resources (video) how to create a sensory story  
<https://learninghub.royalblind.org/course/view.php?id=78>
- Sensory stories-Greenside School  
[www.greenside.Herts.sch.uk/Creative/SensoryStories/SensoryStories.html](http://www.greenside.Herts.sch.uk/Creative/SensoryStories/SensoryStories.html)
- The Sensory Story Downloads from [Teacherspayteachers.com](http://Teacherspayteachers.com)  
( free) The Tiny Seed/ Kitty's Dinner/Rainy Day
- SEN sensory stories resources on Twinkl:  
<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/special-educational-needs/sen-sensory/sen-sensory-stories>

# Useful sensory activity links .

- Help Kids Learn. Offering a free trial period.  
<https://www.helpkidzlearn.com/updates/school-closure.html>

## Further website for parents

<https://www.positiveeye.co.uk/general-news/activity-shares-for-families-and-professionals-covoid19/>