

Sensational Activities!

Improving Your Child's Behavior and Learning Through a Sensory Diet

Ryan E. Winn, OTR/L

Occupational Therapist, Registered/Licensed

CVHA Homeschool Conference

February 11, 2012

I. Introduction to the 7 Senses

A. You are the experts already: How do you calm a baby?

- List strategies

B. These strategies stimulate the 7 Senses to Regulate

1. Taste
2. Smell
3. Touch
4. Deep Touch and Body Sense/Proprioception
5. Movement and Balance/Vestibular
 - i. Semi-Circular Canals filled w/ endolymph fluid that moves the cilia or hair cells to sense movement/direction
 - ii. Utricle and Saccule are otolith organs that use stones and fluid to stimulate hair cells to determine direction of the head; up and down movement
6. Sound
7. Sight

- C. Take this knowledge and apply it to children and adults for learning

II. Sensory Integration or Sensory Processing

1. Ayres: “Sensory Integration is the organization of sensation for use.”
2. Traffic lights direct flow of traffic (bits of sensory information)
3. Ayres: “When sensations flow in a well-organized or integrated manner, the brain can use those sensations to form perceptions, behaviors, and learning. When the flow of sensations is disorganized, life can be like a rush-hour traffic jam.”
4. Ayres said that proper processing of sensation leads to the end products of higher levels skills like
 - Concentration
 - Organization
 - Self-Esteem
 - Self-control
 - Academic learning
 - Abstract reasoning

III. Arousal and Self-Regulation

1. Arousal is how alert we feel.
2. Self-Regulation is the ability to attain, maintain, and change arousal appropriately for task or situation.
3. Many things affect our Regulation and Arousal state:
 - Sleep/Wake
 - Hunger/Thirst
 - Bowel/Bladder
 - Pain/Temperature

- Respiration
- Sensory Processing

IV. Ways to Regulate

1. Take care of our regulatory functions
2. Use Alert Program/Sensory Diets (Bottom Up Approach)
3. Top Down Approach and Other Strategies

V. 1. Take Care of the Regulatory Functions

VI. 2. Alert Program and Sensory Diets

1. Identifying “Engine” Speeds

- Low, High, and Just Right
- Identify patterns of engine speeds

2. Experiment with Methods to Change Engine Speeds

- Sensory Motor Preference Checklist
- Sensory needs/difficulties/preferences/hyper or hypo-sensitivities
- Environmental Changes
- Learning Adaptations
-

3. Regulate Engine Speeds

• Establish and Maintain a “Sensory Diet”

1. Just as your child needs food throughout the course of the day, his need for sensory input must also be met. A “sensory diet” (coined by OT Patricia Wilbarger) is a carefully designed, personalized activity

plan that provides the sensory input a person needs to stay focused and organized throughout the day

- **Create a “menu” from the 7 senses**

1. Put something in your mouth
2. Move/Heavy Work (vestibular/proprioceptive)
3. Touch
4. Look
5. Listen
6. Smell

- **Plan for “meals” and/or “snacks”**

- **Refine your diet**

- **Occupational Therapy**

- **Therapeutic Listening**

VII. 3. Top Down Approach and Other Strategies

1. **Schedule/Visual Schedules**
2. **Create and meet expectations; Time Timer**
3. **Meet emotional needs**
4. **Herbs, Essential Oils**
5. **Behavioral Strategies**

VIII. Case Studies

IX. Questions

X. Resources:

1. www.Sensorysmarts.com
How to Raise a Sensory Smart Child by Lindsey Biel, OTR/L and Nancy Peske, foreword by Dr. Temple Grandin
2. www.out-of-sync-child.com

The Out-of-Sync Child by Carol Kranowitz

3. www.spdfoundation.net
Sensory Processing Foundation
Information, Education, and Parent Connections etc.
4. www.southpawenterprises.com
Sensory Equipment (also Google sensory equipment)
5. www.alertprogram.com
How Does Your Engine Run? A Leader's Guide to The Alert Program for Self-Regulation by Mary Sue Williams and Sherry Shellenberger
6. www.vitallinks.net
Therapeutic Listening
7. www.timetimer.com
Time Timer (also available for purchase on www.amazon.com)
8. www.cpdusu.org
Utah State University Center for Persons with Disabilities
Up-to-3 Early Intervention
Clinical Services
(Includes Occupational Therapy Services)
9. <http://intermountainhealthcare.org/hospitals/logan/services/rehabilitation/pages/cachekidspediatricrehab.aspx>
Logan Regional Pediatric Rehabilitation
(Occupational Therapy Services)