



## *Growing Healthy Children* *Pediatric Occupational Therapy*

### Sensory Chores at Home

Here are some ideas for incorporating proprioceptive activities into your student's home chores!

- Wash the table and wipe down the counters.
- Wash the windows.
- Help push the chairs in and out of the dining room when mopping.
- Empty the waste baskets or take out the trash bag.
- Move items from room to room by putting them in a laundry basket and pushing the basket.
- Carry appropriately heavy books back to put them on the shelf.
- Push the cart at the grocery store (put a case of water in for a ride).
- Push laundry baskets to the laundry area.
- Move wet laundry from washer to dryer.
- Rake leaves.
- Vacuum.
- Help move furniture.
- Digging or shoveling in the yard.
- Puffing up the pillows on everyone's bed.
- Pulling weeds.
- Be the "door opener"

## Sensory Snacks

The muscles in the jaw have a quick connection to the brain. So they get proprioceptive information to the brain fast and with a strong signal. The student could also have special sensory snacks waiting for them in the office and they could eat the snack there.

- Let the child chew gum (just tell the other students that this student needs it to focus)
- Suck water out of the sport top water bottles.
- Chewy breaks: licorice, chewy candy, soft pretzels, bagels
- Crunchy foods: dry cereal, vegetables, pretzels, popcorn
- Use a straw for snack: eat applesauce, pudding, jello through a straw

## Whole Class Tasks

Sometimes the whole class needs to stop what they are doing and refocus. Use that time efficiently by incorporating one of these quick break activities into your day. The activity in the brain has been shown to increase after 2 minutes of proprioceptive tasks.

- “Hold up the wall”- have all the students go and push up the wall.
- “Seat push-ups.” Place hands on the seat with fingers over the side and push body off the seat 30 times.
- Take a five minute Playground Break: Choices could include monkey bars, climb up a ladder, rock climbing walls, swing while pumping with your legs, push a truck through the sand, or play hopscotch.
- Get on tiptoes and thunk down on heels 20 times.
- Power walking, marching in place or while seated. Sing the “Going on a Bear Hunt” song.
- Contract and relax: Tighten a group of muscles for 10 seconds and then relax the muscles. Start with your face muscles and work down to your feet.
- Shake your sillies out! Shake out your body: start with shoulders, then move to your arms, hands, fingers, waist, legs, and out your toes!
- Animal walk relays: crab, bear, rabbit, frog, bird, penguin

Attached are a couple more great sensory activities from Brain Gym.



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### Sensory Suggestions for Preschool

#### Why use sensory strategies?

At least 1 in 20 typically-developing children need help paying attention and completing work because their bodies do not process information from their senses the way everyone else does. Classroom noises may distract them, the tag in their shirt may drive them crazy, or the artwork around the room may just be too much. For other children with sensory processing disorder (SPD), they can't sit still in their chair, they constantly hum, or they bump into everyone in line. These children can learn better and not distract other students when given some tools to help regulate how their brains are registering the sensory information all around them.

#### How can I help?

Research has shown that, through many pathways in the body, Proprioceptive information helps organize the body's registering of different sensory information. Proprioception is the perception of sensation from the muscles and joints telling us when our muscles are contracting or stretching, and when our joints are bending, extending, or being pulled or compressed. This information enables the brain to know where each part of the body is and how it is moving. Proprioceptive input can also help decrease or increase the "volume" of the other sensory information coming in.

### The Tools

#### Classroom Chores

No one wants to look different, so we need to be careful to incorporate sensory strategies into normal classroom routines. Most classes have chore charts, so these new jobs won't seem odd at all. Just assign these jobs to your students that are having a hard time focusing, staying on task, and getting their work done.

- Wash the desks
- Erase the board
- Place the chairs on the desks at the end of the day/take the chairs off the desks in the morning
- Empty the waste baskets
- Fill small boxes with books to move to other locations and then move the books
- Carry appropriately heavy book back to the shelf after story time
- Be the "door opener"

#### Circle Time Strategies

- Define the space the wiggly student needs to stay in with a special rug, rocking chair, or bean bag chair. Students could all take turns sitting on these special seats or the teacher could ask children to sit in them as they become wigglier.
- Take movement breaks a couple of times during opening and closing. See attached Brain Gym activities and class cheers for ideas. These activities work on motor planning at the same time. Songs are also a great time to get up and move as well. Or take a animal walk break and have children walk around the circle as a bear, crab, penguin, etc.
- Have noise-reducing headphones available for children to choose to wear. These can be found in therapy catalogs or hardware stores and greatly reduce the distractions for students.
- Play soft music in the background such as Gregorian Chant or Baroque Era classical music. The songs with a tempo of 60 beats per less naturally calm down students while turning on their brains.

## Sensory Snacks

The muscles in the jaw have a quick connection to the brain. So they get proprioceptive information to the brain fast and with a strong signal. Keep sensory snacks in mind when you are planning snacks for all the students or send a letter home letting parents know about sensory snacks if parents take turns bringing in snack. The student could also have special sensory snacks set aside for them to eat throughout the day.

- Suck water out of the sport top water bottles. Or give the children a straw to drink their water (the longer, thinner, and loopier the straw, the more resistance).
- Chewy foods: licorice, chewy candy, soft pretzels, bagels, dried fruit, beef jerky, granola bars.
- Crunchy foods: dry cereal, vegetables, pretzels, popcorn, fresh veggies.
- Use a straw for snack: eat applesauce, pudding, or jello through a straw.

## Whole Class Tasks

Sometimes the whole class needs to stop what they are doing and refocus. Use this time efficiently by incorporating one of these quick break activities into the school day. The activity in the brain has been shown to increase after 2 minutes of proprioceptive tasks calming students down and helping with their motor planning.

- "Hold up the wall"- have all the students go and push up the wall.
- "Seat push-ups." Place hands on the seat with fingers over the side and push body off the seat 30 times.
- Take a five minute Playground Break: Choices could include monkey bars, climb up a ladder, rock climbing walls, swing while pumping with your legs, push a truck through the sand, or play hopscotch.
- Get on tiptoes and thunk down on heels 20 times.
- Power walking, marching in place or while seated. Sing the "Going on a Bear Hunt" song.
- Contract and relax: Tighten a group of muscles for 10 seconds and then relax the muscles. Start with your face muscles and work down to your feet.
- Shake your sillies out! Shake out your body: start with shoulders, then move to your arms, hands, fingers, waist, legs, and out your toes!
- Animal walk relays: crab, bear, rabbit, frog, bird, penguin

## Oral Motor Ideas

Incorporating activities that require blowing into your craft projects and music time helps students develop their respiratory muscles, which are also the muscles for good posture. So while you are having fun, children can work on developing strong muscles and become more organized by sending increased proprioceptive information to the brain at the same time.

- Bubbles
- Balloons
- whistles/slide whistlesicon
- "Snake"/blower party favors
- Make splatter paintings (use thin paint on paper... blow air through a straw and watch the paint move! can also use chocolate pudding thinned with milk on freezer paper)
- Blopens
- Blow tropical fish bubbles in a bowl of water
- Kazoos, whizzers, and other noise makers



## **Sensory Ideas: Increasing Proprioceptive Input**

### **What is Proprioception?**

Proprioception is the perception of sensation from the muscles and joints telling us when our muscles are contracting or stretching, and when our joints are bending, extending, or being pulled or compressed. This information enables the brain to know where each part of the body is and how it is moving.

### **Why increase Proprioceptive input?**

- Understanding where the body is in space directly affects many aspects of handwriting: posture; stability of the wrist, elbow, and shoulder; coordinated small movements of the fingers in connection with the visual information.
- These activities also help organize the body's registering of different sensory information. If a child is wiggling in their chair or slouching as they complete their work, the child is not successfully modulating vestibular input. Proprioceptive exercises help the brain use vestibular information more effectively.

### **Proprioceptive Activities**

These heavy work activities include pushing, pulling, lifting and carrying.

1. Play "backpacking" and place bags of bean or rice in a child size backpack. Pretend to climb mountains and jumping off rocks.
2. Helping with Chores: Push the cart at the grocery store, bring in the groceries, vacuum the floor, mow the lawn, wash the windows or tabletop, push or carry the clothesbasket, rake the leaves, or shovel snow.
3. On the Playground: Monkey bars, climb up a ladder, rock climbing walls, swing while pumping with your legs, push a trunk through the sand. Play hopscotch.
4. Have a pillow fight 😊
5. Do 10 deep knee bends.
6. "Seat push-ups." Place hands on the seat with fingers over the side and push body off the seat 30 times.
7. Get on tiptoes and thunk down on heels 20 times.
8. Jump on a mini-trampoline.
9. Power walking, marching in place or while seated. Sing the "Going on a Bear Hunt" song.
10. Play tug of war and pull each other into a pile of pillows or blankets.
11. Take the cushions off the couch and gather up pillows to make a pile to climb over.
12. Stretch your muscles.

13. Contract and relax: Tighten a group of muscles for 10 seconds and then relax the muscles. Start with your face muscles and work down to your feet.
14. Make a burrito by wrapping your child up in a blanket.
15. Make a hamburger with your child in between 2 pillows: squeeze their arms and legs while pretending to put ketchup, mustard, and relish on the hamburger.
16. Shake your sillies out! Shake out your body: start with shoulders, then move to your arms, hands, fingers, waist, legs, and out your toes!
17. Fun with boxes: Make a train of boxes with stuffed animals inside, a stuffed animal parade, or make a tunnel with a lot of boxes and crawl through.
18. Animal walks: crab, bear, rabbit, frog, bird, penguin.
19. Hugs, Hugs, and more Hugs! Give your child a huge hug! Dance to music and when the music stops, give each other a hug ☺
20. Hot Lava: take the cushions off the couch and scatter them on the floor. Roll up towels to make bridges between the cushions. Run from island to island but don't fall in the lava!
21. Make sand: Use broken bricks or soft rocks to make sand by putting them in a coffee can with a lid, taping it shut, and then shaking it!
22. Blanket Parachute: Stand around the edges of a blanket and hold the corners. Raise up and down to make waves or put a teddy bear inside the blanket and bounce the bear.
23. Blanket Chariot: Have your child sit on one side of the blanket and pull them around the room. Or put stuffed animals or a younger sibling on one side and have your child pull them (adult supervision suggested when pulling younger sibling ☺)

Information gathered from Sensory Integration and the Child by Jean Ayres, Starting Sensory Integration Therapy by Bonnie Arnwine, and from lots of wise occupational therapists ☺

More great Sensory Resources available on-line at:

<http://www.sensory-processing-disorder.com>

[www.sensorysmarts.com](http://www.sensorysmarts.com)

<http://www.spdfoundation.net/>



## Creating a Calming Sensory Environment

### The Visual environment:

- Provide different sources of lighting!! Many children (and adults) get visually over- or underwhelmed by florescent lighting. Think of the classroom as you would want your home living room to feel in terms of lighting. Having 3 levels of lighting creates a calming and visually inviting environment: a desk lamp (that is below the eye level) in the corner, a wall lamp or pillar light (at or above eye level) and an overhead light (above eye level). Having the options allows you to change the environment as you see fit. Most children calm down after recess or physical activity if the overhead fluorescents are turned off. And don't forget to optimize natural light as much as possible by keeping windows clear of papers, etc. or filter the light if it is strong.
- Provide visually consistent spaces within the classroom: put manipulatives all in one color of box or with one color label, have the classroom schedule for the day in the same place, in a visually uncomplicated manner. One really successful schedule had a clock face next to each segment of the day (typed up in bold print and laminated). This allowed the children to associate the time on the classroom clock with the scheduled activity. If the activities change in time, the laminated card can be moved and affixed with Velcro. But the schedule is clear and consistent, and always at the front of the room.
- Hang artwork, visually distracting items and pictures at the *back* of the classroom, not from the ceiling, or above or near the white/chalk board where children need to attend to the teacher or the subject matter.
- For primary grades: provide a letter guide on the desk or on a side wall, not over the white board.
- Almost all children are farsighted until age 5, and the eyes do not mature until age 10-11. Make sure the letter guides on the desk are large enough type to be useful.
- Provide a visual countdown timer for clear visual identification of the time left in each particular activity. This helps children segment their day, and allow them to self-regulate their attention to the task at hand. Note: Limit the use of a countdown timer for those children that can be obsessive about watching how much time is left.
- Limit clutter.
- Be a visual detective: are the homework pages or workbook pages visually cluttered or easy to navigate? Do the kids work better listing spelling words horizontally or vertically? Can you allow them to choose? Are the pages you are passing out visually distorted, have extraneous marks on them, over-copied, is the type faint or missing?
- Allow the use of desk partitions for those children that cannot screen out visual stimuli.
- Try a "reading window" to help kids block out all text but the line they are reading. The window can be cut out of cardboard, and can have a tinted plastic film (usually pale yellow or orange), similar to a highlighter.
- Provide a visual example (step by step is most effective) before asking children to complete an activity. This sounds simple, but is often overlooked. Visual learning is more effective than verbal learning. Many younger children cannot visually break down a craft or assembly activity into its component parts without first seeing it done.

## The Auditory Environment:

- Limit extraneous noise. For instance, the child with hypersensitivity to sounds can be really distracted by the filter in a fish tank, the sound of a squeaky hinge on the door, the sound of chairs scraping against the floor, or the sound of wind whistling through a cracked window pane. Be a sound detective: have someone else sit at the back of your room and note noises that can be altered or that are distracting.
- Provide "white noise" where appropriate. If children are doing independent reading/writing, allow the use of noise cancelling headphones without music to block out extraneous noises. Some teachers appropriately use nature soundtracks or soft classical music, at different times, to facilitate relaxation. Note: be judicious in use of background noise, different children may react differently to the type of sounds chosen.
- Provide children who are unable to block out sounds with earplugs to use during work time or stations, on the playground, or in assemblies/lunchtime.
- Seat children with noise sensitivities away from very verbal children or sounds that they might focus on (like the fish tank).
- Limit yelling. This sounds very silly, but is fundamental. Most teachers who rarely raise their voice have calmer and quieter classrooms. Some very effective teachers speak very softly so that children MUST focus their attention in order to hear.

## The Oral-Motor and Olfactory Environment:

This area is difficult to integrate into the classroom, but many children have oral motor or olfactory needs that distract them from learning. The child who chews the erasers off pencils, chews the pencil wood, mouths clothing, drools, bites others, puts everything in the mouth, or smells everything they touch cannot possibly pay full attention to learning while seeking out the sensory input. The mouth is one of our first areas of sensory fulfillment and certain children (and adults) get a lot out of the sensations that come from tasting, chewing and smelling.

- There are certain smells that are universally calming (like vanilla), and can be used successfully in the classroom. Unlit candles, room sprays, reed diffusers can be tried.
- Oral motor activities can function to promote calming (sweet tastes, sucking, and chewy soft foods like licorice), or can be stimulating or alerting (crunchy foods, cold foods, bitter/spicy/sour tastes).
- Provide alternatives to chewing behaviors - provide a Chewy Tube, piece of plastic aquarium tubing, small hard candies (sugar free).
- Some classrooms can successfully add allowance of gum chewing if very well supervised with strict guidelines (gum gets spit out before leaving the classroom, no bubble blowing, no overly distracting popping or chewing).

## The Physical Environment:

Providing opportunities for proprioceptive and vestibular needs in the classroom requires educators to constantly think "out of the box":

- Provide alternatives to prolonged times sitting in a chair - children with gravitational insecurities will be more comfortable on the floor.
- Those with proprioceptive needs will concentrate better if they are getting the whole body input that comes from lying on their tummies on the floor. Have a couple of beanbag chairs, or a "reading tent" available to cocoon the child.



- Take frequent movement breaks during the day!! Children that need and seek movement are not able to attend to task if they are required to sit and concentrate for more than a 15 minute period. It is not uncommon to see classrooms that have 40 minutes of letter/spelling time at desktop, followed by 20 minutes of reading at the desk. That is 60 Minutes without moving! Divide the time up and be creative! During spelling, have everyone stand and make the letters in the air with the whole arm (getting proprioceptive and vestibular input, and reinforcing the letter motor plan through stimulation of the large joint receptors in the shoulders). Have the students sit under their desks, or lie on their tummy to read.
- Provide a rocking chair or two in the classroom for the child that needs the movement to calm or to stay focused (for primary grades, make sure the child's feet can touch the floor)
- Use creative means to get the whole class ready to settle to learn or take tests: do a Brain Gym activity for 3 minutes before taking a test, march in place, stretch, do yoga moves for a few minutes.
- Provide opportunities for "heavy work" throughout the day for the children who need the input through the joints and muscles. This can be lifting or stacking, pushing a heavy cart, transferring a few reams of paper to and from the office daily, stacking chairs, etc. Providing *regular* doses (e.g. once every 2 hours) of heavy work can really help some children attend while seated at the desk.
- Do activities that provide deep pressure: roll the child into a foam yoga mat like a burrito, have children crawl through a tube of stocking material (sweatshirt ribbing). Wear a weighted vest (not heavier than 10% of child's body weight), use a weighted blanket or a hull/husk roll on the lap, ask a therapist how to do joint compressions.
- Use alternative behavior strategies versus taking away recess. This cannot be stressed enough, as children will most often "self-help" while playing at recess. The child who is tackling kids on the field most likely is seeking proprioceptive input. Putting him on the bench to sit out the recess will not help him find more constructive and less injurious ways to get the stimuli. Have him instead do 25 push ups, carry a heavy item to and from the outfield, run laps, do jumping jacks, throw a weighted medicine ball into a sand pit, etc. Similarly, the child that is gravitationally insecure may avoid the play structure, but may get some benefit walking on an uneven surface, like tanbark.
- Allow alternatives to sitting at a desk. Some kids concentrate much better standing. Allow them an area to tape the paper to the wall and do the work standing up. Provide one standing station that has a time limit (e.g. 10 minutes) for *any* child to use to read, do math at, etc. An old podium works great.
- Preserve our children's swings! Children get a lot of positive benefits from swinging, and it can be alerting or calming, and can address many needs (visual, tactile, movement) all at one time.
- Consider alternatives to chairs - a T-stool has a seat and a single leg. They are very inexpensive to construct and every classroom would benefit from having at least one. Children balance very nicely while reading and doing work, while getting movement, proprioceptive input and trunk stimulation while sitting. Also consider having a deflated beach ball or Sissel or air- or gel-filled seat in the classroom that provides vestibular input during seated tasks. A therapy ball can be used as well, but bouncing on it may prove too stimulating for some children.
- Provide alternatives to sitting in cross-legged fashion on the floor during circle time. This position may be difficult for the low-tone child, or one with poor body awareness. Allow straight legged sitting, side lying, or even supine or prone during listening time. Children who struggle to maintain a body position are not able to use the auditory system effectively.

## Resources and References:

The sections of text that define sensory integration and its components were adapted from:

Building Bridges through Sensory Integration. Ellen Yack and Paula Aquilla, Shirley Sutton. 2002. Sensory Resources. ISBN-13:978-1-93615-12-9 [www.SensoryResources.com](http://www.SensoryResources.com)

Other resources for classroom ideas and sensory materials:

The Out of Sync Child has Fun. Carol Kranowitz. 2003. The Berkley Publishing Group. ISBN: 0-399-52843. [www.Out-of-sync-child.com](http://www.Out-of-sync-child.com)

The Sensory Tool Chest for Teachers, Parents and Students. Henry Occupational Therapy Services, Inc. 2001. [www.ateachabout.com](http://www.ateachabout.com)

Abilitations Catalog: [www.abilitations.com](http://www.abilitations.com)

Pocket full of Therapy, Inc [www.pfot.com](http://www.pfot.com)

Brain Gym International [www.braingym.org](http://www.braingym.org)

Integrations Catalog: [www.integrationscatalog.com](http://www.integrationscatalog.com)

OT Ideas, Inc. [www.otideas.com](http://www.otideas.com)

Sammons Preston Pediatrics [www.sammonspreston.com](http://www.sammonspreston.com)

The Therapy Shoppe, Inc. [www.TherapyShoppe.com](http://www.TherapyShoppe.com)

## Heavy Work Activities for Parents

- Carry heavy items (baskets with cardboard blocks, groceries for Mom, etc.)
- Mop the floors
- Allow child to chew gum, eat chewy or crunchy foods, or sip water from a water bottle with a straw while doing homework
- Push or pull boxes with toys or a few books in it
- Pillow cases with a few stuffed animals in it for weight, pushing or pulling up a ramp, incline or stairs
- Take the cushions off the sofas, vacuum under them, then put them back. Can also climb on them, hide under them, jump and "crash" into them, play sandwich games with them
- Pull other kids around on a sheet or blanket
- Roller skate uphill
- Pull a heavy trash can
- Yard work, including mowing the lawn, raking grass/leaves, pushing wheelbarrow
- Housework including vacuuming and mopping, carrying buckets of water to clean with or to water flowers/plants/trees
- Shovel sand into a wheelbarrow, wheel the wheelbarrow to a spot, dump out sand and use a rake to level it out. (functional for filling in low spots in backyard)
- Pull a friend or heavy items in a wagon
- Push a friend in a wheelbarrow
- Milkshake rewards sipped through a narrow straw
- Suck applesauce through a straw
- Scrub rough surfaces with a brush
- Carrying heavy cushions
- Pillow fights
- Playing in sandbox with damp heavy sand
- Have the child "help" by pushing in chairs to a table or push chairs into table after a meal
- Push a child's cart filled with cans and then put the cans away on a low shelf where the child needs to be in a weight bearing quadruped (on hands and knees) position
- After a bath, parents can squeeze child and rub him/her briskly with a towel
- Use heavy quilts at night and tight flannel pajamas
- Swimming. Also, have child dive after weighted sticks thrown in pool

- Dancing
- Activities such as gymnastics, horseback riding, wrestling, karate
- Bathe the dog
- Wash the car
- Carry the laundry basket
- Sweep, mop, vacuum the floors
- Jump or climb in inner tubes
- Fill up a child's suitcase with heavy items (such as books) and push/pull the suitcase across the room
- When travelling, let child pull own small suitcase on wheels
- Go "shopping" with a child's shopping cart filled with items
- Child can help change the sheets on the bed, then toss the linens down the stairs
- Heavy Work Activities for Parents
- Go "camping" with a heavy blanket pulled across a few chairs. Child can help set up and take down the blanket
- Child can help rearrange his/her bedroom furniture
- Have child put large toys and equipment away
- Wipe off the table after dinner
- Help dust the furniture
- Climbing activities (such as playground equipment)
- Swing from the trapeze bar
- Push against a wall
- Fill up big toy trucks with heavy blocks, push with both hands to knock things down
- Sports activities involving running and jumping
- Two adults can swing child in a sheet. Watch child's face carefully to note when child has had enough
- Have the child color a "rainbow" with large paper on the floor or with sidewalk chalk outside while child is on his/her hands and knees
- Play "cars" under the kitchen table (or table in classroom) where the child pushes the car with one hand while creeping and weight bearing on the other hand
- Hot dog" game where child lies across end of a blanket and is rolled (ends up inside the rolled up blanket with head outside)
- Walk up a ramp or incline
- Use theraband or tubing attached to a door and pull it then let it snap. Supervision necessary.
- Wood projects requiring sanding and hammering

## Heavy Work Activities for School

- Place chairs on desk at the end of the day or take down at the beginning of the day
- Erase or wash the chalkboard
- Help rearrange desks in the classroom
- Help out the janitor with emptying the wastebaskets, mop the floor etc
- Fill box (one that kids can carry) with books to take to other classrooms or library
- Help the gym teacher move mats, hang them up, etc.
- Chew orthodontic rubber bands, when not in mouth put on pencil as a fidget toy
- Sharpen pencils with a manual sharpener
- Cut out items for display from heavy paper
- Have students carry heavy notebooks to the office or from class to class
- Wear fanny pack so that fidget toys and chewy toys are readily available when needed
- Carry books with both hands hugging them the book close to body
- Have child pass out papers/objects to class members
- Wash desks or chalkboard/dry erase board
- Push the lunch cart or carry lunch bin to cafeteria
- Staple paper onto bulletin boards
- Run around the track at school
- Use a beanbag chair in the classroom, allowing child to use it during silent reading time or to lie over or under it during independent work tasks to get a change in position and the benefit of consistent pressure input
- Prior to seat work, have child pinch, roll pull theraputty or squeeze balloons filled with flour
- Give child firm downward pressure on shoulders
- Encourage climbing activities on the playground equipment, running, jumping, ball skills
- Pull -ups or chin-ups on bars
- Push-ups against a wall
- Open doors for people
- Being door holder
- Quiet squeeze toys on lap and under desk so as not to disturb the class
- Sip from water bottle with straw

- Chair push-ups or pull-ups
- Animal walks (crab walk, bear walk, army crawl)
- Rice play, koosh balls, water play, Jell-o play, homemade play dough
- Mini trampoline
- Stack chairs
- Isometric exercise breaks
- Make foot rest of appropriate thickness out of a piece of heavy foam (large enough to punch 2 holes through it to accommodate front chair legs) Child can quietly push into it with feet (kneading like a cat before it lays down)
- Tie a piece of tubing or bungee around front legs of chair that child can push heels against it
- Train: use several sturdy boxes that children can fit in & have other children push each of the box cars
- Push another child in a wheelchair
- Tie end of long fat rope & place knot under door – have children pull selves hand over hand on tummy along rope – set up 2 ropes for a relay race
- Bounce ball, alternating hands, while doing spelling, math facts, counting backwards, etc.
- 2 children pushing on therapy ball from opposite sides – toward each other
- Cut 3 foot lengths of 3/8 inch bungee cord (tie knot in ends for grip) – do various arm & leg stretches. Do while sitting in chair, marching around room to drum or music
- Wearing a weighted backpack when walking from class to class

## Understanding Your Sensory Preferences:

Make an X on the scale of how much sensory input you prefer (1=little to none, 10=lots & intense)

### Visual

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

### Sound

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

### Taste

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

### Smell

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

### Touch

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

### Movement (Vestibular)

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

### Proprioceptive

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

### Overall Energy (Sensory Arousal Level)

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

What sensory strategies do you use?

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