



Addressing Sensory  
Needs Transparently and  
Appropriately within any  
Environment

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School Health

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### Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Identify sensory items which can become transparent within an environment
- Practice techniques which can be used for the sensory benefits of all in any given environment
- Define what makes an item or technique appropriate and recognize items and techniques which are not appropriate

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### Speaker Disclosures

- ***Dr. Raymond T. Heipp is the Senior Specialist for Special Education with School Health and is speaking at the Conference on a voluntary basis. He has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.***

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## Session Abstract

- This session focuses upon creating sensory feedback for individuals appropriately and transparently in any given environment. All too often, environments create the need for sensory breaks and releases without giving some means for them. In other cases, sensory items and techniques are taught in a vacuum with the expectation that they will work in all circumstances. Finally, the outside world incorrectly propagates a one-size-fits all mentality. The reality is that individuals will need differing modes of sensory feedback dependent upon the environment. We will look at socially appropriate therapies which can be included in any environment and are good for all. We will also experience sensory items which can blend into activities naturally without creating external distraction for others.

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## Activity 1

- Greeting
  - Hand placement
  - Compliment
  - Hand claps
  - Reverse Hands
  - Well wish
  - Hand claps




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## Areas of Experience in Daily Life

- Visual
- Auditory
- Tactile
- Proprioceptive
- Vestibular
- Taste-based
- Scent-based
- Emotion-based




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### Mistaking the Environmental Design in Classrooms

- Lighting
- Windows and natural lighting
- Wall colors
- Decorations
- Desks
- Seating
- NOISE



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### Mistaking the Environmental Design in Workplace Settings

- Lighting
- Seclusion
- Temperature
- Wall Colors
- Seating
- Breaks
- NOISE



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### Mistaking the Environmental Design in Therapy Rooms

- Purpose of Room
- Equipment in room
- Privacy
- Distractibility
- NOISE



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## Mistaking the Environmental Design at Home

- Clutter vs Organization
- Sensory Stimulation
- Colors
- Temperature
- Safety and Security
- NOISE



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## Seating

- Adaptive vs Alternative
- Specialized types of seating
- Creating choice
- Room to grow
- Where and when?



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## Activity 2

- Get up out of your seats
  - Stand up
  - Above head clap
  - Circle down
  - Low clap
  - Sit down



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## Stages of Transparency

- Doing it the way its always been done
- Mild discomfort when items removed
- “Are you crazy?”



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## What is Appropriate?

- Need for overall awareness
  - Self
  - Others
- Activating the feedback mechanism
- Matching the situation, not the environment



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## REMEMBER THIS!!

- THERE IS NEVER A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL SOLUTION!!!!



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### Socially Appropriate Fidgets

- Tactile
- Special Color – perhaps
- NO SOUNDS!
- NO LIGHTS!




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### Transferable Tactile Environments

- Specialized Sands
  - Kinetic
  - Sands Alive
- Specialized “Doughs”
  - Mad Mattr
- Putty
  - Theraputty
  - Thinking Putty




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### Weighted Products

- 1/10<sup>th</sup> of Individual’s Body Weight!!!!
- See if it is the weight that is necessary
- Be careful of commercialism
- UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF AN OT!!!




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## Compression Products

- UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF AN OT!!!
- Easy on/off
- Not the same as athletic clothing
- What is the desired feeling?
  - Compression
  - Release



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## Desk Appropriate

- School or Workplace
- Standard Items
  - Rulers
  - Pencil Grips
  - Putty/Mad Mattr
- My Favorites
  - Duct Tape
  - Velcro



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## Activity 3

- Chair Push-ups



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## Sensory Rooms

- Identify the usage
- Identify Constituents
- Identify the needs



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## Calming Room

- Different from a Sensory Room
- Focuses on de-escalation
- Soft lighting
- Comfortable seating
- Soothing Sound\*
- Aroma Therapy\*



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## Sensory Space

- Answer the question – “What is this going to accomplish?”



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