

# PRACTICAL SENSORY SOLUTIONS FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

## MEALTIMES

- 15 minutes before a meal, have your child suck, blow, bite, crunch or chew.
- Use a cushion on the dining chair.
- Try introducing one new food at a time or making only one change to a familiar food at a time.
- Pair a new food with something he/she likes (dip chicken in ketchup).
- Offer foods at different temperatures.
- Share positive affirmations

## BEDTIME

- Gently rocking in a chair before going to bed is calming.
- Play a soft rhythmic music tape
- Use a soft neutral voice tone to review pleasant events from the day.
- Use a straw to suck liquids or yogurt/pudding/applesauce.
- Bedtime Social stories may help to establish routines.
- Try to use soft sheets such as cotton jersey or high thread count.
- Some children prefer to sleep in a sleeping bag, or under a heavy blanket.

## SCHOOL TIME

### Circle Time-

- Allow alternative seating: sit on a carpet square, sit on a pillow, inner tube, ball chair or rocking chair

### Hallways

- all kids hold onto a rope while walking down the hall
- holding a fidget
- helping to carry a weighted item such as books or milk cartons
- singing rhythmic songs, marching

### Classrooms-

- Remove clutter from the classroom walls,
- Preferential seating (sit at end of lunch table, sit in front of classroom next to the teacher)
- Allow child to listen to quiet calming music through headphones during quiet time
- Allow child to be at the front or back of the line when lining up to prevent other kids from bumping into her
- Allow child to wear a weighted vest or lap buddy to help him/her to stay calm and organized,
- Allow child to sit at a desk by himself instead of a table when working on multistep or complex assignments for better concentration
- Allow child to chew gum to help him concentrate.

**Do not take away recess as a punishment for bad behavior!!**

## **HOMEWORK**

- Establish "do-able" daily communication between school and home
- Help the child establish a routine to organize belongings, papers, etc to go home at the end of the day
- Provide an extra set of textbooks at home to take away the stress of forgetting & to facilitate good homework habits
- Review the day and homework expectations before homework; allow for choice and breaks
- Give child time for snack and movement before homework.
- Try background music with no words. Filter out distractions.
- Provide a weekly chart with after school responsibilities and build in incentives.

## **GENERAL TRANSITIONS**

- Have the child wear a weighted backpack with their own fidgets & snacks during outings or between classes at school.
- Wear "huggable" clothing such as spandex (Compression shirts & shorts, body armor) to help child feel secure.
- Use "first, and then" for completing tasks
- Utilize written or picture schedules & to do lists to foreshadow activities
- Stick to your agenda once you have informed your child
- Use distractions & diversions when appropriate.
- Provide comfort objects (activity book, stuffed animal).
- Be honest and detailed about what lies ahead when foreshadowing; like for a doctor's visit.  
Can also use books or social stories to help calm their anxiety.