



Helpful Handy Hints[©]

Finding Reinforcers

This is an area that is often problematic for many of our students. The key is to observe their behaviours when left to their own devices and then to use these as a starting point. Remember that a student's reaction to sensory input can vary between days and even within a day, and therefore whenever sensory strategies are being used, careful observation of the student's reactions is advised. For students with variable or inconsistent reactions to sensory input, an assessment with an Occupational Therapist may be advisable.

Behaviours Observed	The student gazes at lights or out of the window, fixates at rotating objects, looks at his hands or flaps his fingers in front of his eyes.		
Type of self-stimulation	Visual		
Spinning discs Laser discs Spinning toys Sand Egg timers or oil droppers Snow globes TV or video Computer screensaver programmes	Light toys (such as spinning fan or ball) Flashing toys (such as bouncing ball or stress toy) Spinning tops Wind-up toys Coloured acetate sheets	Executive toys (such as swinging balls) Sparkling toys (such as toy gun or spinning toy) Kaleidoscope View Master Coil toys	Useful websites SEN Switcher http://www.northerngrid.org/ngflwebsite/sen/intro.htm Priory Woods School http://www.priorywoods.middlesbrough.sch.uk

Behaviours Observed	The student vocalises, hums, clicks his tongue, taps furniture or clicks fingers		
Type of self-stimulation	Auditory (Sound)		
Drum Triangle Musical instruments Radio Push-pull toys that make noise	Toys that make noise Clackers Bells Whistles Tambourine Hair dryers	Talking toys (such as Furbies) Buzz toys Toy piano or keyboard Music boxes TV or video	Stethoscopes Music Conversation with another person Talking books Walkman or CD player

Behaviours Observed	The student touches his own or another person's body parts, pinches himself, places his fingers or objects in his mouth.		
Type of self-stimulation	Tactile (Touch)		
Shower scrunchies Soft toys Puppets Talc Electric fan Shaving cream	Items that touch the students' body Koosh ball Silly putty Vibrating or buzz toys Massager	Hand painting Face painting Blankets Make up brush Hand or foot massage Hand lotion	Sand or water play Offcuts of different textured materials (such as fur, felt, cotton, nylon etc) Scrubbing brush Pan scourers

Behaviours Observed	The student rocks, bounces or spins his body. He has strange postures (such as head stands or upside-down), toe walks, holds head on one side or head bangs.		
Type of self-stimulation	Vestibular (Movement) or Proprioceptive (Body Sense)		
Items that recreate motion or body position Rocking horse Rocking chair Firm stroking or patting of body parts student allows or seeks	Therapy or Pilates ball Hammock Swing Action rhymes Vibration or buzz toys	Barrels to roll in or on Pedal cars Spinning office chair Balance ball	Slide Roundabouts Trampolines Push/Pull games against resistance (such as another person)

Behaviours Observed	The student smells self, other people, items or equipment		
Type of self-stimulation	Smell		
Items that smell Scented pens and crayons	Aromatherapy oils Incense	Playdough Scented candles	Flowers Make a "Smell Kit"
To make a "Smell kit" use some small containers with lids (such as empty camera film containers), place some scented items in the container and top with cotton wool. Keep lid closed until needed.	Some ideas could be : ➢ Herbs and Spices ➢ Peppermint ➢ Onion ➢ Citrus oil extracts	➢ Soap or Washing up liquid ➢ Cake essences (such as vanilla, coffee, coconut etc)	

Behaviours Observed	The student licks himself or other people. He may lick objects or put them in his mouth.		
Type of self-stimulation	Oral-motor or Taste		
Sweet and sour contrasts (such as lemon or lime juice) Hot and cold contrasts (such as fried ice cream!)	Items that have different tastes Strong flavoured crisps or sweets	Put lots of ice into cold drinks Thick shakes through a straw	For oral stimulation try: Aquarium air tubing to chew Teething rings and toys Chewing gum or sweets Textiles to chew Tooth and tongue brushing Try an electric toothbrush