

## Sensory Based Calming Activities

Heavy Work Proprioceptive	Quick Fixes	Body Break Activities	Activities to Incorporate into Daily Routines	Leisure Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement against resistance</li> <li>• Movement against Gravity</li> <li>• Weight bearing activities with sustained muscle tension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Squeezing a stress ball</li> <li>• chair sit ups or wall push ups</li> <li>• chewy/crunchy snacks (e.g. licorice, dried fruits, carrots, fruit leather)</li> <li>• Arm wrestling: if you are stronger than your child, please let him win once in a while</li> <li>• Desk Work Out: the child does a mini routine of isometric exercises and stretches while seated at his desk</li> <li>• Natural Movement Break: have the child deliver or erase the blackboard</li> <li>• Wiggles Game</li> <li>• Holding up the Walls game</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isometrics e.g. push ups, sit ups, leg lifts, see saw sit ups etc.</li> <li>• Theraband Exercises: a great heavy work activity that provides intense muscle input and helps the child build postural strength and planning skills e.g. bat wings</li> <li>• Therapy Ball Workout: use therapy ball for a mini exercise routine for older children. It can be done independently or with a peer. Some exercises include ball inchworm, wheelbarrow walks, leg lifts and situps.</li> <li>• Hanging by the Arms: mount a chinning bar in a doorway or take child to the park to hang from the monkey bars. When suspending weight from arms, stretching muscles send calming sensory messages to the brain.</li> <li>• Joint Squeeze: Apply downward pressure through the head, then shoulders. Put one hand on child's forearm and other behind the elbow: slowly press the forearm into the elbow joint. Repeat for hip and knee joints. Straighten and bend child's fingers, wrists, elbows, knees ankles and toes. These extension/flexion techniques provide compression and traction to the joints both of which are calming and organizing.</li> <li>• Back to Back Standing up: Position 2 children sitting on the floor back to back. Ask them to "dig their feet into the floor" and stand up together by pressing against each others back.</li> <li>• Bulldozer: One child sits in a large cardboard box or on a folded gym mat and the other child pushes him across the floor, using his back or feet to make it move.</li> <li>• Scooter Board Activities that involve pushing and pulling e.g. body bowling – on stomach, child pushes off the wall with feet to knock down bowling pins.</li> <li>• Hot Potato with a medicine ball</li> <li>• Animal Walks such as crab walk, kangaroo jump, elephant walk, duck walk, crab walk, seal walk</li> <li>• Bottle Babies: fill empty pop bottle with water. Have the child move them from one side of the room to the other.</li> <li>• Tug of War/Push of War Games</li> <li>• Caterpillar Tunnel: The child pushes a large therapy ball through the fabric tunnel</li> <li>• Push/Pull Activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attach theraband to legs of child's desk allows for a little heavy work for a fidgety child. This allows them to stay at their desk and focus.</li> <li>• Sitting on a therapy ball to complete homework/school work: this activity requires the use of active core muscle strength to maintain balance. This heavy work is calming.</li> <li>• Lifting and Carrying Heavy Loads: encourage the child to help out with household activities that require carrying heavy objects e.g. helping to put the groceries away, carrying the laundry basket upstairs or grocery bags into the house or carrying water to water garden plants</li> <li>• Playground activities and heavy work gym activities.</li> <li>• Heavy work fine motor activities e.g. play with theraputty or clay, hammering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skating</li> <li>• Cycling</li> <li>• Rock climbing</li> <li>• Swimming</li> <li>• Running</li> <li>• Rowing</li> <li>• Weight lifting</li> </ul>

Pressure and Touch	Quick Fixes	Body Break Activities	Activities to Incorporate into Daily Routines	Leisure Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep touch pressure</li> <li>• Vibration</li> <li>• Neutral warmth</li> <li>• Discriminative touch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firm bear hug</li> <li>• Gentle Helper Squishes: apply deep pressure downward through child's head, shoulders</li> <li>• Use for groups, circle, line ups or in a stressful/busy transition</li> <li>• Self Squeeze: Teaching the child to give self deep pressure is critical in developing self regulation.</li> <li>• Combine this activity with Monster Face Squish and a deep breath to help the child regroup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand Hugs: Use both hands to apply firm pressure around the child's limbs beginning at the body and moving outward</li> <li>• Mummy Wraps: Use tensor bandages of non synthetic fabric to wrap the child</li> <li>• People Sandwich: Have the salami (child) lie face down on the "bread" (mat/cushion). With a "spreader" (paintbrush or washcloth) smear arms and legs and torso with pretend mustard, relish, ketchup, etc. Use firm downward strokes. Cover with another piece of bread" (folder mat or second cushion). Now press firmly on the mat to squish out the excess mustard so the child feels the deep soothing pressure.</li> <li>• Steam Roller: Have the child lay face down on the floor. Using a large therapy ball steamroll the ball over the child using firm downward pressure.</li> <li>• Hot Dog Mat Press: weight and pressure to the whole body is very calming. Bun materials can vary from pillows to gym mats. Pressure is created from the mats or when "applying condiments of cheese, mustard etc." with a therapy ball</li> <li>• Massage: Formal and informal massage to the back, feet, hands or sinus area with varying degrees of pressure will help the child focus and regroup to task; or calm for rest and sleep</li> <li>• Slow, Rhythmical Back Rub: use alternating hands, begin at the base of the neck and moving downward to the base of the spine</li> <li>• Joint Compression and Traction: Align joints (e.g. shoulder and elbow joints) and apply firm pressure to the count of 5. Release and repeat. Other activities include-wall pushups, seat pushups, wheel barrow walks, jumping and hanging activities.</li> <li>• Ball Pit Swimming followed by a heavy dry off with different textured towels</li> <li>• Back Chalkboard: use firm pressure and make numbers, letters or shapes on the child's back. Have the child guess what was made.</li> <li>• Finger Painting using a variety of materials such as shaving cream or warm lotion</li> <li>• Water Play: Fill a bin with water and dish soap, add squeeze toys, cups to fill/empty, etc.</li> <li>• Guessing Game: Hide common objects in a bag, have the child ID them without looking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snuggling under heavy covers or weighted blanket</li> <li>• Use of weighted vest, belts, anklets or wristlets provides deep pressure and calms. The weight should be no more than 10% of body weight. Use intermittently as effectiveness may diminish after 20 minutes.</li> <li>• Use of a lap snake or weighted toy</li> <li>• Use of a vibrating pillow, toy or pen.</li> <li>• Alternate work positions (lying</li> </ul>	