

Autism Sensory Bin Activities

A sensory bin (or sensory box) is a simple container filled with a filler of your choice. The container should have enough space left so that when your child explores, none of the filler should spill out. Children with Autism may fully enjoy the tactile experience of sensory bins with hands-on tools for children to learn about their world and senses. Sensory play may calm and focus a child, and engage them in the world around them.

Sensory bins need to use a variety of sensory bin fillers, here is a compiled list of suggested fillers to try with children, including example sensory bin ideas for each single item.

Sensory Bin Fillers

- Pom poms
- Cotton balls
- Straw or hay
- Polystyrene chips
- Bathing Salts
- Water (with glitter!)
- Shredded paper
- Artificial grass
- Leaves
- Water beads
- Sands
- Gravel
- Grass stones
- Buttons
- Ice
- Shaving Foam
- Feathers
- Mud
- Tinsel
- Ribbons
- Corks
- Seashells
- Tissue paper
- Scarves
- String

Sensory Bin Enhancements

- Literacy - Foam/magnetic letters, different paper, sticky notes, pens, pencils, chinks, books, phonics (initial letters for example, items beginning with the sound S).
- Maths - Magnetic/foam numbers, numicon, dice, counters.
- Animals - Dinosaurs, bugs, safari, arctic animals, ocean animals, farmyard.
- Lights - Colour changing light up torch, fibre optic lamp, handheld projector ball, flashing space ball, infinity hand held mirror, shake and shine light, ridged light up ball, spikey light up ball, rotating projector ball (Kaleidoscope).
- Colour based - Rainbows (dyed rice), items in certain colours.
- Smells - Chocolate, cinnamon, coffee, orange, mint (these can all be infused in modelling dough).
- Seasonal fillers.

Experience, Explore and Play

- Push their hands in to explore how it feels.
- Dig and make marks using different tools, such as scoops, rakes and trowels.
- Use their fingers to poke holes.
- Scoop using different tools and pour into pots. Explore the concepts of 'full', 'empty' and 'half full'