Dingley's Promise

Transforming the Early Years for children with SEND

SENSORY CIRCUITS

What is a Sensory Circuit?

It is a sensory motor skills programme that helps children become more organised and achieve the right level of alertness to help them prepare for the day's learning. It helps children achieve the right level of stimulation for senses through alerting, organising and calming sections of the circuit, done repeatedly. The activities promote self awareness, helping children to make connection to their senses in an active, fun, and enjoyable way.

How and When?

Set all activities up in advance

Model and motivate children, but do not force them

Choose activities for each section depending on the child's interests

Use visual prompts to support children's understanding of different activities

Should be done first thing on arrival to school, at the same time (wherever possible). Some children also find it beneficial after lunch.

Allow approximately 5 minutes for each section in the circuit.

Alerting Section

Fast moving activities

Organising Section

Coordination/ balance among senses

Calming Section

Calming the senses

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Alerting Section

- Activities that wakes up the senses
- Jumping on a trampoline. Use songs or rhymes that interest the child eg "1 little 2 little 3 little dinosaurs..." or "ready, steady, jump"
- Sit and bounce on a gym ball
- Marching on the spot. Use songs or rhymes that interest the child eg "walking, walking, hop hop hop, running, running, now let's stop" or "the ants go marching one by one hurrah, hurrah"
- Step ups/stepping stone. Count the steps "One step, two steps, three steps jump"
- Waving with colourful ribbons
- Forward and backward movement like rowing a boat and singing "row, row, row your boat"
- Fast movement songs with actions eg "heads, shoulders, knees and toes"

Organising Section

- Activities that involve coordination/balance among the senses
- Throwing a small beanbag or sensory ball into a box. Child can stand or sit on a gym ball depending on their interest
- Jumping through hoops
- Walking along a balancing bench or balance on a wobble board
- Crawling through a tunnel
- Moving around and hitting the balloon or popping the bubbles

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Calming Section

- Activities that relax the senses - relaxation, deep pressure or massage, heavy work activities
- Press ups on a wall. Stand behind the child and support them to push the wall and count to ten with rhymes or songs
- Placing feet or hands in weighted bean bags
- Use a vibrating massager, sensory toy or spine balls and massage different parts along with singing
- Deep pressure hug
- Rolling gym balls over the child's back
- Rolling child up tightly in a blanket like a hotdog and make up your own songs or rhymes