

Sensory Play

What do you need?

Things that look different

- Brightly coloured bits of material (old clothes, pillow cases etc.)
- Sparkly things (anything shiny)
- Mirrors (plastic)
- Different toys

Things that make different noises

- Crinkly things
- Shakers
- Things to bang (pots and pans)

Things to touch that feel different.

- Pine cones
- Baked Beans
- Cuddly toys
- Bubbles

Things that smell different

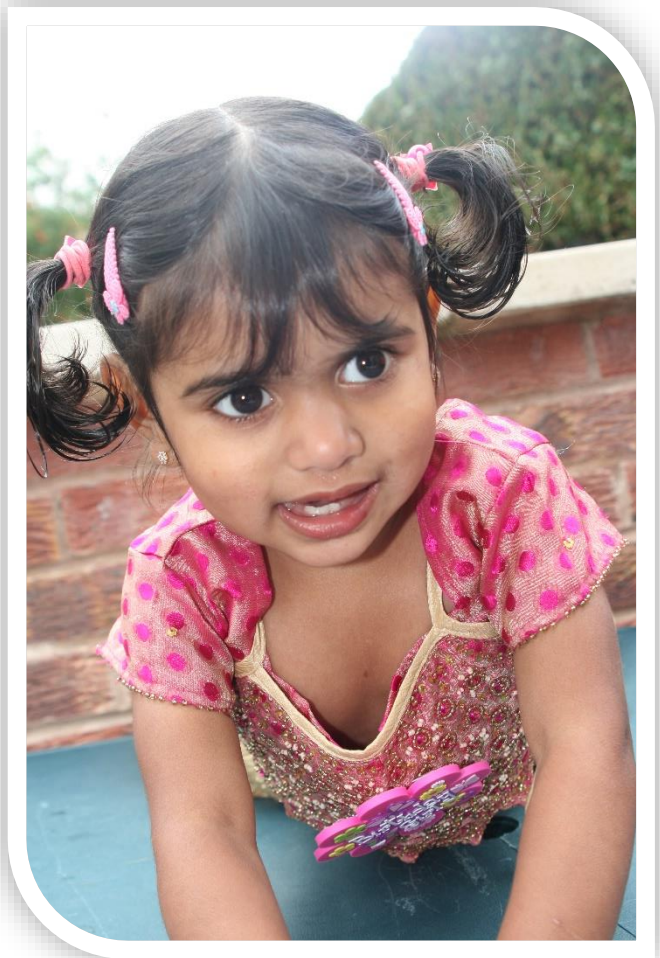
- Fruit
- Garden Herbs
- Lip balm
- Playdoh

Things that taste different

- Different foods

How do we do it?

Have you ever wondered why your child squidges their food between their fingers when they eat it? Or bangs toys on the floor or table? This is because sensory play is **really** important. Children have a built in need to find out about their world and they do it with their five senses. When they explore the world using their senses they produce chemicals in their brain that speed up brain growth giving them bigger healthier brains. There are no rules with sensory play. So long as it is fun (and safe) then you can help your children to explore using their senses. Don't forget that the best sensory resource in your



child's world is you. Join in with their sensory explorations and talk about what you can see, hear, smell, feel, and taste. Touch is really important so giving children things that have different textures is brilliant. Lay out lots of objects on the floor near to your child that have different textures for them to explore. Children also explore the world with their mouths which is why it is important never to have anything they can choke on near to a child. Very young children can only see a short distance but as they get older they get better and better at seeing things further away. They identify very early on with faces, so being close to your face enables them to develop their eyesight. If you are also making noises they will develop their hearing as well. Think about different things to smell, if you always use the same shower gel the child will associate that smell with you and will feel safe and care for whenever they smell it. What other things can they smell, bananas? Playdoh? What different things make different sounds. Children can be very loud sometimes but they need this in order to develop their hearing. Sensory play is incredibly good for children's brain development (especially when shared with you) so even though it can sometimes be messy it is worth a little mess because it is so mazing for our children.

