



# A Sensory Life



## A Sensory Enriched Recess

Let's make the most out of the time spent on the playground and at recess! When a child is left to just run around on a fenced in cement slab, or being chased by 10 screaming little girls, problems are just a literal stone throw away. Just because a child is given the time outside doesn't mean it is beneficial, if the environment is not sensory friendly for everyone.

**Here are some sensory friendly activities and equipment suggestions to get the most bang for your recess buck!**

- **A bar for hanging on at a safe height...**this allows for joint traction on the arms and also on the legs and spine if the child hangs upside down. Inverting the head is also EXCELLENT for self-regulation. Hanging from a bar in different ways provides proprioceptive and vestibular input.
- **Monkey bars** Excellent for proprioception and motor planning.
- **Swings and a Merry-Go-Round** Although I know these have been banned from most playgrounds and schools due to liability issues, they are indeed critical components for a sensory enriched recess. So if you are a part of a private school or charter school I hope you have these gems available. They are so important for vestibular input!
- **Slides** Please allow the children to climb up the slides and also go down on their stomachs. Allowing these different fun options provides an opportunity for prone extension and full body flexion as well as motor planning and vestibular and proprioceptive input. It is indeed possible to teach children to safely climb slides as well as one of the supervising teachers can help make it safe and join in on the fun!
- **Scooter Boards** This is a nice extra tool to have out on the playground, to work on prone extension and shoulder stability as well as providing vestibular and proprioceptive input. Add in the use of hula hoops for pulling each other around on their bellies and also using cones to set up obstacle courses and races.
- **Wagons for the younger children** Great proprioception for the child pulling the other child around as well as vestibular input and proprioception from the bumpy ride for the child in the wagon.
- **Balance bikes or tricycles for the younger children** Also great for proprioception and vestibular input as well as a nice way to work on balance and motor planning.
- **Hippity hop balls in different sizes** Such a great tool and so much fun! Provides vestibular and proprioceptive input as well as works on motor planning, balance, and overall muscle tone, posture and strength.
- **Playground balls** Get a game of four square or kick ball started. Excellent for motor planning and visual motor development! Also use these balls for playing basketball for those who have a hard time using the heavier basketball.
- **Basketball hoops and basketballs**
- **Jump ropes, individual and long ropes for 3 person jump roping**
- **Footballs and soccer balls**

**Don't forget the earplugs, noise cancelling headphones, sunglasses and floppy hats for the sensory sensitive children who need these tools in order to enjoy recess. ☺**

