



OT Time!



December 2018 - Holiday Tips

Winter break should be a time for relaxation and fun, not stress!

However, we all know a change in routine can be a big disruption for a child with sensory challenges. Use these tips to help reduce sensory meltdowns and enjoy the holiday season with family and friends!

Plan Ahead

It's important to know where you are going and what the setting will be like. How many people will be there? Will it be noisier than usual? Are there going to be bright and/or flashing lights? Will you need to sit still for a long period of time?

Find out if there will be a quiet room you can use if your child becomes upset.

The more information you can gather ahead of time, the better and less stressful your experience is likelier to be.



Prepare a Calm Down Bag

New situations can be extremely overwhelming for a child with sensory challenges, whether it's bright lights, loud noises, or new people. Having a bag full of different soothing items can help keep your child calm when facing these different experiences.

Ideas of items to keep in your own calm down bag may include:

- Favorite toy/stuffed animal
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Fidget toys
- Sensory balls
- iPod with calming music
- Weighted blanket
- Favorite snacks

Get Your Child Ready

Unfamiliar settings may be upsetting if your child is not properly prepared. Social stories are a great way to familiarize your child with something new. If possible, visit the place ahead of time. If that is not an option, show your child pictures and/or videos of where you will be going and what you will be doing (i.e., holiday lights display). It may help to talk about the event days ahead of time so the activity is not brand new to your child.

Simple Snow Slime

- 2 cups - silver glitter glue
- 1-2 cups - liquid starch

1. Pour glitter glue into large mixing bowl.
2. Slowly add liquid starch and mix until reaching desired consistency.
3. Knead with clean, dry hands.

Sensory Friendly Gift Ideas

- Exercise/therapy ball
- Mini trampoline
- Lava lamp
- Bubbles
- Liquid motion toys
- Swings
- Gears sets
- Kinetic sand
- Playdough
- Plush/weighted toys
- Weighted blanket
- Fidget cubes
- Vibrating/massager toys
- Spinning/rocking chair

Specific questions or comments?

Contact your school's occupational therapist!