



Sensory Table Benefits: Ideas For Home & Play

Why Use a Sensory Bin/Table?

Sensory play includes any activity that stimulates your child's senses: touch, smell, taste, sight and hearing. Sensory activities and sensory tables facilitate exploration and naturally encourage children to use scientific processes while they play, create, investigate and explore. Spending time stimulating their senses helps children develop cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally, physically and creatively.

Is it smooth and wet or bumpy and dry? Is it sticky and gooey or slippery and fluffy? Does it tickle? Can it change shape? These are just a few of the questions that children can explore while using a sensory table. Learning with a sensory table is more than a fun time-filler; it allows them to gain insight and information about the world around them by providing essential hands-on experiences. Investigating materials with no preconceived knowledge also helps develop and refine cognitive, social and emotional, physical, creative and linguistic skills.

Building a Sensory Table

There is no "right way" to construct or present a sensory table. Typically, a sensory table consists of any surface or larger tubs that contain a variety of sensory materials, items that provide children with hours of learning, exploring and fun. Choose ingredients (to fill the tubs) and materials (items to add to the tubs) to enhance the sensory experience and spark your child's interest and creativity. Make sure your items are age-appropriate in size and shape. Sponges, shells, small toys, string, blocks, kitchen utensils (like tongs, funnels, measuring cups, spatulas, spoons), egg carton pieces, ping pong balls, straws, corks, small shovels, popsicle or craft sticks, clothespins or anything else that might encourage exploration!

Tips for Using a Sensory Table

Remember, there is no right or wrong way to use a sensory table; they are appropriate for all ages, genders and races. Encourage your child to explore: don't overwhelm her/him with tasks and don't be too quick to answer her/his questions. Every table and every experience will be different and some may be messy, so be sure to cover the surrounding area and keep water and towels nearby.

For More Information

The internet offers many sources of additional information. For starters, visit:

<http://www.pre-kpages.com/sensory-bin-fillers-sensory-play-preschool/>

<http://yourkidstable.com/ultimate-list-of-sensory-bin-ideas/>

Sensory Table Ideas

- Sand
- Water
- Soapy Water
- Ice
- Dirt
- Noodles
- Flour
- Oatmeal
- Bird Seed
- Beans
- Rice
- Noodles
- Chick Peas
- Dry Cereal
- Goop
- Play Dough
- Real Dough
- Cotton Balls
- Plastic Grass
- Straws
- Ribbon
- Shredded Paper
- Pom Poms
- Cut Straws
- Fish Gravel
- Legos
- Small Blocks
- Marble Words
- Magnets
- Small World
- Leaves
- Sticks
- Mulch
- Rocks
- Seeds
- Pine Cones
- Flowers
- Weeds

CHOKING HAZARD WARNING: THIS PROJECT SHOULD HAVE ADULT SUPERVISION FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH UNDER 8-YEARS-OLD.

Main referral number for all services  406.532.1615

Missoula County Office: 406.532.1615
Ravalli County: 406.273.1684

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