

SENSATIONAL PLAY! EXPLORING TOUCH

PROVIDED BY UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS MEDICAL CENTER OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS

Children's sensory needs are like different sizes of cups!

Children with **small cups** may need little to no sensory input to feel just right with too much sensory input, they may become overwhelmed or upset.

Children with **big cups** may need quite a lot of sensory input, without enough sensory input to fill their cup, they may get bored or restless.



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- Touch is one way children learn about the world around them.
- Everyone responds to touch in their own way.
- We may be more or less sensitive to different sensory experiences.
- When environments do not match our sensory needs, it can create challenges for us.
- The best way to support all children is to accommodate for their sensory needs.

**IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW THAT OUR PREFERENCES ARE NEITHER GOOD OR BAD.
WE ALL HAVE DIFFERENT PREFERNCES AND DON'T NEED TO BE CHANGED!**

ACTIVITIES TO DO AT HOME

Explore sensory preferences at home. Notice the sensory input your child prefers.

Play with shaving cream in the bathtub: Does your child enjoy getting their hands messy? Do they like to keep their hands clean?

Play dress up with fabrics, textures, and fits: Which fabrics does your child seem most comfortable wearing?

Play tag: Does your child enjoy games with physical contact?

Paint with your hands and feet: Does your child enjoy the cold and wet paint on their hands and/or feet?

Explore the backyard: Does your child enjoy the grass on their bare feet? Does your child like the way trees or plants feel on their hands? Would they rather have their shoes on while playing outside?