

# Who we are

...Occupational therapy students who want to spread awareness of how to help encourage children with sensory deficits to engage in new environments. We understand that it can be difficult for families to help their children with sensory deficits, overcome problem behaviors. Sometimes there are communication barriers that can make it even more difficult to solve these problems. We want to educate families on the importance of proprioceptive input and how this can help regulate children's emotional and behavior responses to sensory stimulation.

BALLOONS FILLED WITH PLAY-DOUGH



# Proprioception

What is proprioception

- Proprioception is a body system located in our muscles and joints. It provides us with a sense of body awareness and detects/controls force and pressure. It has an important regulatory role in sensory processing as proprioceptive input can assist in controlling responses to sensory stimuli.
- Proprioceptive input can be calming for those who are easily overwhelmed by sensory stimulation or alerting for those who need increased sensory stimulation to facilitate attention and learning
- Many children seek proprioceptive input in order to regulate their emotional and behavioral responses to sensory stimulation



## Sensory Toys and What They Have To Offer

Eastern Michigan University  
Occupational Therapy



## Techniques to meet sensory needs

- Bear hugs (tactile pressure)
- Squishes on certain body parts (tactile pressure)
- Weighted toys (tactile pressure)
- Therabands (rocking & pulling)
- Tug of war (pulling)
- DIY toys- sensory bottles, balloon with flour or play-dough in it (auditory, tactile pressure, squeezing)
- Chewies (self-regulation)
- Exercise ball rolls or bounces (tactile pressure or bouncing)

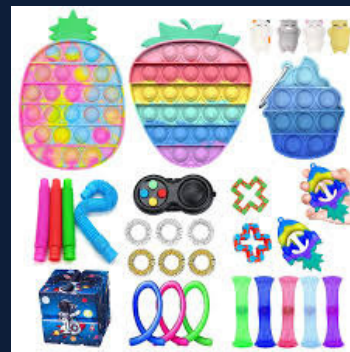
## Indicators that someone is seeking sensory input



- Bites/chews on objects e.g. sleeve of jumper, pen/pencil
- Hyperextends joints e.g. bending back fingers, locking knee joints
- Bangs body parts e.g. bangs hands together, bangs jaw with hand
- Holds objects with excessive pressure e.g. pencil; writes heavily on page
- Enjoys rough and tumble play but can be excessively rough with others
- Throws self heavily onto floor
- Prefers to run, jump or stamp heavily when he/she should be walking
- Likes to sit with knees tucked under himself/herself
- Engages in weight bearing activities e.g. swinging on desks, climbing
- Walks on tiptoes (NB there are other possible factors for this gait pattern; seeking proprioceptive input is just one factor)

## Importance

All children are sensory beings. Children can have varying responses to sensory input. Some children may be “sensory seekers”, while others may be “sensory avoiders”. The sensory seeking children are typically under-sensitive to stimuli, which means they look for more stimulation and may appear clumsy, loud, or as having behavioral problems. Most sensory avoiders are over-sensitive to sensory stimuli and feel overwhelmed more easily. They may appear timid, picky with food, and avoidant. Knowing your child's triggers and ways to cope with them can greatly decrease their discomfort.



**IM NOT A BAD KID, I  
JUST HAVE SENSORY  
SENSITIVITIES**