



Sensory Processing Service

Tips for Creating Routine and
Adding Predictability



Caring, Learning
& Growing Together



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Tips for Creating Routine and Adding Predictability

The Sensory world around us can sometimes be overwhelming and confusing, especially for children with sensory processing differences. However, creating good routines and adding predictability to tasks can be reassuring and make the sensory world an easier place to navigate.

Here you will find some tips on how to develop good routines and add predictability to tasks:

- Routine can make the day less daunting for a child with sensory processing differences, as it gives them an idea of what to expect from their day and an opportunity to prepare.
- Predictability can help us to manage change, which is something that can be extremely challenging for neurodiverse people. Change is something that should be slowly introduced (try to make it predictable) and should be approached in a supportive manner.
- Using a white board on the fridge or a visual communication board to explain what is happening that day. E.g. Having breakfast, going to school, helping to make meals etc. may help to provide a clear structure for the day.
- Making tasks close-ended i.e. setting out a definitive end to a task, can make activities much more predictable, which is reassuring, particularly for challenging tasks. For example, bathing can be challenging; state that hair washing will only happen for 10 minutes. Providing a clear end point will make the task more manageable.



- Using a visual or sand timer adds predictability, as it provides a good visual cue for how long a task may last.
- Break tasks down into 'now and then' i.e. 'now we are going shopping, and then we will go swimming'.
- It is not possible to plan every activity and sometimes plans do have to change. When this happens, swap 'can't' with something more specific – e.g. 'you can't go swimming today' with 'its not possible for you to go swimming today, but you can go swimming next Monday'. This is much more specific and creates more predictability.
- Adding proprioceptive activities into a daily routine can be very regulating. Making time to do these activities proactively, throughout the day, rather than reactively when your child is over alert, will help to calm all the other senses and reduce stress response behaviours. We should never assume that children know when to do sensory activities; we need to be explicit in when they should be carried out.
- See the proprioceptive activities resource for lots of ideas on different activities to try. Remember to make these activities fun and engaging for your child. If they do not enjoy an activity, do not force them to participate – allow them to find their own 'feel-good' activities.

 Visit:

sensoryprocessinghub.humber.nhs.uk

for more help and information.



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