



PODCAST FREEBIE

Sensory Diets for Travel

Sensory diets during travel are critical! They help regulate arousal level & emotions, helping to create a fun travel experience.

Use this guide to better understand how to structure a sensory diet for before, during & after travel days.

Types of Input:

1 VESTIBULAR INPUT IS ALERTING

If a child seeks movement, provide 3-5 minutes of preferred movement based activities.

2 PROPRIOCEPTIVE INPUT IS CALMING

Complete a heavy work activity after a movement based activity to decrease over-stimulation & promote a calm arousal state.

3 ORAL MOTOR INPUT IS CALMING

Provide a variety of types of oral motor input to promote a calm arousal state.

4 AUDITORY & VISUAL INPUT CAN BE CALMING

However, we encourage limited screen time. Instead, provide a variety of "natural" types of auditory and visual input.

5 TACTILE INPUT CAN BE CALMING

Fidgets are a fantastic way to provide an activity while also promoting a calm arousal state.

6 OLFACTORY INPUT CAN BE ALERTING OR CALMING

Calm scents such as lavender can be an effective tool to promote a calm arousal state.

Before Travel:



- 3-5 minutes of vestibular input.
- 5-10 minutes of proprioceptive input.
- Incorporate oral motor into the proprioceptive activity.
- Can complete a tactile - sensory bin - for 5-10 minutes as a calming activity.

During Travel:



- Provide proprioceptive input as needed (weighted items, vibration, joint compressions, etc.).
- Provide oral motor input as needed (drinking through a straw, hard candy, chewing gum etc.).
- Provide variety of visual & auditory activities (limit screen time).
- Provide olfactory input as needed.
- Provide tactile fidgets as needed.
- Provide combination vestibular-proprioceptive activities during stops (i.e. animal walks at the rest stop, freeze tag, etc).
- If on an airplane, allow child to complete animal walks up / down the aisles every hour as needed.

After Travel:



- 5-10 minutes of vestibular input as needed.
- 5-10 minutes of proprioceptive input.

Travel Sensory Diet Activity List:

- Use a social story to prepare for a trip. Include expected events, places, & emotions.
- If possible, do a practice run - this is great for airports.
- Use YouTube as a way to visually prepare for different environments & expectations.
- Use a check-off calendar to provide a visual reminder of when the trip is occurring.
- Use a written / picture list of necessary items for child to pack.
- Allow child to plan some of the activities that will happen on the trip.
- Remain calm & practice EMPATHY. Traveling is hard & can cause big emotions.
- A pop-up tent is a great option to provide a "calm down" space in new environments.
- Pack a long a dry erase board or boogie board for easy creation of a sensory diet.