

CREATING A SENSORY DIET

Are you frequently overwhelmed during your day? Do you have difficulty focusing on tasks at school or work? Do you often have too much or too little energy, but rarely the “just right” amount? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions you may want to develop a sensory diet to help you function at your best. Follow the instructions below to get started!

1. IDENTIFY YOUR SENSORY NEEDS

Complete the *Identifying Your Sensory Needs* worksheet to identify what *your* sensory system needs to work at its best. Highlight or star all of the activities you mark as “calming/organizing.”

2. MAKE A LIST OF CALMING/ORGANIZING ACTIVITIES

Use your “calming/organizing” activities from the *Identifying Your Sensory Needs* worksheet (and any others you can think of) to make a list of 10 – 15 *Calming/Organizing Activities*.

3. CHOOSE YOUR SENSORY “MEALS”

Sensory “meals” are calming/organizing activities that provide a *large* amount of sensory input (i.e. a long run, weight-lifting workout, bubble bath, etc.). Refer to your list of *Calming/Organizing Activities* and chose 3 – 5 activities to use as sensory meals. Use these activities in the *Sensory “Meals”* section of the *Sensory Diet Worksheet*.

4. CHOOSE YOUR SENSORY “SNACKS”

Sensory “snacks” are easily accessible calming/organizing tools or activities (i.e. listening to music, drinking a cup of coffee or tea, eating a snack, going for a short walk, etc). Refer to your list of *Calming/Organizing Activities* and chose 3 – 5 activities to use as sensory snacks. Use these activities in the *Sensory “Snacks”* section of the *Sensory Diet Worksheet*.

5. IDENTIFY ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORTS

Environmental supports are adjustments you can make at school, work, or home (i.e. using a yoga ball instead of a desk chair, replacing fluorescent lights with full spectrum light bulbs, decreasing clutter, etc). Write down 2 – 3 adjustments you could try in the *Environmental Supports* section of the *Sensory Diet Worksheet*.

6. IDENTIFY “HIDEOUT” SPACES

“Hideout” spaces are places you can go when you need alone/quiet time during your day. Write down 2 – 3 safe, quiet places you could go at school/home/work in the *“Hideout” Spaces* section of the *Sensory Diet Worksheet*.

7. CHOOSE YOUR LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Leisure activities are a very important part of your sensory diet and a great way to get additional sensory input. Complete the *Leisure Activities* section of the *Sensory Diet Worksheet*.

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