

The use of Sensology and sensory aids for PMLD children

By Katrina Barker



PMLD children require large amounts of stimulation due to their inactivity. In order to provide appropriate intervention, sensology is used.

What is Sensology?

Sensology is an Educational approach emphasising sensory stimulation, It covers five basic senses

Sight : light and colour is detected by cells in the retina at the back of the eye

Sound : hair cells in the ear move in response to specific sequences

Taste : taste buds on the tongue react to salt, sour, bitter, sweet.

Smell : special cells in the nose detect different chemicals in the air that we breath in.

Touch : various receptors in our skin detect different types of touch, including pressure from vibrations.

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Sensology and its supporting aids

Each of the senses are broken down with a use of an aid, these aids can vary, however, within my setting and the needs of the children the aids we would use are, torch, smooth/rough piece of material, sweet/sour foods, food seasoning and bells, in order to gain an appropriate response from the child.



Theory behind the Sensory stimulation with children with PMLD

Internal and External sensories

According to Brown (1998), he described the first external sensory input received from a distance such as light reflected from an object, this providing information relating to shape, size and colour. Brown explains further of internal sensory input received from within the body system from the senses of touch, taste and smell, this providing information from the bodies system.

Brown argued that a child with PMLD may be at a disadvantage and retreat into themselves to overactive stimuli and that there would need to be a careful setting and organisation of the way activities are presented.



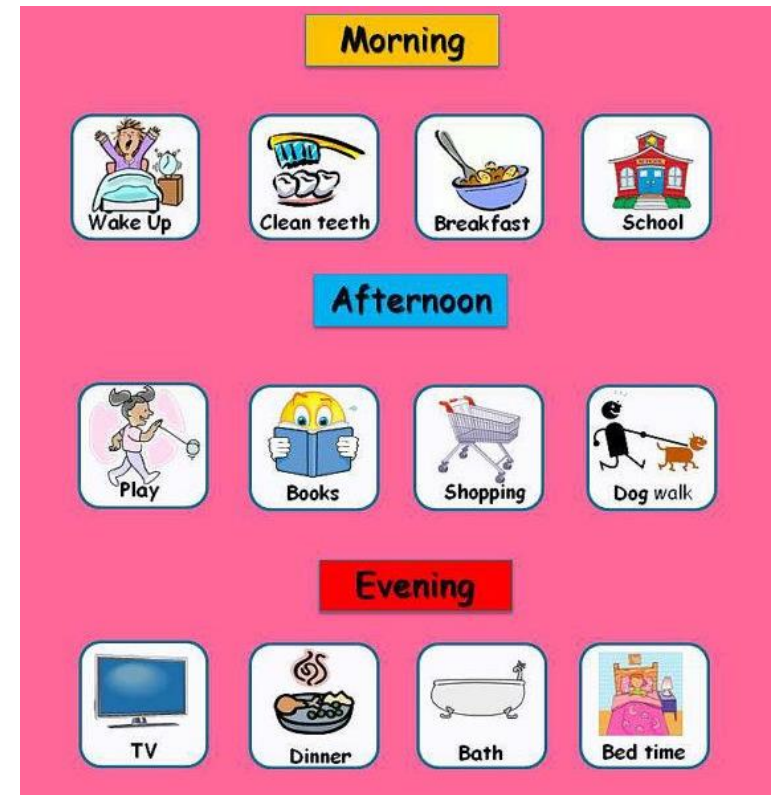
“Overactive stimuli response” Brown (1998)



Sensory and its purpose within Education

Ouvry and Saunders (1996) identify that sensory can be used to stimulate senses with activities based upon stages of sensory development and the ability of basic skills to identify priorities needed in the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP). This can then be incorporated into the child's activities which are tailor made to their needs and expectations.

In order to support the child with PMLD a well structured IEP is put in place with the use of interactive aids. The activities are followed as part of the child's daily routine.



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Sensology and the aids explained

Smell

In my setting during a sensology session, jars of spices will be waved under the child's nose for a few seconds/minutes waiting on a reaction which is usually a turn of the head or scrunching up of the nostrils



See

In my setting we would use a small torch usually of different colours, waving it backwards and forwards for a few second/minutes waiting for a reaction which will usually be the child following the direction of the light



Taste

In my setting we will use two types of taste. Lemon juice and jam and waiting for the child's reaction which for sour will be scrunching of the nose and twisting of mouth and for jam the child will constantly lick their lips.



Touch

During a sensology session in my setting we would use a soft piece of material and a rough piece of material to see if we have a reaction from the child. The pupils body becomes relaxed with a soft material and with the rough material legs or arms would move telling us they have felt the movement on their skin.



Sound

We would use a bell during a sensology session. We would rattle the bell on each ear in turn, waiting for the reaction from the child which is usually a turn in their head in the direction you are rattling the bell.



How beneficial is sensory aid to children with PMLD?

Increase
concentration
and focus
attention

Develop senses of
hearing, sight,
smell, touch and
taste

Hooson, A. (2018) stated that a multi sensory environment has been proven to increase concentration, improve motor skills, creativity, social relations and communication, general awareness of the surrounding world.

This has had a huge impact on health and wellbeing and education sectors providing new ways and encouraging learning, motor development, language and social interaction skills.

Provide relief and
distraction from
painful
treatments

Enjoying
themselves

Calmer and
less aggressive
behaviour



My experiences and the use of sensory in my setting

In my setting I work within a class of eight pupils all with varying needs of sensory and sensory input.

As I have presented in this power point we use various aids and strategies in order to support each pupil's individual needs and their development of communication and sensory needs.

Within my place of work sensory is paramount to their daily routine and structure and offers opportunity for expression, emotion and a form of communication.



My thoughts on sensory activities

I enjoy the opportunity to embrace the sensory activities and the ability to have a one to one personal connection whilst observing their reactions, no matter how big or small that reaction may be. The continuing development of sensory aids for all children not just PMLD is important, as I discovered while researching for my presentation.

“Touch comes before sight, before speech. It is the first language and the last, and it always tells the truth”. Margaret Atwood (2007)



Reference list

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