

Activities to Support Finding the Smile!

Having Fun with Sensory Social Routines

Adapted from: *An early start for your child with Autism*. Rogers, S.J., Dawson, G., Vismara, L.A. (2012)

1. Find the Rhythm of Sensory Social Routines

Pick a sensory rich activity and find the smile!

- ✓ Get your child's attention focused on you when he is not engaged in something else.
- ✓ When you have your child's attention position yourself so you are face to face and begin a brief game. Repeat several times, then pause/wait, looking expectantly and watch your child cue for continuing.
- ✓ Pause right before the **big event**.
- ✓ At the big end of the big event, stop, look at your child excitedly, place your hands and body as if you are about to do it again, and wait.
- ✓ Once you or your child loose interest say "all done with ____".
- ✓ Sing songs with motions, make up songs and lap games.

Some Sensory Social Games to Consider

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|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| ✓ Pattycake | ✓ Creepy fingers |
| ✓ Peekaboo | ✓ Itsy-Bitsy Spider |
| ✓ This Little Piggy | ✓ Open - Shut Them |
| ✓ Chase | ✓ Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star |
| ✓ Airplane | ✓ Ring-around-the-Rosy |
| ✓ So Big | ✓ The Wheels on the Bus |
| ✓ Dancing to Music | ✓ If Your Happy and You Know It |

2. Build a Repertoire and Refine the Routines

Get Creative in Building and Varying Your Sensory Social Repertoire

- ✓ Keep your turn short, so your child has more opportunities to respond.
- ✓ Avoid the situation in which you are making your child happy by simple entertaining your child.
- ✓ Once your child shows enjoyment, participation, and recognition of one familiar routine, go ahead and add another.
- ✓ Find a variety of times during the day to build in sensory social routines.
- ✓ Once it starts to feel repetitive to you, add some variation.
- ✓ Know when it is time to end the game.

Know When to Use Objects in Sensory Social Routines

Games and Songs with Objects

Blowing Bubbles	Balloons
Pinwheels	Swinging child through your legs
Pom Poms	Rocking the child on a rocking horse
Lotion	Rocking chair-rock fast, rock slow
Scarves - throw, hide under	Spinning in a swing
Blankets or mats- roll your child up or swing	Splash games with water in the bath
Peek-a-boo with an object	Noisemakers
Pushing your child on a swing	Slinkies

3. Optimize Your Child's Energy Level for Learning

Learn to Dial Down the Activity When Your Child is Getting Highly Aroused

- ✓ Make the play gentler the minute you see your child getting overly aroused.
- ✓ Use sensory social routines to help your child adjust her arousal level.

Find Ways to Energize an Under-aroused Child

- ✓ Move the child quickly by bouncing, jiggling, spinning, or using fast paced actions or songs.
- ✓ Use stronger touches, more volume, a bigger voice, more emotion.
- ✓ Use physical actions involving rapid or rather jerky movements.
- ✓ Use sensory social objects that create big sounds or visual events.
- ✓ Use touch to "rev up" and under-aroused child.