


## Exploring Our Senses

Sensory Boxes are a great way for children to explore their senses. This is an easy activity to set up at home.

What you need to create Sensory Boxes at home:

Five containers with lids. (If you can increase the contrast of the container by lining it with black paper, objects will be easier to see)	
Find interesting, brightly coloured objects for exploring touch	Feathers, fabric – silk/corduroy, tinsel, balloons filled with water, wind-up fans, vibrating toothbrush, pipe cleaners, velcro, cotton wool, rocks, seashells, buttons, sand, spiky balls.
Can you find items with different smells?	Lavender, herbs, spices, essential oils on kitchen roll, herbal teabags, candles, soap.
Add a range of objects that make sounds	Bells, musical instruments, spoons, saucepan lids, sand-filled shaker, squeaky toys.
Find items that encourage looking and focussing	Torches, mirrors, magnifying glasses, coloured see-through sweet wrappers, sequinned purses, push-button lights.
Consider creating an edible sensory box	Dry pasta, rice, popcorn, flour, jelly, whipped cream, cooked pasta, cereals, yogurt, breadcrumbs.

### Tips for using Sensory Boxes with a Child who is Blind/ Visually Impaired

- Allow child to explore the items. Ensure an adult is always present to supervise for safety purposes.
- Sensory Boxes can help develop language. Adults can encourage this by describing the objects e.g. shiny, hard, soft, tickly.
- When playing with sensory boxes, consider the lighting in the room. Allow the child to sit with their back to the window so that they are not affected by glare. Perhaps darken the room so that the toys which light up are easier to see.
- It is of benefit to some children to only explore one sense at a time e.g. only touch.
- Some children resist touching new textures. Do not be discouraged by this. Building up a tolerance for exploring new textures may take time but will enable children to learn more about their world.
- We use our senses to learn about the world in which we live. For children who are blind/visually impaired, it is really important that they learn to make full use of their other senses.
- Children who are blind/visually impaired can learn to use the senses of hearing, touch, taste and smell to get information that other children get through their vision. Touch is a really important sense. In fact touch can be the primary means for obtaining information.

HAVE FUN

