



TELE- SENSE

Making Sense of Sensory Preferences

How do EI Occupational Therapists support children with strong sensory preferences without being physically present? We focus on how to help the family support the child's involvement in everyday routines and activities.

Observing Everyday Environments & Activities



OTs know how to look at an activity within an environment for sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and materials that can positively or negatively affect the child, and then help families make changes to meet their children's needs. During a televisit, it may be more difficult to get a sense of the environment, but the EI OT's primary role is to build family capacity for making these changes during typical routines. Share your knowledge with parents and brainstorm together for ways the environment can contribute to child learning.

Understanding cues



When using tele-intervention, the cues you typically notice when the child needs different sensory input may be more challenging to see. Talk to families about what cues you may be looking for, so they can help you understand what is happening and learn how to recognize cues during everyday activities.



Using Interests

Think about how a child's interests, particularly sensory interests, impact family activities. During tele-intervention visits, help the caregiver use the child's interests and modify the environment for the activity in order to use it as a learning opportunity. For example, if a child loves water, but hates bathtime, schedule your tele-intervention during bathtime. Explore with the parent how to modify the activity based on the child's sensory preferences (i.e., use a cloth to keep water off his face when washing his hair) to capitalize on the interests (i.e., put plastic cups in the tub to fill and pour).



Family, Infant & Preschool Program
of the
J. Iverson Riddle Developmental Center



NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES