

*These activities are made possible thanks to funding from the Jesse and Joan Kupferberg Foundation and The FAR Fund.*



Sensory play is any activity that stimulates the senses. It is crucial for the cognitive, emotional and physical development of children (and adults!) of all ages. Sensory activities are open-ended and encourage exploration of materials and processes, rather than the end product.

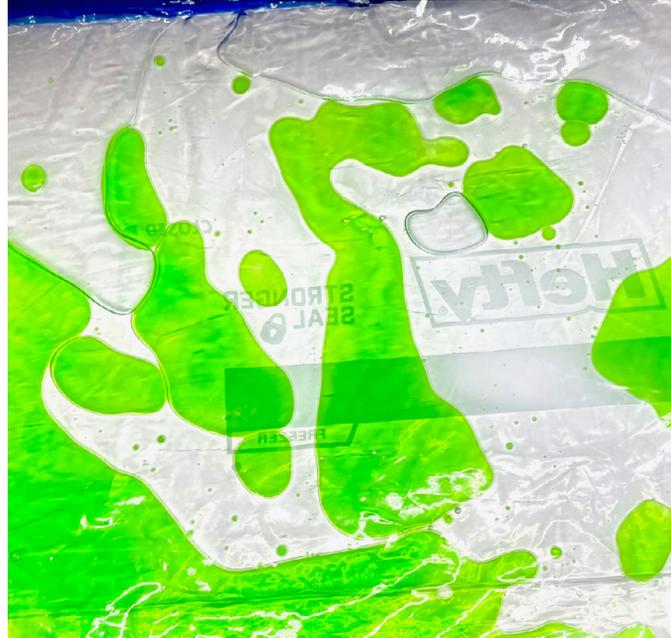
Recognizing and interpreting sensory information provides many benefits, including:

- Builds nerve connections in a child’s brain that help them engage in more complex and sophisticated learning tasks.
- Supports language development as the child learns to use adjectives to describe items and experiences (hot, cold, wet, sticky, etc.).
- Encourages the child to use scientific processes as they play, create, investigate and explore using their senses.

Engaging children with extra needs in sensory activities is especially beneficial. Encouraging a child to engage in sensory play may help with social and communication abilities, while also helping them self-regulate overwhelming experiences. Along with the cognitive and physical benefits, sensory play is an effective coping strategy to help children (and adults) reduce levels of stress and anxiety.

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## Colors of Density

Density is the value that establishes the amount of space an object or a substance has taken up. A liquid that weighs more, is considered to be denser and goes to the bottom. In our experiment the oil will rise, which means it is less dense than the water.

Liquids with different densities do not mix.

As your child explores with water and oil, they will observe the density of the substances as they spread the water color bubbles around.

Invite your child to explore density by making a water and oil based sensory bag.

1. Fill in the Ziploc bag with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of water.
2. Add a few drops of desired food coloring.
3. Then, add a  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of baby oil into the Ziploc bag.
4. Next, push out most of the air leaving very little air in the bag, then seal that area with tape as well.
5. Challenge your child to see if they can mix all the liquids together.

Encourage your child to push the colored bubbles around the bag. Prompt them to try to “pop” the bubbles.

Ask your child:

- What happens when you push the colored bubbles?
- Do they pop? Do they mix together?