

## Self Soothing — Sensory kit

A good way to alleviate distressing feelings is to combat them with soothing ones. Keep a bag or box full of things that will give you strong positive feelings. Focus on one of the 5 senses at a time, and figure out some things that you know you like from each of those categories: Sight, touch, taste, smell, and sound. Include a few things that are very strong — for example, you may not find mints enjoyable, but the strong taste can calm your body's responses by having something physical to focus on. When a distressing event occurs you can pull out one of your sensory-soothing items and use it to alleviate the stress of a situation. This works for anxiety, anger, depression... any strong, physical emotion! Even the container you choose can be sensory-pleasing! It's important to find something that just looking at it fills you with a sense of pleasure. Sensory kits can be any size. You may want to have a large one in your bedroom closet and a small one in the glove compartment of your car, or in your backpack at school.

Some ideas for a successful Sensory kit:

### Sight

- Pieces of paper or cloth that are your favorite color
- Funny photos
- Pictures cut from a magazine of someone or something you enjoy (baby animals, favourite movie star, favourite city, etc)
- Bubble blowing kit to watch the bubbles float through the air
- Positive affirmations – write notes to yourself with positive/encouraging comments
- Kaleidoscope

### Touch

- Travel-sized play dough, or putty
- Soft objects
- Stress relief Magnets
- Stress balls
- Tactile beads
- Wood, metal, etc.
- Rubber bands
- Smooth or rough stones
- Beanbags

### Taste

- Sour or hot candies
- Strong or favourite flavoured gum
- Strong, spicy mints
- A favorite snack

### Smell

- Aromatherapy oils (lavender is popular)
- Travel sized scented hand sanitizers
- Perfumes
- Menthol, commonly used for soothing colds
- Scratch and sniff stickers

### Sound

- Clickers
- CD with:
  - Favourite songs
  - Nature sounds (birds, running water, rain, people laughing, wind)
  - Classical music
- Music box
- Bells