

Sensory Engagement and the development of early cognition.

In the early stages of development sensory stimulation is critical to the wiring of the brain.

Early sensory experiences trigger the creation of neural pathways in the mind.

The more pathways created during this early stage of development the greater the potential for the brain in the future.



The Sensory Projects run on the principle that with the right knowledge and a little creativity inexpensive items can become effective tools for sensory inclusion.

Through the work of all the Projects founder **Joanna Grace** is seeking to contribute to a future where people are understood in spite of their differences.

To learn more about the projects, and to access free resources and information about bespoke sensory training visit

www.TheSensoryProjects.co.uk

Joanna's books: **Sensory Stories for Children and Teens** and **Sensory-being for Sensory Beings** are available on amazon, with more titles due for publication in 2018.



The Sensory Projects

Joanna Grace

www.TheSensoryProjects.co.uk

Dangling Delights



@Jo3Grace

Publication dated/updated 15/10/17

Dangling Delights

Imagine I could float you in space, somewhere where it is perfectly dark and there is no sound, nothing to see, nothing to hear, nothing to feel. You reach out your hand in front of you. You cannot see it, it does not touch anything but you know where it is. You sense where it is. You also know if you are moving or not.

How do you know these things?

Information about where our body is and how it is moving comes to us through two subconscious senses called proprioception and vestibulation. We do not notice these sensory systems in daily life as much as we do our conscious senses but they fundamentally underpin our ability to move and to co-ordinate our movements.

Now imagine that you had grown up entirely in the floating space, no sights, no sounds, no touches. When you reach forward with your arm do you know where it is? Or do you just feel a sensation, a sensation that has no meaning to you? Imagine how frightening

it would be to not know where your body was.

It is only through experiencing proprioceptive and vestibular information in partnership with information from our conscious senses that we understand what these subconscious sensations mean.

Sensory Beings need lots of practice at experiencing where their bodies are in space through partnered sensory information. You can provide them with the opportunity to practice their sensory expertise by creating dangling delights for them to explore.

Creating Dangling Delights

All you need is some string and some items that give strong conscious sense information, e.g. bright and colourful items, or ones that makes a noise when touched, or ones with interesting textures.

You need to hang the items in positions where they will register the movements the Sensory Being you are supporting might make. Hang them near to any limbs they are able to move, hang them in the places where they might move those limbs to, place them in positions where they will be easy to see and to sense.

Lie the Sensory Being you are supporting among them and allow them to discover what their proprioceptive and vestibular sensory signals mean as they encounter them in partnership with the stimulus you've provide.

Easy ways to do this:

For small Sensory Beings you may be able to pop a clothes airer open above them and hang things from it.

For larger Sensory Beings hook coat hangers from the ceiling or from a rope strung across the room and dangle things from these.

Always be sure to supervise their explorations, you do not want them to get tangled in the strings and hurt themselves. Lili Neilson's small rooms, and standard baby gyms are good examples of places that offer dangling delights (although often on baby gyms the things hang too high to be discovered unintentionally which is a disadvantage).

