

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.

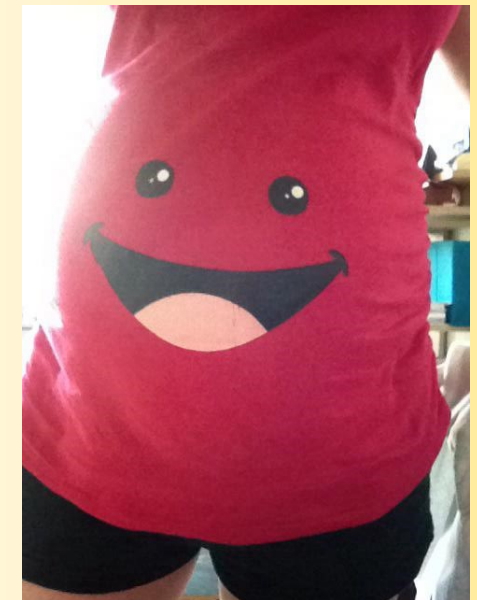


The Sensory Projects

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In the beginning



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In the beginning

In the beginning you were safe and warm in a womb. Most babies first sound in the world is a cry. Transitioning from a safe place to a potentially dangerous place we respond with a cry for help, asking for security.

For some experience in the womb is not one of total safety, for example scans show the distress a baby experiences when a mother smokes a cigarette and many studies show a mother's emotional state has a chemical impact on her growing foetus.

That safe experience in the womb is the foundation of learning, the bedrock of emotional security and positive attachment.

All parents are keen to see their children begin to tick off developmental milestones but pushing for these without strong foundations can mean towers of achievement topple.



We can support Sensory Beings, and others who may need it, to build this strong foundation by creating an environment that shares a sensory palette with the womb experience and by ensuring that we are responsive to all and any attempts to communicate. Let us focus first on creating the sensory environment:

What we are aiming for is an enclosed environment, lit with pinky/red tones, combined with white noise and a heartbeat rhythm, at body temperature, that offers periods of rocking. In addition to this we can think of offering sweet tastes and soothing pheromone scents.

What might this look like?

For a small Sensory Being it could be a red wrap sling that allows the primary carer to carry the infant around. This is great as it will automatically provide the heartbeat and the temperature and scents that are desirable. Carrying a small child upright can also help prevent chest infections (more common in those who lie flat all day). aid digestion and regulate heartbeat.

For a larger Sensory Being it could be a hammock or chair swing. Free white noise apps are available for most phones and youtube provides free access to womb sounds which many find aid relaxation.

You could use a large deep resonate drum to create a heartbeat rhythm.

If you are supporting a larger Sensory Being and it is appropriate for you to do so skin to skin contact can still be very beneficial.

Now let us focus on responding to the cry. Understanding that it will not be an actual cry for every Sensory Being, it will be whatever is their means of expression. To respond means that you do something as a result of their expression, that could be making a noise back, it could be a facial expression, whatever it is, it needs to be something they can perceive. Of course it would be wonderful if you could understand what their expression meant: we cannot always do this but we can always let them know we noticed them.

Building foundations is never the exciting part of construction, but time spent making good ones, and time spent reinforcing existing ones is always worthwhile.

