

## **Parent Sensory Training Script Part Two Touch/Tactile**

This script is for use by Interpreters and is planned to work alongside the slides in the power-point presentation. Please feel free to print this off if required, and then translate each slide in sequence and in time with the presentation. Each section of the training has a script available.

### **Part Two - Touch**

#### **Slide 1**

Welcome to Part two of the Derbyshire Health care NHS Foundation Trust's Community Paediatric Occupational Therapy team's Sensory Training for Parents and Carers.

#### **Slide 2**

In this section we are going to talk about the touch sense.

#### **Slide 3**

We experience our sense of touch through our skin. Touch tells us if what we are touching is living or just an object, whether it is hot or cold, solid or soft.

Touch also allows us to understand, identify and make decisions about the nature of what we are touching. This sense gives us the ability to discriminate, or to understand and identify what we are touching. This enables us to find specific items in a bag, drawer or pencil case using feel alone. We can adjust how we use our hands to perform functional actions in the most effective way.

We use our touch sense in many varied and subtle ways, applying pressure and manipulating items in order to control tools – such as to get dressed, use a knife and fork, play on an i-pad or to write.

There are two main types of touch we need to consider when thinking about our tactile sensory processing.

This is light tickly touch and deep pressure or sustained touch.

#### **Slide 4:**

Light tickly touch is received by many sensory receptors that sit near the surface of the skin. The brain pays attention to this input, because it brings our attention to possible dangers, and in doing so, it has a protective function - light touch therefore, raises our awareness or alerts us!

An over response in this sense can cause some children to struggle with the feeling of clothing, to avoid messy play, or some foods. Many of us will experience some discomfort for some touch experiences, like disliking the feeling of wet cotton wool,

or scouring pads. This discomfort or avoidance is only a problem to us if it is related to more than one experience or if the experience stops us being able to undertake normal daily living activities.

### **Slide 5:**

Deep pressure receptors are situated deeper within the skin layer, there are fewer of these receptors; but they are large and carry a lot of information to the brain and central nervous system.

Deep touch is often sustained; we experience this when we lean against or hold something for a while. It is also the information we receive when we are given a hug.

Generally Deep touch reassures us and calms us.

We use deep pressure touch as one of our most important sensory tools.

### **Slide 6:**

Outlining is when we use firm deep pressure touch to go around a child's body outline. In order to do this you need to move your hands over your child's shoulders, back, and sides. Your movements should be slow and definite – it is important to avoid any type of tickle contact.

### **Slide 7: photo outlining:**

Here Mum is facing her child and using deep pressure on both sides of his body she is moving her hands down his arms. This can be done in a slow firm slide down the arms or as a series of deep pressure squashes that move slowly, in steps down the arms. You can outline the back and down the sides of the legs also. It is important to avoid light tickle touch, and do not be tempted to introduce tickle play when doing this activity.

Mum is very quiet during this process, she is avoiding direct eye contact, but is watching to see how her child reacts to this touch, and she will stop if he starts to become giggly or resists the pressure. If when you are using this technique you see any of these unwanted responses, pause, and wait for your child to become calm and then carry on with the outlining.

If your child struggles to get away, don't try to stop them but continue the technique at a different time, you might need to build acceptance slowly over time.

This technique is a good preparation tool to use when you know your child will find something challenging.

**Slide 8:**

Deep pressure: This can be a hug, a lean against, a side by side hold or a squash. The hug should be maintained, however it is important that the child can move away from this contact if they need to.

Deep pressure touch can be used to prepare the child for a challenging experience such as for meal times/teeth cleaning, or nail cutting.

**Slide 9 phot sofa:**

Here we see Mum sitting next to her son who is squashed against the arm of the chair. It is important that the boy can move away if he wants to. This technique can also be used by allowing your child to be behind you when you are on the sofa. Many children seek this position themselves, or seek to squash themselves beside walls or between the sofa and the wall. If you see this behaviour your child is seeking this sensation.

Mum is not looking directly at her son; she is also not talking to him. If you want to give a voice cue to this technique it is recommended that you use one word such as 'squash' as a label rather than give a lot of verbal information.

**Slide 10: photo cushions:**

Here we are watching Mum using deep pressure through cushions. This technique can be done in bed in the morning to help prepare your child for getting up. In bed use a pillow to squash across your child's body.

Make sure the squash is firm, but not too heavy for your child. With practice you will learn how much pressure your child likes.

Always make sure you can see your child's face and stop if they show distress. Apply the squashing pressure slowly. You can let your child know you are going to squash them by saying the word Squash. In this photo Mum is calm and quiet, she is not adding any additional sensory information to this interaction. By keeping a low sensory approach, Mum reduces the demand of the situation and the environment for her son, this allows the deep pressure technique to work most effectively. It can be challenging to maintain this low sensory approach, and this technique needs to be practised.

**Slide 11: Photo Deep pressure walking:**

In this photograph we see the Mum providing deep pressure touch through the whole left side of her child, Mums right hand is also providing deep pressure to her son's shoulder. This is a good technique to practice as it can be used out in community settings and can be very discrete.

As with the other techniques, make sure the pressure is consistent and avoid tickle touch.

### **Slide12: New Techniques**

Introduce any new technique at a quiet time for your child. Not when they are already challenged.

If your child is able to understand, talk about the plan and agree how to practise this.

Many techniques will need to be familiar before the child can respond by calming, it is important not to give up if any new technique does not work immediately.

A good time to introduce a new technique is during a quiet time, such as when relaxing on the sofa watching TV.

If your child is not able to be part of the plan start by introducing techniques to your child, use the strong hand to shoulder touch for a few seconds and then remove your hand. If your child does not find this difficult repeat and sustain the contact for longer. If your child finds this contact to be OK, repeat the following day. You can call the contact 'squash', but do not add too many words to the practise. Repeat until you feel your child is able to accept this touch without becoming distressed. You can then try the same contact in preparation to challenging activities or to support calming when your child is starting to become distressed.

This is the end of Section two Touch. Please go to Section Three Taste. If you do not need any other sensory information please go to the sensory day section of this training, there are two options one for Early Years and Primary aged children and one for Secondary aged children. At the end of these sections you will be given information about how to access a follow up session.