Application of Sensory Diets in the Home, School, or Clinic

Autism Society of the Bluegrass
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Term was "coined" back in 1971 and has been refined ever since

Used a nutritional diet as a metaphor to stress the need for the "Just Right" combination of sensory input to keep optimal arousal and performance

Have to time and plan our sensory activities to make them "snacks" or "meals"

1. **Mood makers** – change our "state" for short periods of time
2. **State changers** – change our "state" for longer effect on performance

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Sensory Considerations and Assessment

1. Any cycle seen with behavior
   a. sensory seeking
   b. sensory avoiding
   c. modulation difficulties

2. Optimally, look at 2 days of behaviors
   a. for home: sleep, waking, day activities, noise, different environments, night routine
   b. school: from home, transitions, classroom environments, noise, anxiety
BUILDING A SENSORY DIET

Choose from a menu RATHER than follow a recipe

Time to choose the power:

1. Vestibular: 4 to 8 hour duration

2. Whole body, joint traction/co-contraction, heavy work, and some respiratory work: 2 hour duration

3. Touch pressure: 1-2 hour duration

4. Visual – not long lasting

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DEVELOPMENT OF SELF REGULATION

THIRD ORDER
- Invention
- Sustained attention
- Working memory
- Choice of a goal
- Anticipatory planning
- Planning
- Formulation of strategies
- Execution of strategies
- Evaluation of strategies
- Self-monitoring
- Problem solving
- Voluntary, goal directed behavior
- Language for organization
- Recognition of need for state change/maintenance
- Organization of spaces, time, tasks, environments

SECOND ORDER
- Organized outputs
  - Suck/swallow/breathe
    - Synchrony
  - Selective attention
  - Visual searching, monitoring & directing
  - Adaptive/movement
  - Vocalization
  - Patterns
  - Ability to achieve, maintain and change situation appropriate states
  Oral
    - use of taste, texture, temperature, suck, blow, bite, crunch, chew, lick
  Hands
    - use of form, size, texture, temperature, movement patterns
  Body/Parts
    - use of movement patterns & planes of movement
      - push, pull, lift, carry, hang, bounce, swing, rotate
      - horizontal (supine/prone), vertical, diagonal, upside down/backwards

FIRST ORDER
- Automatic functions
  - temperature
  - blood pressure/heart rate
  - respiration
  - sleep/wake cycles
  - ingestion/digestion/elimination
  - integrated function of nervous, endocrine & immune systems
- Muscle/cortical tone
- State maintenance
- Monitoring for survival

Figure 33. Cutler, Stevens Domínguez, Oetter, Westby 1992, UAP/UNM/Training Unit. Printed with permission.
SPECIFIC HOME PROGRAMS
Wilbarger Touch Pressure
Listening Program

SCHOOL AND HOME PROGRAMS

The Alert Program: How Does Your Engine Run?

Listening Program

Brain Gym

OT Designed Sensory Diets

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