

Sensory Motor Circuits



Sensory Motor Circuits Sensory Circuits is a short and snappy sensory motor skills programme that helps to set children up for a school day. It enables children to reach the level of alertness needed to concentrate during lessons. They were developed in the Peterborough area, where most schools use it because it is so effective. Some schools run sensory circuits after lunch as well. Children participate in a 10-15-minute session of activities designed to improve brain processing efficiency, and they generally find that the circuit is a fun way to start the day. Doing the activities in the recommended order is vital. The right order results in a well-regulated, happy child. The wrong order may well result in a dysregulated, upset or irritable child.

1. Alerting

The first activities should be those that make the head change direction rapidly.

Examples:

- Bouncing
- Skipping
- Jumping or Step-ups
- Self Spinning using board/ cone or Bilibo
- Trampette (Jump, Jump, lift knees up / kick feet out behind, Star jump, Jump and count, recite time tables, recite alphabet, throw a bean bag, ball at a target/into a bucket, Throw a bean bag to a person who is walking around the trampette, Change direction while jumping)

2. Organising

The second set of activities should be those that provide a motor challenge to the child.

Examples:

- Funny walks: Animal walks.
- Egg and spoon walk
- Throw and catch while on a balance board
- Balance board, put bean bags around it. Child picks up bean bags one by one, or in a certain order.
- Walk along a gym bench (could be upturned, with the child picking up bean bags and throwing them in a bucket)
- Pass bean bag round leg, behind back
- Log rolls, hands clasped & arms stretched out above head
- Infinity Walk: walk round 2 chairs, in and out in a figure of eight. Repeat with eyes closed
- Balance along masking tape line.
- Jump over line from side to side
- Commando crawling.

3. Calming

The third set of activities should be those that calm the child: (deep pressure, proprioceptive input, and heavy work)

Examples:

- Wall pushes: Count to 10. Repeat 3 times
- Half press-ups from the floor: Push up from knees not from the feet.
- Isometrics and Chair sit ups (see Isometrics on page 6)
- 'Steamroller squash': Student lies on their stomach. Roll a gym ball up and down, pressing down hard. Do not roll it over their head.
- Joint compressions
- Firm massage: any of back, hands, feet, and shoulders

Considerations:

- Environment - space, layout,
- Equipment- use of available equipment, checked for health and safety
- Communication – use of visual symbols
- letters to parents- consent/ information
- Staffing – identify key people, ratio, ideally minimum 3 adults, training needs
- Risk assessments- essential, updating/ reviewing
- Music- It is useful to play music during the circuit. Choose music that is fast (140-160 beats per minute). Keep stereo away from calm down area.

