

ALERTING IDEAS

Please keep in mind that these strategies are not specific to every child, not all children respond in the same way to sensory input. It is worth trialling some of these activities to determine what works best for the child. Carefully monitor the child's reaction to the following strategies, stop immediately if signs of distress or discomfort are displayed

Organising and alerting activities can help children who are either over or under-active become focussed and attentive. These activities are particularly useful during transitions in the school day and a lot of them are great as a whole class activity! These activities can help a person to attend and focus, by calming and organising the sensory system.

Proprioception

- Proprioceptive awareness is stimulated by weight-bearing and repetitive activity, which also increases muscle tone and strength. This can be carried out prior to activities involving concentration and fine motor control e.g. handwriting.
- Proprioception helps to “centre” a person - it helps the brain to either alert or calm by efficiently organising and making sense of information entering our sensory systems and can help a person to maintain a calm alert state throughout the day. Movement breaks and activities which involve resistance in the muscles and joints such as ‘Heavy work’ movement breaks can help to facilitate this.

Heavy Work and Deep Pressure

- Magic room - with arms extended and palms flat push the walls of the room to “make the room ‘bigger’”
- Chair push ups - sitting on standard class chair, hold onto sides of chair and lift bottom off chair. Hold position and count. This is a great whole class activity
- Stand in door frame and “push out” the sides
- Monkey bars – hanging and swinging from bars is great
- Push open heavy doors
- Carry books against body hugging to chest, i.e. carry books/objects to office/from class to class
- Place chairs on desk at end of day
- Erase or wash chalkboard/wipe board/desk
- Help move gym mats in P.E



Movement

- Take movement breaks to stand up and stretch between classroom activities
- Using a video The Wake Up Shake Up (<https://youtu.be/1gUbdNbu6ak>) or The Bean Game [The Bean Game! - YouTube](#)
- Have a mini trampoline or gym ball available for use of bouncing
- Take frequent breaks during more difficult tasks



- Marching from one room to another
- Marching and clapping to music.

Other ideas

- Provide a chewy and/or crunchy snacks i.e. dried mango, liquorice, biltong, carrot sticks, pretzels, bread sticks
- Drinking cold water from a sports drink bottle
- Run classroom errands to provide opportunities for movement
- Implement a card system so that child can have a discreet method to request a movement break.
- Use bright natural light or colourful lights
- Consider open spaces, with lots of different colours/objects
- Use of bright colours, visual and tactile stimulus

CLASS WAKE UP

- Stamp feet. March on the spot
- Push palms together for 5 seconds
- Clasp fingers of each hand (“opera singer” pose) and pull for 5 seconds
- Hands on head, push down firmly for 5 seconds
- Hands clasped behind head, pull hands forward adding resistance with your head, for 5 seconds
- Stretch both arms up high, fingers outstretched and hold for 10 seconds.
- Reach down slowly and touch your toes or put hands flat on the floor
- Neck rolls to either side (slowly) – 2 or 3 to either side
- Shake out hands
- Give yourself a big hug

THE BEAN GAME

- Runner Bean – Run on the spot
- Jumping Bean – Jump up and down
- String Bean – Stand tall and stretch yours arms over your head
- Jelly Bean – Wobble your arms and legs
- Broad Bean – Stand with your arms and legs as wide as you can
- Baked Bean – curl up on the floor like a small baked bean
- Chilli Bean – Shiver, pretending to be really cold



- French Bean – Pull a pose and call out ‘ooo la la!’

