

Sensory & Support Materials Toolkit

This toolkit includes practical, portable tools that can support autistic individuals in managing sensory overload, anxiety, focus, communication, and emotional regulation. Please acknowledge that every person is different—what works for one may not work for another—so this is a flexible starting point.

Biting (Oral Sensory Needs)

Some individuals bite to regulate oral sensory input or when feeling anxious.

Materials & Tools:

- [Chewable jewellery \(chewelry\): necklaces, bracelets](#)
- [Silicone chew sticks](#)
- [Comfort safety lanyards for chews](#)
- [Textured or vibrating teething toys \(age-appropriate\)](#)

Other Strategies:

- Offer crunchy or chewy snacks (e.g., carrots, bagels)
- Encourage safe redirection (e.g., “chew necklace, not shirt”)

Sleeping

Sleep issues can stem from anxiety, overstimulation, or sensory sensitivity. Please check our sleeping toolkits for further information.

Materials & Tools:

- [Weighted blankets or teddies](#)
- [White noise machines](#)
- [Soft lighting/night lights](#)

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- [Visual bedtime routine charts](#)
- [Lavender-scented pillows or sprays](#)

Other Strategies:

- Predictable bedtime routine
- Limit screen time before bed
- Gentle sensory activities before bed (e.g., stretching, warm bath)

Co-operation

Difficulty with co-operation might stem from communication differences or lack of understanding of expectations.

Materials & Tools:

- [Visual schedules and choice boards](#)
- [First-Then cards](#)
- [Social stories \(e.g., "Taking Turns"\)](#)
- [Reward charts or token boards](#)
- [AAC \(Alternative & Augmentative Communication\) devices or picture communication cards](#)

Other Strategies:

- Give clear, direct instructions
- Allow processing time
- Offer controlled choices to encourage autonomy

Hyperactivity

It can be a response to under-stimulation, anxiety, or difficulties with emotional regulation.

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- [Movement breaks \(e.g., trampoline, scooter board\)](#)
- [Resistance bands or fidget pedals under desks](#)
- [Sensory swings](#)
- [Weighted lap pads](#)
- [Calming jars](#)

Other Strategies:

- Build physical activity into the day
- Use “heavy work” tasks (e.g., carrying books)
- Try sensory circuits in school/home settings

Concentration and Over-sensory Protection

Focus can be affected by sensory input, anxiety, or executive functioning differences.

Materials & Tools:

- [Fidget tools \(spinners, cubes, stress balls\)](#)
- [Noise-cancelling headphones or ear defenders](#)
- [Task timers \(e.g., Time Timer\)](#)
- [Desk dividers or quiet corners](#)
- [Visual checklists](#)

Other Strategies:

- Break tasks into smaller chunks
- Use visual and verbal prompts
- Provide movement breaks

Emotion Regulation

Emotional regulation difficulties can lead to meltdowns or shutdowns.

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Materials & Tools:

- [Emotion cards or zones of regulation visuals](#)
- [Weighted blankets/lap pads](#)
- [Sensory jars or squishy toys](#)
- [Headphones with calming music](#)
- [Breathing tools \(e.g., pinwheels, breathing cards\)](#)

Other Strategies:

- Help label emotions (“I can see you're feeling...”)
- Co-regulation: model calm responses
- Use “feelings corners” or calm boxes

Anxiety

Often co-occurs with autism and may present as avoidance, stimming, or emotional distress.

Materials & Tools:

- [Visual timetables for predictability](#)
- [Comfort objects \(e.g., teddy, hoodie\)](#)
- [Calming sensory tools \(e.g., tactile toys, fidgets\)](#)
- [Weighted teddies or lap snakes](#)
- [Social stories for anxiety triggers](#)

Other Strategies:

- Prepare for changes in advance
- Use grounding techniques (5-4-3-2-1)
- Encourage journaling or drawing as an expression

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