

Sensational Toddler/Preschooler OT Tip of the Month Music

Do you know toddlers/preschoolers that...

1. Cover their ears or seem to withdraw during music
2. Get very silly or attention seeking with music activities
3. Have difficulty following a rhythm or imitating actions of a song

These children might have sensory and/or motor struggles. Some children are sensitive to the specific frequencies or volume of sound. They may feel actual discomfort. Some children get very overstimulated by the music and/or movement during music leading to challenging behavior. Motor planning difficulties can make it hard to imitate actions, particularly when two hands act together.

Sensational Ideas for music ...

1. Use music as a calming, organizing tool by watching the reaction of the group to various types of music – rhythmic, nature, classical
2. Sound blocking headphones can allow a child to participate without discomfort from the volume of sound.
3. Pre-teaching can be helpful if a new song with actions will be learned. Arrange for the child to watch a video of the song with actions to get exposure before class and extra opportunities to practice.
4. Provide heavy muscle work just before music time to help children feel calm and organized (animal walks, stretches, etc.).

A good read: [Tools for Tots](#) by Henry, Kane-Wineland, Swindeman is a resource book with sensory strategies for toddlers and preschoolers and there is a CD of songs paired with the sensory issues addressed also available.

[Click here](#) for more tip sheets for preschool and school age classrooms at www.cintiOTinstitute.com/tipofthemoth . For information about occupational therapy services at COTI go to www.cintiOTinstitute.com.

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