

Sensational OT Tip of the Month

Social Struggles

Do you know children that ...?

1. seem to have difficulty making or sustaining friendships?
2. do not know how to join into play with others?
3. get overstimulated and/ or withdraw from groups of children?

These children might have sensory processing challenges that are impacting social interactions. They may not filter out sensory input well in groups making it hard to engage. They may have poor motor coordination making it hard to play successfully during physical play. They may feel insecure because of negative past experiences and therefore avoid the risk of failure.

Sensational Ideas for Social Success

1. Acknowledge to the child that you that some situations are hard and that you are there to help if needed.
2. Plan time for this child to work with one child successfully in an activity that is of interest to both.
3. Provide opportunities for social interaction in quiet places. Large group spaces like the cafeteria or gymnasium are extra challenging.
4. Let the parents know what the other kids commonly play during recess or upcoming gym activities so they can practice the needed skills at home. Ex. 4 square, jump rope, basketball or kick ball.
5. Utilize literature and curriculum that build social thinking as part of learning for all the children in your class. We sometimes use the We Thinkers curriculum for 4-7 year olds and the Superflex curriculum for elementary/middle school students from www.socialthinking.com

COTI provides added social opportunities during the summer. Go to www.cintiOTinstitute.com for information about the social opportunities at COTI Camp Odakota and our Summer Sensations groups.

[Click here](#) for more tip sheets for preschool and school age classrooms at www.cintiOTinstitute.com/tipofthemonth . For information about occupational therapy services at COTI go to www.cintiOTinstitute.com. (Dostal 2017)