



Section: Explore More

Module: Disability Inclusion for Ministry

## Suggested Materials for a Sensory Room, Embracing Neurodiversity Handout 2 of 3

*Information gleaned from Circle of Friends Camp at Camp Gilmont and kin-dom camps in various locations*

- Yoga mats
- Shag throw carpet
- Noise Canceling Headphones
- Fabric to cover overhead lighting (especially if fluorescent)
  - Talk to building manager or facilities team to make sure all are on board and can prevent fire danger
    - If fabric is not workable, see about light filters (similar to ones used in theater)
- Fabric or adhesive window clings to diffuse natural light and reduce visual stimulation
- Single person pop up tent to provide isolation and darkness ([Like this one](#))
- Lights on a dimmer switch so there can be a control of how bright or dark the room is
- Twinkle lights for the walls
- Fidget Toys (search on Amazon)
- Sensory friendly snacks (chewing and sucking are often forms of self-regulation) *Make sure to record and confirm any food allergies before offering*
  - *Crunchy* snacks provide a lot of pressure input to the jaw.
    - These snacks include: Thick or hard granola bars , Apples, pears, carrot sticks, cucumbers , Pretzels , Goldfish or Saltine Crackers, Ice chips, Rice cakes , Bagel or pita chips , Graham crackers , Dry cereal
  - *Chewy* snacks promote an increased rate of chewing as well as providing a lot of input.
    - Some examples of these snacks are: Fruit snacks, Fruit leather, Dried fruit, Raisins , Chewy mini bagels , Gum , Sausage sticks or beef jerky
  - Sucking on snacks and drinks also provides great resistance in the mouth for sensory seekers.
    - You could provide crazy straws or coffee stirrer straws
    - Applesauce and Yogurt pouches
    - Hard candy mints
- Coloring Sheets and a variety of coloring objects (colored pencils, crayons, chalk, water color, felt pens, gel pens, etc.)
- More resources for Sensory Room materials:
  - <https://hes-extraordinary.com/sensory-room-ideas>
  - <https://www.pediaplex.net/blog/sensory-room-ideas-for-children-with-autism>

*\*This could all be adapted and used to create Sensory bags to have in worship or Sunday School, or any group gathering\**





### **Questions to ask your leaders and to ask of your programs:**

- Do you offer and support multiple styles of learning?
  - Learn more in this article: <https://teachable.com/blog/types-of-learning-styles>
- Do you have resources or accommodations to help support people who get overstimulated easily?
  - Noise Canceling Headphones
  - A room for people to experience worship that isn't loud or in direct flashing light
  - Handheld grounding tools or fidget toys
- Are all of your youth and children's programs loud or based on ability to move, hear, speak and comprehend quickly?
- Does your website have accessibility options? Has it been designed to be accessible?
- Do you have behavioral specialists, therapists, or other folks in your congregation/setting that are trained in accessibility and supporting needed accommodations to create a more welcoming environment? Involve them in doing a programmatic inventory of the space, the bulletin, the offerings and available resources
- Do you have neurodivergent leaders on staff or as volunteers? That is a great non-verbal way to queue that representation matters to your congregation
- Have you asked neurodivergent people directly what they need to feel more welcome? And have you taken steps to make those things possible? It is important to create means of agency and giving voice to lived experience- neurodiverse individuals are the best experts on neurodiversity!

Resources prepared by Rev. Pepa Paniagua, a pastor, New Worshiping Community leader (Kin-dom Community), and co-founder of Kin-dom Camp.