

# Vision, Motor and Self-Care Skills for children with Down Syndrome

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September 2021



# Overview



- Most children with Down syndrome experience delays or physical differences that impact vision, motor, and self care skills.
- These can be assessed with some tests, but often are best assessed with doing the activity they need or want to do.
- Offering simple instructions, visuals, time for processing information, and repetition of tasks can be helpful.
- Most importantly, make it meaningful!



# Assessment

## Standardized

- Beery VMI
- PDMS
- BOT-2
- Sensory Profile

## Non-Standardized

- Write their name or just color
- Try to get self dressed/undressed
- Prepare food
- Puzzle
- Ball game



# Vision

## Challenges

- Holding items too close or too far away



## Solutions

- Glasses that fit!
- Larger print books



# Visual Motor



## Challenges

- Smaller hands
- Very flexible joints
- Cognitive Delays



## Solutions

- Provide foot support when sitting
- Use smaller writing utensils
- Practice cutting lines and shapes
- Use smaller toys
- Practice a lot!



# Fine Motor

## Challenges

- Smaller hands
- Low tone
- Weakness



## Solutions

- Smaller writing utensils
- Work with tongs and tweezers
- Slanted surface to help with grasp
- Practice grasp on bottle tops, bags, clothes pins, small pieces of food

# Self-Care: dressing

## Challenges

- Shorter stature
- Low tone
- Weaker muscles
- Cognitive delays



## Solutions

- Larger clothing
- Fasteners off the body first
- Try tying shoes on table, then on body
- Work on underclothing first, then longer clothing
- practice!



# Self-Care: Grooming and Toileting

## Challenges

- Difficulty brushing teeth
- Difficulty getting hands washed
- Shorter legs
- Delayed cognition
- Sensory processing



## Solutions

- Mirror
- Turns with teeth brushing
- Timed toileting
- Practice nail clippers on paper
- Steps to hand washing by sink
- Stool for feet in bathroom

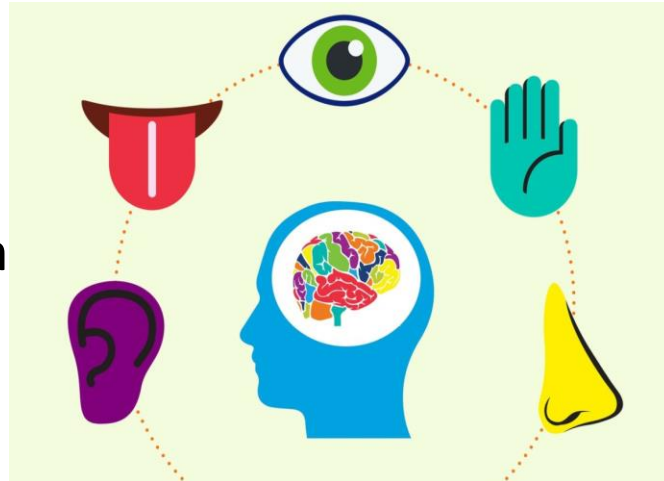




# Sensory Processing

## Challenges

- Over or under sensitive to input
- Hearing difficulties
- Holding paper or screen too close
- Putting non-food items in mouth
- Overstuffing
- Touching or not liking to touch certain textures
- Lots of movement



## Solutions

- Watch how the child reacts
- Assess for hearing or vision difficulties
- Offer items they can chew on
- Add more flavor or spice to food
- Slowly introduce new texture, or allow child to have things they can touch
- Provide movement breaks before sitting down



# Teens



## Challenges

- Learning chores
- Transportation
- Meal Preparation
- Mental Health
- Relationships

## Solutions

- Break down chores into steps
- Work on walking to familiar places
- Begin with simple recipes/cooking
- Help them find one person who they trust to talk to about hard topics
- Talk about boundaries, taking care of bodies, and ways to interact with peers





Questions?

