



# Theme: Overstimulation Solutions

Sensory Overstimulation can occur when the brain is overwhelmed trying to process and sort through information it's receiving from the five senses. Some common experiences that can lead to overstimulation include loud noises, bright lights, certain textures and strong smells. Everyone is different and what might feel okay for one person could be overstimulating for another.

Overstimulation can cause reactions that are different for everyone, but it might make you want to cry, cover your ears or face, stop listening, have an outburst, have difficulty focusing, feel irritated, get aggressive, or make you want to leave a space or situation.

## Building self-soothing skills:

Over time you can improve your self-soothing skills. You might not feel like it helps at first but over time, these types of exercises can calm the body and mind.

Here are some ideas that could help:

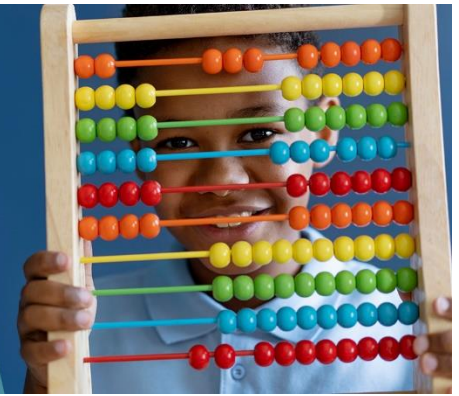
- Take a warm or cool bath.
- Change the temperature by moving inside or outside.
- Take a walk, do jumping jacks, or practice another exercise. Yoga is great for this too!
- Take off your shoes and feel some grass or dirt under your feet. Try to focus on the way it feels.
- Practice guided meditation, counting, or breathing exercises.
- Turn down lights if possible, or move to an area with soft or low lighting.
- Try soothing scents or scents you enjoy.
- Try counting. Keep counting until you feel yourself relax.
- Feel better? Now it's time for Reflection: Try to identify what caused your distress. Was it a noise, smell or something else you might have been able to move away from? Could you have removed yourself from the situation for a while to help you feel better? What could you do if it happens again? Make a plan.

**Note:** *If none of these options are available and you feel overstimulated, be kind to yourself by taking regular breaks from the stimulating environment or situation.*

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# SENSORY KITS

## RESOURCES



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## How to use this kit

We've included some tools you can try out. These might help you with sensory overstimulation.

### This kit contains:

- Two books to read together: *The Beach is Loud* by Samantha Cotterill helps us understand how it might feel to become overstimulated. *Little Monkey Calms Down* by Michael Dahl helps us understand how self-soothing techniques can help.
- Noise-cancelling headphones: Use these to reduce the input you receive from the sounds all around you.
  - You can also use regular headphones or earbuds to listen to music or nature sounds with a low volume to muffle the impact of other noises.
- Weighted lap pad: When you are having trouble sitting still, try the lap pad and allow the pressure it provides to help you feel calmer.
  - You can also use weighted, soft or heated blankets and stuffed animals.
- Hug ball: Hugs can help us feel better! This ball is not for throwing - it's for hugging or squeezing.
  - For an extra big hug try a sensory sack or a hug bag.
- Monkey Noodles: These fidget toys help your hands or your mind focus on something new.