

Leisure Activity Considerations

The following is a list of things to consider when choosing leisure activities for your child. As the number of demands and the complexity of the sensory environment increase, some children may be able to sustain participation. Therefore, as you get to know your child's Sensational Profile, you can guide him/her toward leisure activities that are supportive as well as help him/her feel successful.

Effect on Arousal	energizing	restoring
Number of Participants	team	individual
Skill Demands	new or challenging skill development	familiar, high repetition, or mastered skills
Predictability	unpredictable movement of people and objects	predictable movement of people and objects
Strength/Posture	continuous posture/motor demands	low posture/motor demands with breaks
Intensity	periods of high and low intensity	minimal and/or sustained effort
Vestibular Demands	frequent change of direction	low to no direction changes
Vision Demands	vision demands with body movement	low vision demands
Auditory Demands	loud, noisy	quiet
Olfactory/Gustatory Demands	strong smells/tastes/textures	limited to no smells/tastes/textures
Fine Motor Demands	high fine motor skill demands	low fine motor skill demands
Space Availability	limited space	open space
Spatial Relationship	undefined space	defined space
Praxis Demands	sequencing of activities	single-step activities
Social Demands	high communication/ social demands	no communication/social demands
Rules	fluid rules	clear rules

Other factors to keep in mind:

- Instructor/coach personality/style
- Interests/what they want to learn
- Things they can do by themselves/with others
- Things they can do for fun or do to build skills
- Local resources/support

A Final Note:

While some children respond well to anything involving music, others may do best with high intensity movement. Finding the right match of the sensory environment and the level of skill demand for whatever activities a child shows interest in will support his/her ability to self-regulate while developing the skills they need to feel confident and successful.

Examples of more complex leisure activities may include soccer, dodgeball, and unstructured birthday parties

Examples of activities that typically require less skill and provide intense sensory input are swimming, jumping on a trampoline, and coloring.

If your child appears to be anxious about or have limited tolerance for a particular activity, encourage him/her to communicate more specifically about what the concern/challenge is so that you can guide him/her toward other more supportive options.