

## Sensorial activities

### A sensory box

The sensorial activities are those which refine the five senses – tactile, visual, auditory, olfactory and gustatory. For toddlers the sensorial activities are very important. From birth, babies start exploring the world through their senses. At first they just observe and listen. As soon as a baby is able to control their hands, they reach out to grab an object and explore it. The tactile sense remains an important tool for exploring the world throughout the early childhood. There is a very simple and fun way to engage a toddler in a sensorial activity through sensory boxes. A sensory box can be any container filled with any kind of tactile material that children explore with their hands. It is easy to create a sensory box at home.



#### You will need:

- A container
- Some grainy material (sand, lentils, semolina, wheat grains, etc.)
- Small objects

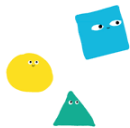
#### How to do it?

1. Pour the grainy material in the container.
2. Invite the child to work with you.
3. Present the small objects, naming each of them. Be sure to use objects familiar to the child. This will not be a language lesson and the



child needs to know the objects very well and to be familiar with their main characteristics.

4. Put the objects in the container and hide them in the grainy material well enough not to be visible.



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5. Invite the child to put their hands inside and look for the objects, trying to guess which one they have.
6. Ideally, the child will touch an object, feel it with their hands and name it and only after that they will take it out of the box. For younger toddlers it would not work this way; they will be excited and impatient to see what they've got. For older toddlers you can even put a blindfolder on their eyes.

### **Choosing the objects**

Any small object can be used in a sensory box. It needs to be familiar to the child and with distinguishable features – either shape or material or both.

For this sensory box I used a key (it is metal, it is smooth and cold, quite distinguishable), a small book (it is paper and it consists of pages, also easy to recognize), a small porcelain mug, two balls (one rubber and one woolen) and two cubes (one wooden and one marble), as she was well-familiar with the spherical and cubical shapes and another challenge was to determine the material. This child was too small (14 months) to verbalize and she was mainly feeling the difference in the touch. After she found them all, we spoke about them again and looked for other objects in the house, made of the same material, so she can touch and compare. It is a wonderful experience for the tactile sense.