

Thumbs Up Texture Exploration

Target age group: Preschool children with autism, all developmental levels

Objective: To expand the range of acceptable sensory experiences involving textures and to begin labeling comfort levels during experiences

Materials needed:

- Fabric scraps with different textures, such as fake fur, satin, velvet, vinyl, wool, etc.
- Other textured objects, such as sandpaper, wood, and plastic

Instructional strategy:

1. Before the lesson, talk with children about how each object has a different feeling. Give examples of how they may love or hate this feeling, such as scratchy shirt tags, furry stuffed animals, and other experiences they may have had.
2. Talk about the idea of thumbs up and thumbs down. If developmentally able, children can give a thumbs up for a sensory experience they enjoy and a thumbs down for a sensory experience they dislike.
3. Bring out the fabric scraps and other objects and give one piece to each child. Go around the circle, asking each child to give a thumbs up or a thumbs down for the feel of the piece.
4. Have children switch objects and give impressions for each one. Continue until each child has tried each texture.
5. At the end of the lesson, have children name their favorite objects.

Accommodations:

- Some children may require the help of a paraprofessional to stay on task and participate in the activity.
- Some children may not be developmentally ready to give a thumbs up or thumbs down. In this case, simply handling the object is sufficient.
- If children have a strong objection to the texture, they may be excused from handling that item.