

Valentine's sensory activities for children with autism



Valentine's Day is approaching, and it's a great occasion for children with autism to take part in.

Not only does the day promote the understanding of positive, loving relationships and social interaction, but it also provides lots of opportunities for fun and rewarding sensory activities.

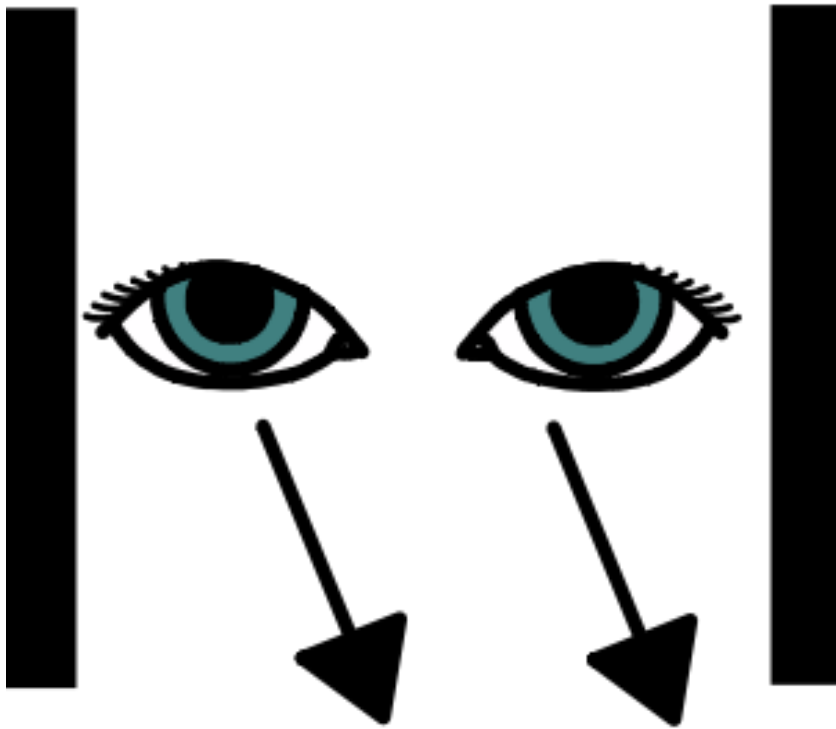
People with autism sense the world around them differently - they may experience hypersensitivity or hyposensitivity. Sensory play can be a comfortable way to explore new sensations and learn to use the senses, as well as a really effective way to calm anxieties.

You can read more about how sensory play can benefit children with autism here:

<https://app2vox.com/resources/sensory-activities-for-autistic-children/>

or scroll down for some sensory activities for non-verbal and autistic children you can try this Valentine's Day.





Sight: Floating heart bottles

These bottles are a bit like snow globes but for Valentine's Day. They're fascinating to watch.

Reuse a small clear plastic bottle and add your glitter – a mix of glitter glues in red, pink and purple, as well as heart-shaped glitter. Then simply fill with warm water. The jars can even double up as Valentine's Day gifts.

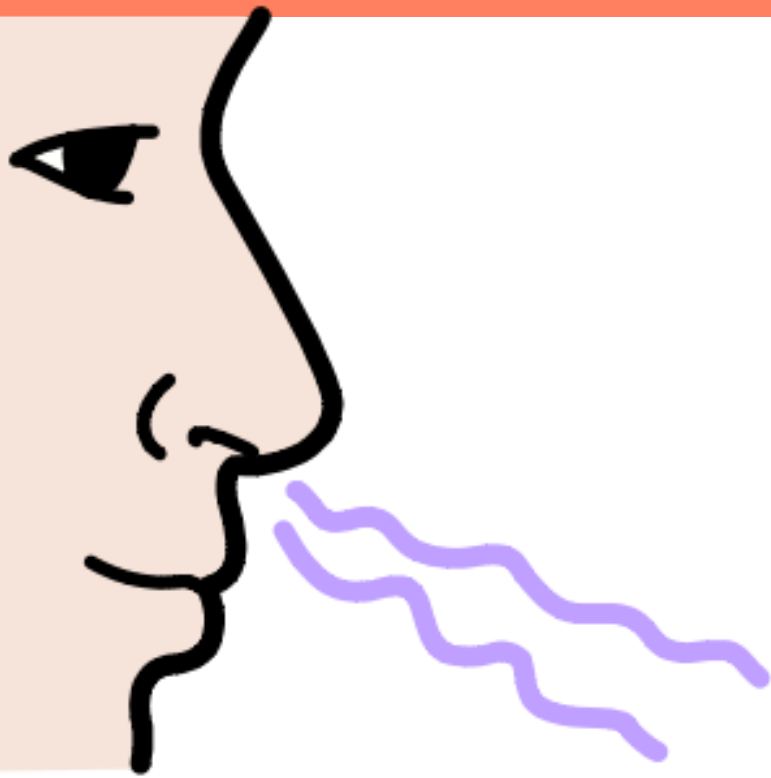


Hearing: Heart sound shakers

Based on Montessori sound cylinders, this is a relaxing and fun sound-matching game you can play using heart-shaped containers for a Valentine's Day theme.

Fill pairs of different coloured heart boxes with things that make different kinds of sounds, such as beads, bells, or raw chickpeas, so your child can shake them in turn and match the pairs.





Smell: Scented sensory box

Sorting through a sensory box can be both soothing and stimulating, and by adding scented items to the box, you can focus on the sense of smell.

Take a large plastic container and fill it with Valentine-themed objects such as heart or rose-shaped boxes, buttons and pots. To add a sweet-smelling dimension, you can add rice coated in a fragrant red or pink-coloured frosting mix – something like strawberry or raspberry flavour is ideal.





Taste: Heart biscuit tasting game

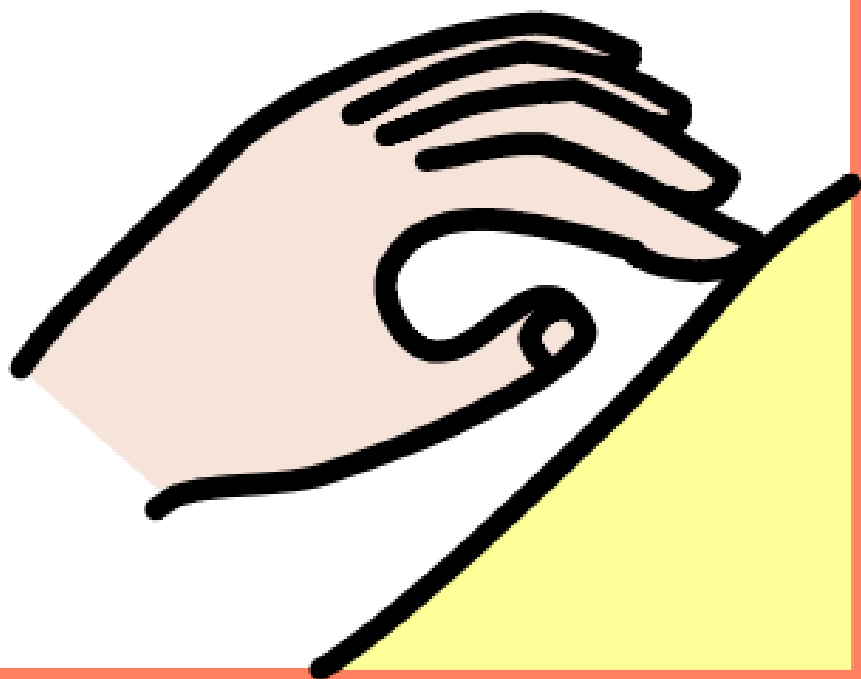
Bake some heart-shaped biscuits for your child, adding different tastes such as strawberry, chocolate, orange and lemon. Then encourage them to taste the heart biscuits and describe or identify the different tastes.



Touch: Heart texture-matching game

Get hold of some heart-shaped balloons and select fillings for them with a variety of textures. Things you could use to fill the balloons include flour, rice, playdough, shaving cream and water.

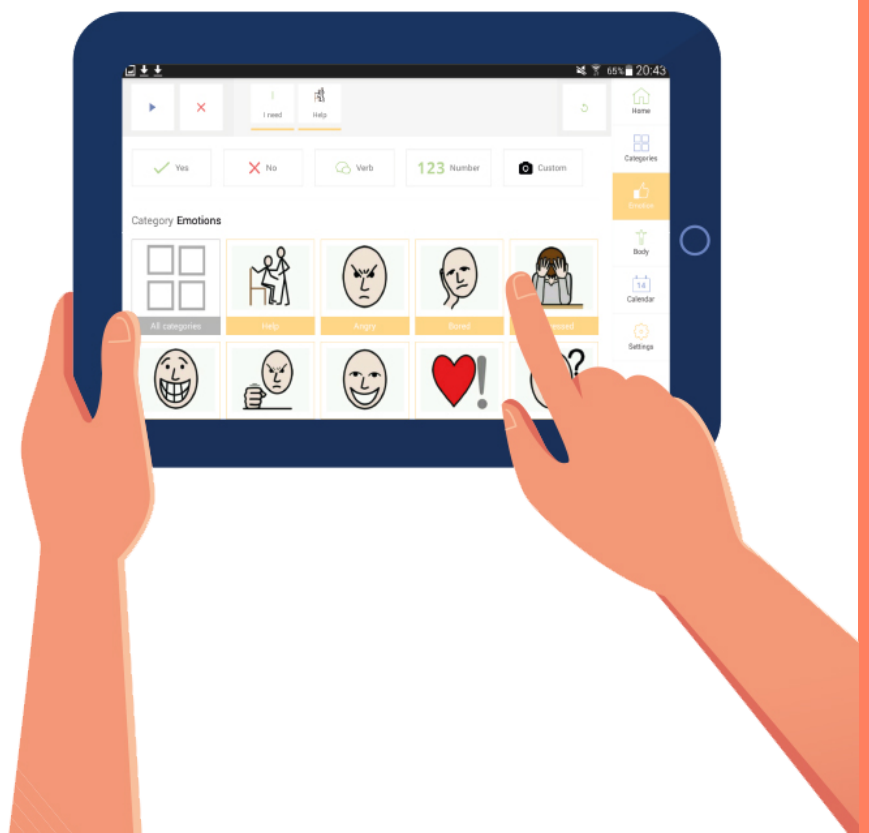
You could also try activities focusing on the other senses: vestibular (movement and balance) and proprioception (position of body) - for instance, by encouraging dance or other forms of physical expression.



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