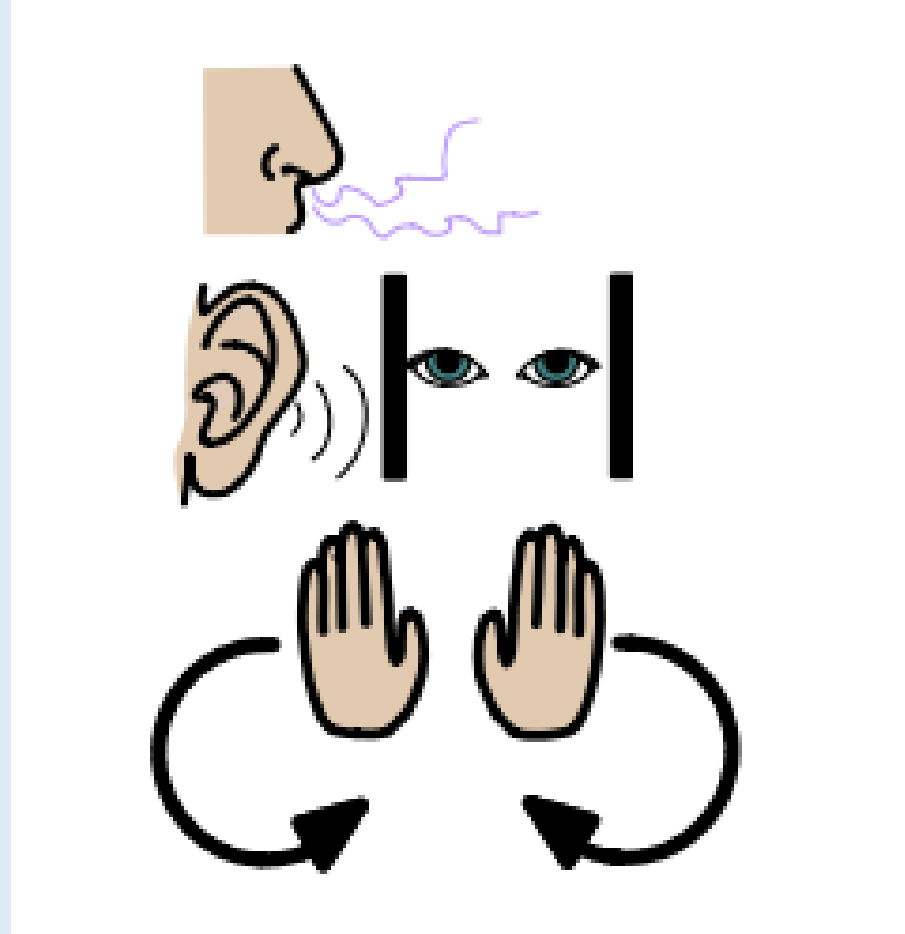


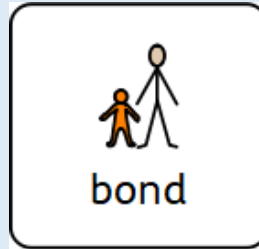
Sensory Massage



Connect with your child using sensory massage techniques.

What are the benefits of sensory massage?

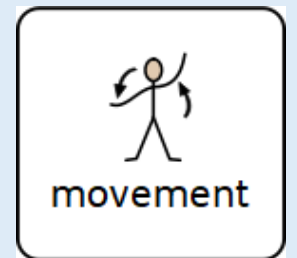
Child/Caregiver Bonding



- Massage offers an opportunity to bond with your child using gentle and relaxing touch.
- This a great way to communicate care, build the connection between child and caregiver, helping to build secure attachments.

Wakes up bodies

- Massage can help wake up their bodies and muscles – improving coordination and movement skills as their body awareness grows.



What are the benefits of sensory massage?

Reduces Sensitivities

- Children who are tactile defensive can find touch uncomfortable, massage helps to desensitise this.
- Firm touch can be preferable to gentle, while oil can make massage more comfortable.
- If your child is resisting or unhappy, stop the massage and try again another day or start with small steps and build up.

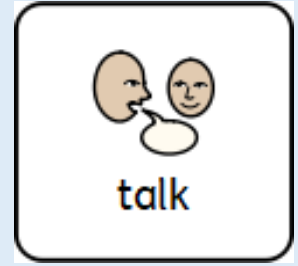


Calming and Regulating

- Massage is great for children who are always on the go with lots of energy.
- A massage can help your child to be calm, encourage relaxation, to be still and help with concentration.



What are the benefits of sensory massage?



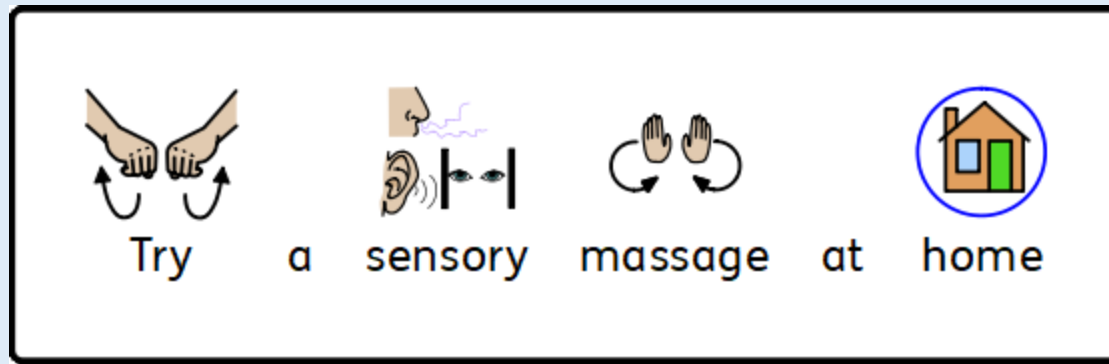
Heightening Physical Awareness

- Massage is a great way to communicate non-verbally with your child through touch.
- If your child can understand language, talk to them throughout the massage, telling them what you are doing and where you are touching them.

For example, *“I am fanning your arm”* or *“I am pressing the scourer into your leg.”* This is a great way to teach them about their bodies and help heighten their awareness of what they are feeling.

Set the scene ready for the sensory massage

- Wear comfortable and loose clothing.
- Make sure the space is comfortable – sit/lay on blankets, yoga mat or cushions.
- Ensure you are free from distraction for the duration. Put your phone on silent, make sure the room is not too bright and turn off the television.
- If your child gets up and moves, follow them and continue unless they become distressed, then stop. Try again another time.
- When commenting, make eye-contact and keep your voice low. Enjoy gazes and smiles with your child.



Suggested items you could use *(please adapt and use what you have available)*:

- A spatula or wooden spoon
- Feather duster or scarf
- Sponge
- Massage oil
- Blanket or bed sheet

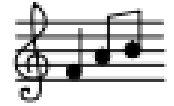


Step 1: Tapping with spatulas

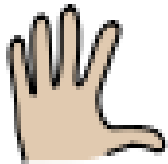
- Show your child the spatula and name it.
- Turn the music on.
- Tap the spatulas on your child to the beat.
- Allow your child to choose where to be tapped – use comments such as, *‘I’m tapping your foot.’ ‘Let’s tap your arm.’*



Tap



here for music



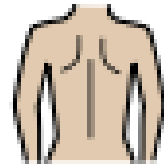
hand



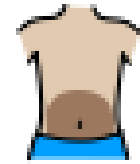
feet



arm



back



tummy

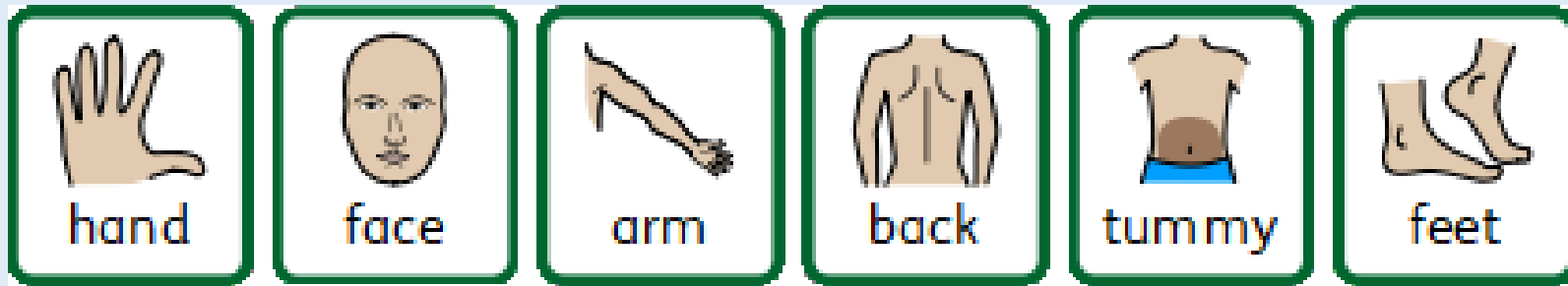


leg

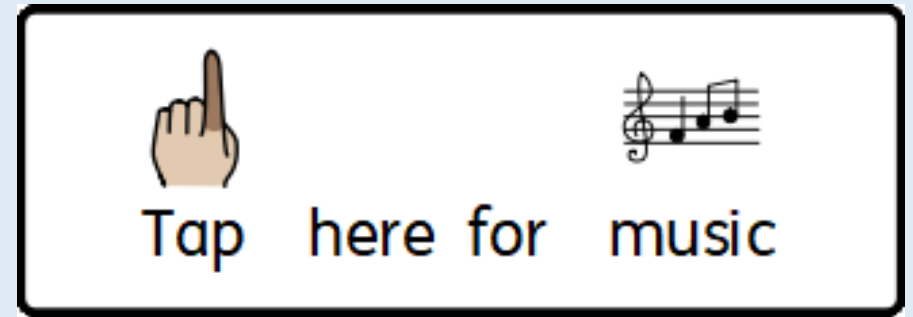
- Stop the music after 2-3 minutes (sooner/later depending on their response).

Step 2: Tickle with feathers

- Show your child the feather duster.
- Turn the music on.
- Tickle your child with the feathers to the music – use gentle flicking motions.
- Allow your child to choose where to be tickled – use comments such as, *'You like tickles on your face.'*

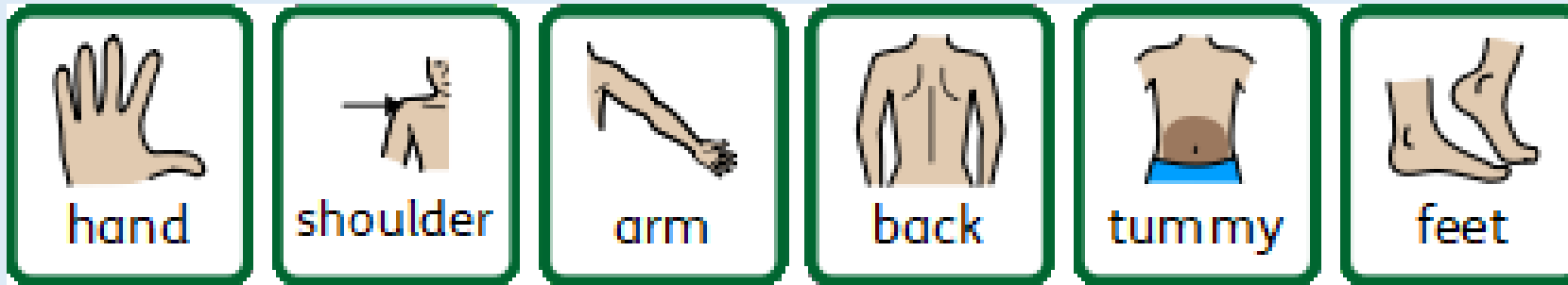
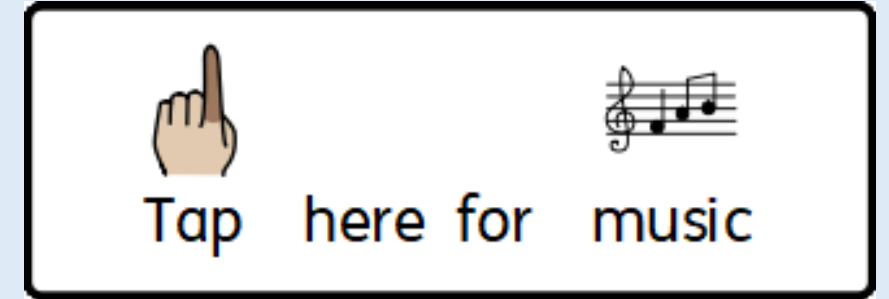


- Stop the music after 2-3 minutes (sooner/later depending on their response)



Step 3: Squeeze with sponge

- Show your child the sponge.
- Turn the music on.
- Squeeze the sponge on your child to the music.
- Allow your child to choose where to be squeezed - use comment such as, *'I'm squeezing the sponge on your shoulder.'*



- Stop the music after 2-3 minutes (sooner/later depending on their response)

Step 4: Press with massage oil

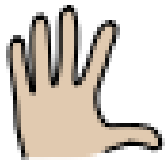
- Show your child the massage oil.
- Turn the music on.
- Rub the oil into your hands and then gently/firmly press/squeeze your child.
- Allow your child to choose where to be pressed/squeezed –use comments such as, *'I'm pressing/squeezing your feet.'*



Tap



here for music



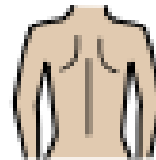
hand



leg



arm



back



tummy



feet

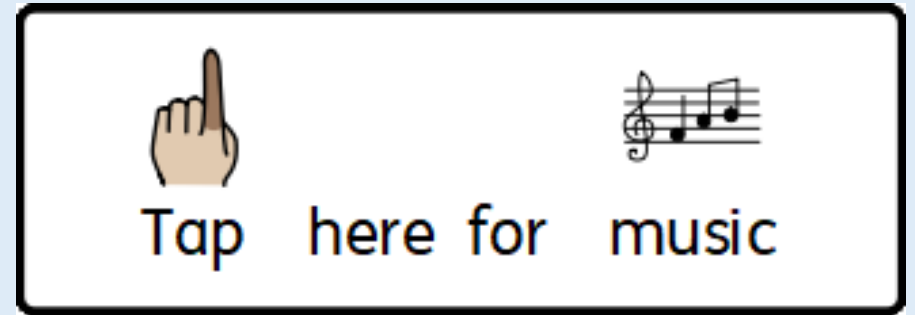
- Stop the music after 2 minutes (or sooner/later depending on their response)

Step 5: Relax with a blanket

- Show your child the blanket.
- Turn the music on.
- Wrap the blanket round and cuddle your child firmly. Or if they are resistant to this, lay the blanket on top of your child.
- Allow your child to choose how they want to relax. Model how to relax.



- Stop the music after 2-3 minutes (sooner/later depending on their response)





Gympanzees offers suggestions on how to give children with ASD or other SEND needs a sensory massage. You will also find useful online resources that will enable you to support your child at home and have access to interesting webinars.



Story Massage are offering free resources and webinars during lockdown. They also include links to their videos on YouTube and Vimeo.



Therapy Spot has a few videos on YouTube that offer sensory massage ideas and other activities to help with co-regulation. They also have their own website with interesting blogs and suggestions.

[Click here to find out more.](#)



Oaklands subscribes to TACPAC for sensory massage sessions.