**Sensory Classroom**

**Goal:**

The goal of the Traveling Sensory Classroom (TSC) is to educate school staff, parents and students by demonstrating that all people experience some sensory integration problems. It is also important for them to understand that some children actually feel strong discomfort or pain and experience great anxiety due to sensory insults in the environment and these are not always easily observed. By expanding knowledge, we hope to reduce the misunderstanding of behavioral challenges that some children present, and change their environment to reduce the stressful sensory insult.

**Program Description:**

All TSC presentations are divided into three segments:

1. Educational/Awareness Segment – Information about Sensory Processing Disorder and particulars about the Sensory System are presented. Emphasis is given to the fact that all people have sensory issues, but some actually suffer discomfort or pain when their senses are insulted. Some of the more common sensory sensitivities (florescent lighting, Styrofoam cups, high pitched sounds, scratchy fabrics) are shared so the attendees can more closely relate to the topic.
2. Classroom Segment – We use various tools to create the sensory insults and enhance the experience. People relate better when they actually walk in the shoes of others. To illustrate the point we simulate sensory insults: loud noises, distracting and irritating sounds, wetness, strong smells, tickling feel, a taste experience, different touches, waiting, visual impairment, time pressure, anxiety producing activity. Some of the tools used are: the anxiety produced when attendees simply wonder, “What are they going to do to me?”, a wad of paper at the nape of each person’s neck, a small piece of paper to write on along with a tiny piece of chalk or crayon, a spelling test (on a CD with a large amount of static), a math test with some attendees asked to remove their glasses, a teacher who is constantly hurrying the students, taste strips, limburger cheese, fish line, water, bubbles, bell, feather duster, bottle brush, bubble wrap and so forth.
3. Debriefing Segment – In this segment discussion takes place with the attendees sharing their experience, what irritated them and what did not, what is the human reaction to sensory insults and how might a child respond? Accommodations (ear phones, raised line paper, fidget toys, special pens, soft lights for example) that help reduce anxiety produced by sensory insults in the environment are shown and demonstrated.