



**Here are some classroom accommodations which may help children remain calm, focused and organized:**

#### **Physical Accommodations**

1. Use carpet squares for each child when sitting on the floor to keep them in their own space.
2. Adjust chairs, desks, tables so children sit with feet flat on the floor and hips bent at a 90 degree angle.
3. If a child is easily distracted, make sure his seat is away from doorways or windows.
4. Use alternative seating equipment; sit on therapy balls, t-stools, disco-sit, bean bag chairs, or positioning wedges
5. Allow children to work in a variety of positions; laying flat on the floor propped on elbows, standing at a table or easel, or lying on side and using a clipboard to write on
6. Use a soft, plush rug in play areas to help muffle noise.
7. If possible, have a rocking chair or glider rocker inside the classroom, and/or a hammock or swing chair outside the classroom where a child can go to relax.
8. Allow children to use sleeping bags or weighted blankets in a quiet reading corner.
9. Use a small tent or play hut with soft pillows and/or bean bag chair for a child to go to if over aroused.

#### **Visual Accommodations**

1. Post a daily schedule with pictures.
2. Tape alphabet and number strips on a child's desk for them to use as a reference or guide.
3. Place a drawing of a clock with appropriate day/time for therapy or assistant sessions outside of the classroom.
4. Use tape, hula hoops or carpet squares to reinforce personal boundaries in seated learning or play areas.
5. Use visual cues such as words or pictures for organizing personal belongings, containers, or shelves
6. Keep visual distractions to a minimum; hang art projects on the wall in the hallway, keep bulletin boards simple and uncluttered, reduce hanging pictures and decorations.
7. Help the child stay organized and focused by;
  - using his finger or index card under the line he is working on during reading or math
  - use graph paper for visual help aligning numbers during math work
  - use minimal visual information on each page
  - cover other areas of the page not currently working on to keep the child focused

8. Use study carrels to decrease stimuli
9. Minimize amount of toys, games, and decorations in the environment
10. Have enough organized storage space, containers, and shelves to put all items away (label containers)
11. Keep chalkboard clean
12. Use dim lighting and pastel colors. Turn off lights during quiet breaks
13. Keep memos and informational posters away from the front of the classroom so children can focus on the teacher

### **Auditory Accommodations**

1. Have earplugs or sound blocking headphones available for children who are sensitive to, or distracted by environmental noises
2. Ask child to repeat directions back to you before they start their work to ensure they understand
3. Establish eye contact with the child before speaking to them
4. Teach children to ask for help and make yourself available to them if they are having difficulty
5. Break directions down into steps and allow extra time for children to process them if needed
6. Warn children of any loud noises before they occur (bells, fire alarms etc.)

### **Organizational Accommodations**

1. Give simple, step-by-step directions. Have child verbalize steps needed to accomplish the task. Use peer or yourself to demonstrate/model task first, then ask the child to try it
2. Use a consistent approach when teaching a child a new skill and allow time to practice and master the new skill
3. Present directions to the child consistent with their best modality for learning (i.e., auditory, visual, or multi-sensory). Model, demonstrate and repeat as needed. Monitor the child to make sure they understand and are able to start the task
4. Help the child plan for each task by asking questions such as, "What materials will you need?" "What will you do first?" and/or "What do you need to do when you are done?" etc.
5. Provide a few suggestions or a peer brainstorming session if a child has difficulty formulating ideas for assignments
6. Help children who have difficulty with transitions by using a timer or give them a verbal cue that it will be time to change activities
7. Transitions may also go smoother if a list with pictures is on the blackboard showing the day's activities
8. Help prepare the child for transitions with an orderly clean up and a consistent musical selection which makes it fun and signals it is time to move on to the next activity
9. Give children a consistent and organized place to store materials when they are finished using them

**Sensory Accommodations (for consistent, appropriate arousal levels and decreasing distractibility):**

**Alerting Activities For The Lethargic Child**

1. Allow the child to sip on ice water in a water bottle throughout the day
2. Use bright lighting
3. Have the child pat cool water on their face as needed
4. Take frequent "gross motor" breaks during difficult tasks (i.e., jump, hop, march in place, sit ups etc.)
5. Encourage an active recess with swinging, jumping, climbing, playing ball etc.
6. Have the child chew strong/flavorful sugar-free gum or suck on sugar free candies (use sweet or sour gum/candy or fireballs)

**Calming Activities For An Overly Active Child**

1. Use low level lighting, no fluorescent lights!
2. Allow the child to listen to calming music with headphones
3. Use a soft voice and slow down your speech and movements while talking
4. Allow the child to lay on the floor in a secluded area with weighted blankets, heavy pillows or bean bag chairs on top of them during written work or reading
5. Push down heavily on the child's shoulders, with equal and constant pressure
6. Avoid rushing the child
7. Have the child be responsible for the heaviest work at clean up time; putting heavy books or objects away, moving/pushing chairs in, wiping down tables etc.
8. Plan ahead, allow enough time between and during activities
9. Make the child the "teacher's assistant"; carrying books to the library, allow them extra movement breaks with in-school errands (taking notes to the office or another teacher, passing out papers etc.), or giving them "heavy work" chores such as sharpening pencils, erasing and cleaning blackboards and erasers, etc.
10. Provide opportunities for the child to jump on a mini trampoline, bounce on a therapy ball or sit on one instead of their chair to give them extra input
11. Allow the child to have quiet fidget toys, chew toys/tubing, or squish/stress balls to squeeze while sitting and listening or during desk work
12. Encourage twirling, spinning, rolling and swinging during physical education or recess
13. Have child do "chair push ups" (raising their body off the chair with hands next to them on their seat) and/or tie Thera-Band around their chair and have them stretch it using their legs while doing desk work

## **Behavioral Accommodations**

1. Empower and encourage the child, avoid rescuing when the child is struggling (i.e., "hang in there", "you can do this", "you're ok" and "way to go")
2. Use positive praise and awards when the child tries his best, attempts something new, does something independently, initiates a project, asks for help, follows the rules, or accomplishes something even if the outcome is not exactly what it should be
3. Be specific with constructive criticism; make positive statements about what the child DID accomplish then make suggestions or ways to improve clear, concise and/or elicit suggestions from the child on what is missing or how to improve next time
4. Validate them, their efforts, choices and feelings no matter what!
5. Establish firm, clear rules with appropriate consequences if the child breaks them. Follow through!
6. Talk through a task/problem with the child if they are struggling
7. Be aware of the child's signs when they are starting to lose control. Be proactive in dealing with the issues BEFORE the child has a meltdown
8. Teach children about personal space and enforce staying within those boundaries and keeping their hands to themselves
9. Help the child generate ideas, problem solve, make choices or think creatively
10. Use alternative approaches (through the senses) to alert, calm, and stabilize the nervous system

Source: [Sensoryprocessing.com](http://Sensoryprocessing.com)