

# HOW TO INTRODUCE FIDGET TOOLS IN THE CLASSROOM

## **1 || Introduce the sensory systems and talk about how they work**

Give kids hands-on experience with their sensory systems and allow them to experiment with different types of sensory input while explaining how sensory processing works.

## **2 || Have kids explore their own unique sensory preferences**

Teach kids that we all have our own unique sensory needs and preferences. Talk with them about the sensory experiences they find enjoyable and about the ones they really can't stand. This is usually a really fun and lively discussion, as it validates everyone's needs and differences.

## **3 || Make your sensory materials list**

Make a list of the items and strategies to include in the classroom fidget and sensory kit.

Include items that will address the preferences and needs you've identified in the group of students. Instead of calling the sensory materials "toys", consider reframing the items as "tools" to support their learning.

### **Possible items to include in your kit**

:–fidget toys, bubbles

–CD or website with movement break songs/videos

–a quiet space in the room with pillows/cushions

–headphones with quiet music or white noise

–visual sensory bottles, tactile bins

–photos of different stretches or a yoga deck

–bean bag or rocking chair and clipboards so kids can work away from desk

–weighted lap pad or weighted blanket or stuffed animals, stretchy bands

–scented lotions or essential oils

–mints or gum

## **4 || Have everyone pitch in**

Having kids help assemble and create their own classroom kit creates a sense of ownership and responsibility. Have kids work together to make their own materials to add to the classroom sensory kit. Demonstrate and let kids experiment with how the materials should be used. Have kids help to label, organize, and store the sensory tools in an accessible place in the room.



## HOW TO INTRODUCE FIDGET TOOLS IN THE CLASSROOM (CONTINUED)

### **5 || Create a Sensory Kit Contract**

Divide the sensory materials into two categories: items that can be used during learning activities and items that can be used at break times throughout the day. Discuss how and when kids can request the materials or if there are certain materials that they can access without needing to ask permission.

#### **Examples of rules/responsibilities to include in your contract**

- Be responsible for the items in our sensory toolkit – take good care of our tools!
- Wait for break times to ask if you can use a break time item from the kit.
- Raise your hand to ask to use learning-time items from the sensory kit.
- The items in our Sensory Kit are for all of the students in our classroom. Share and take turns.
- Use the items wisely to help you pay attention and calm your body, not to distract yourself or others.