



Learning Through The Senses

"Play is our brain's favorite way of learning." ~ Diane Ackerman

During the process of play, infants and young children use all six of their senses to discover their environment and learn not only about their surroundings but also about themselves.

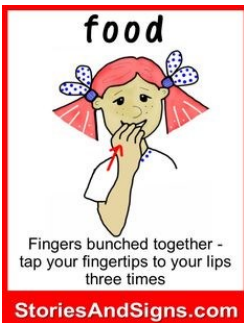


Encouraging Early Learners in Brazos Valley

2017—Quarter 3

The Six Senses

1. **Hearing** - Hearing develops throughout the early years. Vocabulary, pronunciation, and language are fully dependent on how much conversation young children hear on a daily basis. Keep Talking!!
2. **Seeing** - Sight develops at a slower rate than hearing.
3. **Touching** - Touch is very important in a child's development. Young children need daily hugs and cuddles to build the brain connections that lay the foundation for healthy relationships in a child's life.
4. **Tasting** - The mouth and tongue have thousands of sensory receptors! Young children discover the world through this sense.
5. **Smelling** - Infants identify familiar people and objects, such as a security blanket, with their sense of smell. Children as well as adults associate certain smells with memories of past experiences.
6. **Kinesthetic Sense (Movement & Balance)** - This sense develops by experiencing different positions and opportunities for physical movement. This sense helps young children know where their bodies are in space and gives children a sense of balance.



Summer Safety Tips

- ★ Provide plenty of water for children when they play outdoors.
- ★ Use sun screen often. Check sunscreen for allergies!
- ★ Be attentive when your children are near water.
- ★ Lifeguards are NOT babysitters—Be within reach of your children.
- ★ Look before you lock your car—do not leave children alone in the car.

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Sensory Play Matters

Children learn best when they have opportunities to use their senses to experience the world around them. These experiences send information to their brains where it is stored in their memory. Experiences in a loving and nurturing environment create the foundation for future learning. Every child experiences the world in their own way and develops on their own schedule.

Environments must be stimulating, challenging, and engage both their minds and interests. Children learn when their bodies and minds interact with actual objects.

We have listed a few wonderful websites here that have great information on Sensory Play.

- [Community Playthings](#)
- [Zero To Three](#)
- [Early Childhood Teacher](#)
- [Texas Childcare Solutions](#)
- [Child Care Encyclopedia](#)
- [Infant-Toddler TAMU](#)

Growth and Development

Incredible Infants (0-9 months):

Guess What?! I can recognize your face, voice, & touch. Please sing to me and cuddle with me!

Mobile Movers (9-24 months):

Guess What?! I love to play in water, sand, and with bubbles. Please allow me to splash in the bathtub and build with blocks in the sand.

Terrific Two's:

Guess What?! I am learning new things and want to do them by myself. Please let me play in my own way and allow me choose the books I want to read.



To learn more about developmental milestones, visit CDC.gov

Remember! Every child develops at his/her own pace!

"Look At Me" Three's:

Guess What?! I can do things on my own. Please help me practice writing and spend time reading with me!

Fantastic Four's:

Guess What?! I know my colors and shapes. Please help me learn my letters by allowing me to write in the sand or in shaving cream!

Reading to All Ages:

Holding your child in your lap while reading stories engages many senses which contribute to your child's brain development.

Parent Policies - Suspensions & Transfers

If you receive Child Care Subsidies through Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley, you must contact a Case Worker to make changes to your child's care, such as suspensions and transfers.

SUSPENSIONS - If you know that your child will not be attending care for an extended period of time, such as summer or school breaks, you may request a suspension to avoid absences.

⇒ **What We Need:** The date you want to start the suspension and an estimated date your child will return to care.

To Request a Suspension or Transfer, Call:
(979) 595-2801 ext. 2105
Or Email:
CCMS@bvcog.org

TRANSFERS - To change providers, you will need to contact a Case Worker *at least 2 weeks in advance.*

⇒ **What We Need:** The name of the new provider and the requested start date.

⇒ **Remember:** You are responsible for giving your current provider adequate notice according to their parent handbook and for any registration paperwork at the new provider.

We serve over 1,200 children each day so it may take up to two weeks to process your transfer request!

Family Activities

Parent's can help children develop their sensory skills while building connections in their brains. These skills contribute to your child's success in life.

HEARING. Sing songs often and play music for your child—but limit his/her exposure to loud noises that can damage their hearing.

SEEING. Describe what your child sees, by pointing out colors, objects, and shapes. Eye exams starting at age 3 help early detection of delays.

TOUCHING. Hugs and cuddles are a great way to use touch with young chil-

dren. Provide your child with a variety of textured toys and describe the textures.

TASTING. Describe to your child the taste of new foods and offer new foods, one at a time, on a regular basis with foods they already enjoy.

SMELLING. Identify smells and aromas in your child's world. Encourage them to smell flowers, leaves, and dirt outside.

KINESTHETIC. Minimize the time your child spends sitting by allowing them the freedom to move often. Dance with your child to rhythmic music.

Recipe Corner

Snow Dough is fun and easy to make with your child. It promotes math skills through measuring materials, vocabulary of new words, and it helps stimulate the senses.

- * 2 cups corn starch or flour
- * 1/3 to 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- * Optional: Glitter, food coloring, and fragrances!

To view the recipe online, [click here.](#)



Provider Policies - CCAA "Swipe Card" Monitoring

If you accept child care subsidies, you must utilize the Child Care Automated Attendance (CCAA) system provided by Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). In accordance with the Provider Handbook that you received, you are responsible for accessing and reviewing the CCAA system attendance and absence report.

Where Do I See CCAA Activity?

- ◇ [CCAA Texas Provider Portal](#)

When Should I Review CCAA Activity?

- ◇ At a minimum - every three days

What To Look For:

- ◇ "Z" - The red Z indicates that the parent failed to swipe for that day.



CCS Provider
Specialist

(979) 595-2801
ext. 2243

CCMS@bvcog.org

Why Should I Review CCAA Activity?

- ◇ To ensure that your parents are swiping properly to record child attendance.
- ◇ This system authorizes payments to you, the provider, for the child's attendance.
- ◇ Watch this short [informative video](#) on the CCAA Card for Providers.

Who Should I Call With Questions?:

- ◇ Specific questions regarding attendance, contact your local Provider Specialist.
- ◇ CCAA device issues and troubleshooting, call: 866-320-8720.

For more information on the CCAA system, please review the [Provider Handbook!](#)

Sensory Play DIY (Do-It-Yourself)

There are thousands of videos, blogs, posts, pins, and websites on sensory DIYs and activities on the internet and in books, but here are a few to get you started!

[Sensory Bins](#) - Affordable, compact, safe, and personalized containers filled with a variety of items intended to allow children to explore, increase acceptance of different textures, and support their language development.

[Sensory Bottles](#) - Easy to make bottles of wonderment that allow your child to use his/her senses to explore without the mess or the "yuk" feel and helps them learn to "self-regulate" or calm themselves.

[Sensory Boards](#) - These boards are fun for kids of all ages and allow them to safely explore a range of textures that stimulate their senses. The best part is, these boards can be made from items

you already have. Here is another fun DIY [sensory board!](#) There are many fun ways to support the senses that are not only for children, but also for adults.



Curriculum Enrichment - Activities & Tips

Activity Ideas:

- ✓ Puzzles - Get on the floor with the child and talk about how the pieces fit and what they look like.
- ✓ Build with Blocks - Let the child decide what you are going to build and follow the child's lead.
- ✓ Dance - Put on some upbeat rhythmic music and have fun!
- ✓ Explore Outdoors - Take a walk.
- ✓ Color Pictures - Blank pages are the best for imaginations!



Activity Tips:

- ✓ Allow children to explore the environment around them; this is their world.
- ✓ Plan activities without an intentional outcome. This allows the child to discover things and enjoy the process.
- ✓ Be mindful: infants and toddlers put everything into their mouths! Assure that objects within their reach are clean and are not a choking hazard.
- ✓ Each child is different and learns at his/her own pace. Stay calm & patient!

What Does Quality Care Mean and Why Does It Matter?

Research tells us that our children's healthy development depends on safe and positive relationships and experiences during the first few years of life. Choosing quality child care is one of the most important decisions you will make for your child as they spend a good portion of their first few years in the care of someone other than their parents or family members.

You might want to visit several different child care programs, either centers or homes, before you decide which is best for your family. Call each child care program and schedule an appointment for your visit. Once there, watch activities, check the surroundings, and ask questions. Find a program that is convenient, open when you need it, and will have a long lasting positive impact on your child's development. Most importantly, you and your child need a child care program that makes sure your child is learning, healthy, and in a physically and emotionally safe environment.

Texas Rising Star Program

The Texas Rising Star program is a voluntary program striving to provide a higher level of quality care for children. The program provides mentoring and professional development resources to prepare for, sustain, and improve the quality of early childhood environments.

There are three levels of certification (Two-Star, Three-Star, and Four-Star) designed to encourage providers to attain progressively higher levels of certification. Texas Rising Star provides a higher level of reimbursement, eligibility for quality fund distribution, and out-of-region trainings at annual early childhood conferences. In addition, each year, Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley Board spends approximately \$400,000 on quality items for child care providers who are working towards their Texas Rising Star Provider status.

Providers who are interested in being certified as Texas Rising Star Providers are encouraged to visit the website to learn more.

<http://texasrisingstar.org>



Below is a list of local Texas Rising Star Providers in the Brazos Valley Region.

4-Star Providers	3-Star Providers	2-Star Providers
A&M United Methodist Weekday School	AlphaBEST - Mitchell Elementary	AlphaBEST - Bowen Elementary
Becky Gates Children's Center	Brazos Valley Kidz Academy	AlphaBEST - Crockett Elementary
Big Top Learning Center	First Step Learning Center	AlphaBEST - Fannin Elementary
Bullfrogs and Butterflies Child Care	New Beginnings Christian CD Home	AlphaBEST - Houston Elementary
Christ Lutheran Day School		AlphaBEST - Johnson Elementary
Cuddly Care Daycare		Blessings from Above CCC 2
Kinder Care 839		Rising Star Learning Center
Kinder Care 841		
Kinder Care 843		
Methodist Weekday CDC		

For Questions, Call or Email:

Kristen Goodson
 (979) 595-2801 ext. 2014
Kristen.Goodson@bvcog.org

OR

Lidia Hawryluk
 (979) 595-2801 ext. 2016
Lidia.Hawryluk@bvcog.org

Equal opportunity employer/program.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech-impaired customers may contact: Relay Texas (800) 735-2989 (TTY) or 711 (Voice).