



— ALL ABOUT —  
**SPEECH & LANGUAGE**

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS' (OT)  
5-STEP OBSTACLE COURSE FOR SENSORY ISSUES**

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**SENSORY INTEGRATION / MODULATION ISSUES**

Many children with sensory integration or modulation difficulties are unable to organize play to receive the necessary input to become regulated. A regulated child is attentive, engaged, focused, and calm.

This dysregulation affects all areas of functioning including attention, focus, hyperactivity, visual stimulation, and difficulty with auditory filtering. Sensory integration based occupational therapists use obstacle courses in order to create organized play for these children.

**PREPARING FOR THE 5-PART OBSTACLE COURSE:**

- I. Therapressure Brushing: to alert the mind and body. The brushing alerts the tactile system quickly to the brain for increased body awareness.
- II. Joint Compressions at all 6-major joints, then calm the system for increased organization.
- III. Layed out on the floor: 5-stations specifically organized to feed the sensory system for that child in a structured and controlled environment.

**5-PART OBSTACLE COURSE:**

One way to help your child would be to create an obstacle course with movement that promotes proprioception, vestibular, visual, and tactile input. Below is an example that could be used to promote regulation.

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1. Station One: Do jumping jacks, jump on a small trampoline, or walk on uneven surfaces such as pillows to engage the vestibular system and promote balance.
2. Station Two: Have the child push a heavy box or laundry basket with weighted objects such as books using their feet. Pushing the container across a carpeted surface provides more resistance to engage proprioception for calming and improved body awareness.
3. Station Three: Walk like an animal 10-15 ft. (bear, crab, frog, snake, donkey kicks, duck) to promote strength and coordination.
4. Station Four: Pile up pillows, blankets, and/or bean bags and have the child jump and crash (with supervision). Apply gentle but firm pressure on their lower body with a pillow while they crawl off the pile to engage the tactile system and reduce sensitivity to textures.
5. Station Five: Fine motor/visual motor/ motor coordination and activities of daily living skills are then practiced once seeing the shift in the child's sensory system demonstrating overall increased sensory regulation.

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