

## Sensory Awareness

Examples of ways to support the development of **Sensory Awareness** (Nicholas et al., 2018; Smith, 2014):

- Provide opportunities for tactile exploration
  - E.g., use real objects, such as a real flower, not a paper one
- With your student, focus on the physical dimensions of an object
  - E.g., explore edges, flat surfaces, texture, curves, temperature, weight, smell, sound, salient visual features, etc.
- With your student, focus on an object of interest in the immediate vicinity
  - E.g., talk about the object - why is it there, what does it do, who uses it, is it always there, can it be found elsewhere, can you find it again somewhere else. Explore the physical dimensions of the object (see above)
- Draw your student's attention to environmental information
  - E.g., when you are on your way to the gym with your student, what landmarks do you pass? What tactile information does your student gather from landmarks? What does your student see, hear, smell?
  - E.g., when you and your student pass by a room and there's the scent of popcorn in the air, talk about it. Where are you in the school? Why do we smell popcorn? When do we smell popcorn at school? How can we get a bag of popcorn?
  - E.g., explore the room cue outside the classroom and other important locations (colour, shape, size, texture)

Your O&M specialist, Teacher for Students with Visual Impairments, Teacher for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and POPDB Teacher can help you learn how to provide students with materials and experiences to enhance sensory experiences.

Nicholas, J.T., Johannessen, A.M., & van Nunen, T. (2018). *A checklist of learning strategies that support tactile working memory*. Nordic Welfare Centre.

Smith, M. (2014). Sensory efficiency. In C.B. Allman & S. Lewis (Eds.), *ECC essentials: Teaching the expanded core curriculum to students with visual impairments*, (pp. 117-171), AFB Press.