



Author: Zoe Morgese, Speech and Language Pathologist

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Title: **Communication: Sensory Vocabulary**

Today's idea is easy to incorporate in your daily routines for babies and toddlers. Older toddlers and their siblings might have fun going on a 'hunt' for items that include these concepts!

Look for items that include vocabulary about sensory experiences. Here are a few examples:

Hearing: Identify sounds in your environment. Are the sounds loud or soft? Was the sound a surprise? Common sounds might include: water running, a washer/dryer, the dishwasher, a siren, the trash truck, a dog (Is the dog inside your house, close by, or far away?), a door opening/closing, etc.

Smell: Different smells while cooking (Let your child smell various ingredients as you cook), soaps, lotions, trees, flowers as they begin to bloom outside, etc.

Touch: Describe how things feel as you use them throughout the day. "Here's your towel...it is so soft! Now you will be dry after your bath!" Go on a hunt to find things that are soft, rough, smooth, wet, dry, warm, cold, heavy, light, squishy, etc.

Taste: Describe the taste of the foods your child tries. If your child is not eating orally or is eating just a few foods, you can describe the foods as you cook or have during a meal. "Wow, that's SOUR! I didn't know my water had lemon in it!" "I'll put honey in my tea and it will be SWEET!"

Vision: describe what you are seeing during the day. This might be especially important if you do different things like take a walk outside. These descriptions are important for children with visual impairment and can be essential for learning in areas such as mobility, sequencing, anticipation, following directions, and categorization. "I see the the end of the block ahead! Now we are at the end of this block. We'll go down the bump and across the street. It's bumpy in the street! I see a fence on the other side...let's go touch it!"

Talking to your child throughout the day is very important for language understanding and development. Babies and young children need to hear words many, many times and in a variety of situations in order to begin to understand them. They will love the interaction with you as you describe your day. Have fun!