

HISTORY OF SNOEZELEN

For more on the history, philosophy and use of Snoezelen, please visit:
<http://www.flaghouse.ca/SnoezelenAL.asp>

- The word SNOEZELEN originated in Holland in the early 1980's as a concept recreation/relaxation for disabled adults
- Use extended to seniors and children, people with autism, chronic pain, mental illness, ABI (Acquired Brain Injury) and the mainstream population
- Used also in therapy, education, distraction
- Developed as a distinct environment but becoming increasingly portable - Cart, SUV, Snoezelen mobile
- Sensory concepts extended into all aspects of life

TODAY, THERE ARE OVER 500 INSTALLATIONS IN CANADA AND 700+ IN THE U.S. - MEETING MULTIPLE NEEDS:

- Therapy/Rehabilitation
- Education
- Relaxation
- Crisis Management
- Recreation/Leisure
- Activity Programming
- Stress Management
- Pain Management

SNOEZELEN FOR CHILDREN:

- Schools
- Autism Programs
- Respite Homes
- Rehabilitation Centres
- Acute Care Hospitals
- Pre-School Programs
- Early Intervention
- Group Homes
- Deaf/Blind Programs
- Palliative Care

SENSORY DEPRIVATION

“ The average person touches 300 different surfaces every 30 minutes.....”

Disinfectant advertisement

“ The average person with a profound disability will likely touch 1 – 5 surfaces in the same timeframe ”

SENSORY OVERLOAD

- Inability to process or manage the amount or intensity of sensory stimuli
- Frequently observed with autism spectrum disorders, dementia and other mental health challenges
- Management of everyday environment a challenge

SENSORY EXPERIENCE

“ People need to understand that behavior is always communication, it is always telling us something.”

HOW SNOEZELEN WORKS

- Snoezelen manipulates brain chemistry through the senses, to set the tone for motivation and functional attention.
- It lowers the stress chemistry and increases the relaxation chemistry.
- The key is finding the right combination.

SNOEZELEN can be used to:

Explore:

The sensory world, perceptions, likes, dislikes, reactions and responses of individual client

Calm

People experiencing anxiety attacks, temper tantrums, and outbursts by either matching the arousal level and gradually reducing stimulus or by providing a calm haven

Relax

Those whose day or life is stressful, who need to chance to recuperate their spirit or take time away from their usual environment and everyday frustrations

Stimulate

Clients who experience sensory deprivation in any of its many forms, whose world is narrow and closed, whose lives are restricted by their disabilities or environment

Empower

People who lack control over their own lives and may have little self-worth and motivation as a result - SNOEZELEN equipment can be activated by a single breath or the blink of an eye

Enjoy

A quality experience, different from everyday activities, that offers a pleasant, comfortable venue, amusement, fun and relaxation

Enrich

By expanding the world of people with disabilities and offering new, different sensations and sensory experiences

Educate

By theming SNOEZELEN and building learning experiences into sensory play

VISUAL EQUIPMENT	VISUAL ACTIVITIES
Bubble Tubes	Light effects, fiber optics, bubble tubes etc
Black Light	Colorful toys, objects, parachute
Fibre Optics	Peek-a-boo
Refraction Panels	Reflection, shadows, projection
Solar Projectors	Penlight play
Light Chase	Winking, blinking, making faces
Wall Panels	Interactive switches
Glowing Ball Pools	

TACTILE EQUIPMENT	TEXTURE - PROPRIOCEPTION
Ball Pools	Shaving cream, gentle water play
Cushions/Pillows	Hugs
Tactile Blankets	Rough-housing
Tactile Panels	Different texture cushions, blankets
Sheepskin	Bouncing on therapy balls
Carpets	Reaching for different objects, weights
Fan Cushion	Breeze, warmth
	Joint approximations, gentle tugging, pressure

MOVEMENT EQUIPMENT	MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES
Water Beds	Rough-housing
Steps, Wedges, Waves	Bouncing on therapy balls
Water Beds	Reaching for different objects, weights
Vibrosonic chair	Joint approximations, gentle tugging, pressure
Leaf chair/Swings	
Air Cushion	
Tactile Blanket	

<i>SOUND EQUIPMENT</i>	<i>LISTENING</i>
VibroSound	Background music
CD Player	Strong rhythms
Musical Instruments	Musical instruments, noisy toys
Soundbeam	Clapping, copying rhythms
Musical Tactile Panel	Miscellaneous sound effects
	Sound effects and stories to accompany effect wheels
	Singing, humming, whistling, mimicked sounds
	Interactive switches

SMELL EQUIPMENT	SMELL
Aromatherapy	Essential oils
Aroma Switch Box	

INTERACTIVE EQUIPMENT	
All Wall Panels	
Voice Activated Light Chase	
Bubble Tubes	
All switched products	

WHILE IN SNOEZELEN: COMMUNICATION

- Facial expressions – joy, fear, surprise, happy, bored, excited
- Body gestures, touch, pantomime
- Eyes – smiling, crying, sleepy, awake, winking, blinking
- Eye-pointing for choice, selection
- Eye communications
- Body posture – interested, agreeable, available
- Touch of friendship, support
- Vocalizations

SNOEZELEN USE & ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Types of session
- ✓ Planning a session
- ✓ How to interpret needs
- ✓ How to spot boredom or fear
- ✓ How to change activities
- ✓ Length of session
- ✓ Outside SNOEZELEN
- ✓ Profiles and notes

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- ✓ Review client profile/diary cards
- ✓ Communicate with staff re: mood/current health etc.
- ✓ Set up room
- ✓ Invite client to room
- ✓ Manage client's physical needs
- ✓ Manage transitions
- ✓ Follow client's lead, enjoy
- ✓ Wind down gradually

AFTER A SESSION:

- ✓ Return client to quiet location or for follow-on activity (perhaps use client's awareness or relaxed state to advantage)
- ✓ Restore SNOEZELEN room
- ✓ equipment and effects to original condition
- ✓ Clean/disinfect if necessary
- ✓ Record session
- ✓ Update diary card and forward as appropriate
- ✓ Communicate with staff

CAREGIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ Know client
- ✓ Build trust
- ✓ Plan the session
- ✓ Observe closely
- ✓ Allow client to choose
- ✓ Read signals
- ✓ Remain connected
- ✓ Respect client's wishes
- ✓ Reinforce positive activities
- ✓ Remove from negative activities
- ✓ Take time

PROSPECTIVE OUTCOMES

- ✓ Improved rapport/relationships
- ✓ Improved client/caregiver communications
- ✓ Understanding of sensory impairments
- ✓ Better engagement
- ✓ Changes in behavior, learning, ability
- ✓ Improved sense of well-being
- ✓ Expanded opportunities outside SNOEZELEN
- ✓ Improved skill acquisition, motivation, social interaction and quality of life experiences
- ✓ Less 'institutional', more 'individual' approach

THE FUTURE

- ✓ Learn about clients using sensory assessments
- ✓ Look for sensory opportunities in the bedroom, bathroom, dining room, day room, garden
- ✓ Use any Snoezelen-type product
- ✓ Make life a sensory cafeteria
- ✓ Enjoy the results alongside your clients!!