



Pacific Autism
CENTER FOR EDUCATION

Creating a Supportive Environment

Porchlight Autism Education Series

Today's Presenter, Danielle Borrás



Danielle is a graduate of the USC Occupational Therapy program and has 20 years of experience working with preschoolers, children and adolescents with developmental disabilities such as autism, ADHD, and mental health conditions such as bi-polar disorder, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorders. Danielle provides OT for individual and group social skills classes, fine and gross motor skills programs and individualized sensory diets.

She also runs school and class-based training sessions and well as parent workshops. Danielle has worked in private schools in the Los Gatos and Saratoga areas and currently is employed at the Pacific Autism Center for Education (PACE) K-12 school and the PACE early intervention preschool. Danielle recently completed a certification course in evaluating and treating Sensory Integration Disorders through USC and Western Psychological Services.

Using ReadyTalk



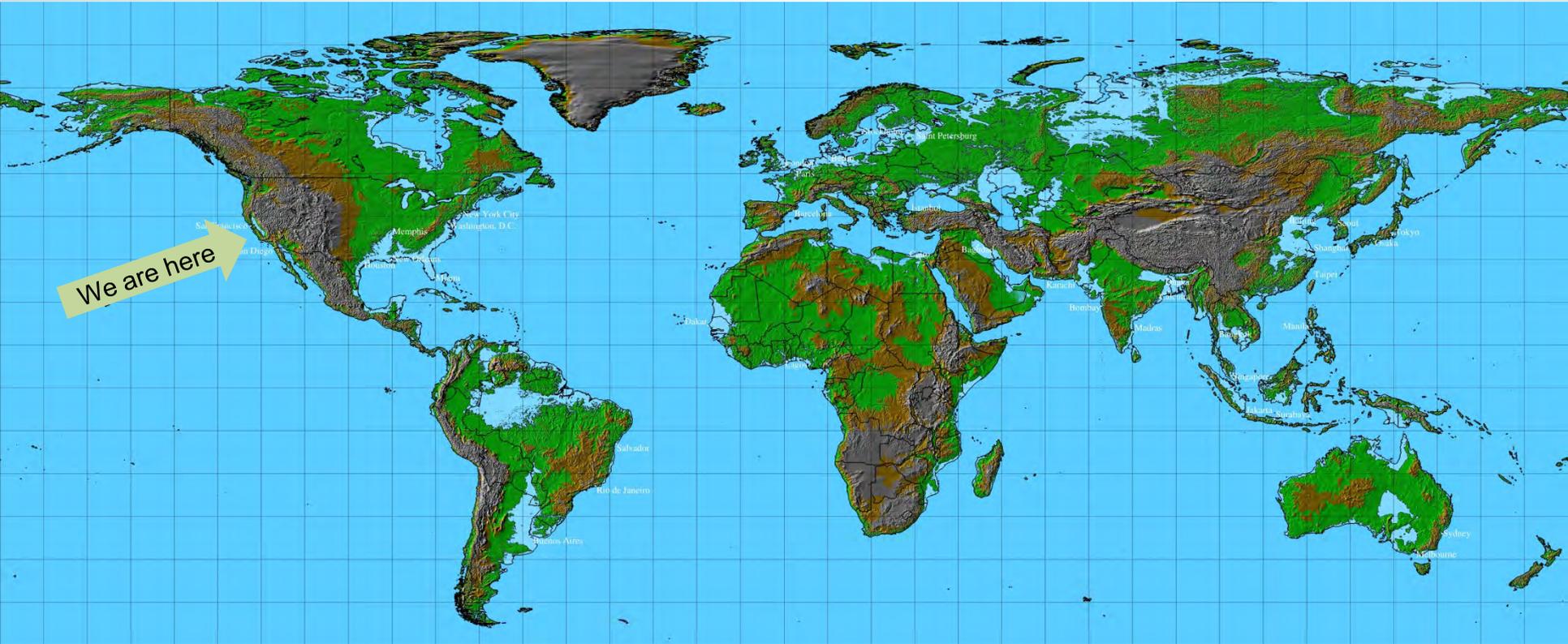
- Chat to ask questions.
- All lines are muted.
- If you lose your Internet connection, reconnect using the link emailed to you.
- If you lose your phone connection, re-dial the phone number and re-join.
- ReadyTalk support: 800-843-9166

Your audio will play through your computer's speakers. Hear an echo? You may be logged in twice and will need to close one instance of ReadyTalk.

Viewing the Webinar Later...

- This webinar will be available on the **Porchlight** website through a link on this page: <http://www.porchlighteducation.org/creating-a-supportive-environment/>
- You may also view it on the PACE YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/PACE1880>
- You'll receive an email with this presentation, recording, and links.
- Tweet us @PacificAutismCE or using hashtag: #PACE
- info@pacificautism.org for questions

Where are you?



We're in San Jose, California.

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Agenda

- Introduction to the Pacific Autism Center for Education
- What is Project Porchlight?
- Review Creating a Supportive Environment
- Questions & Answers



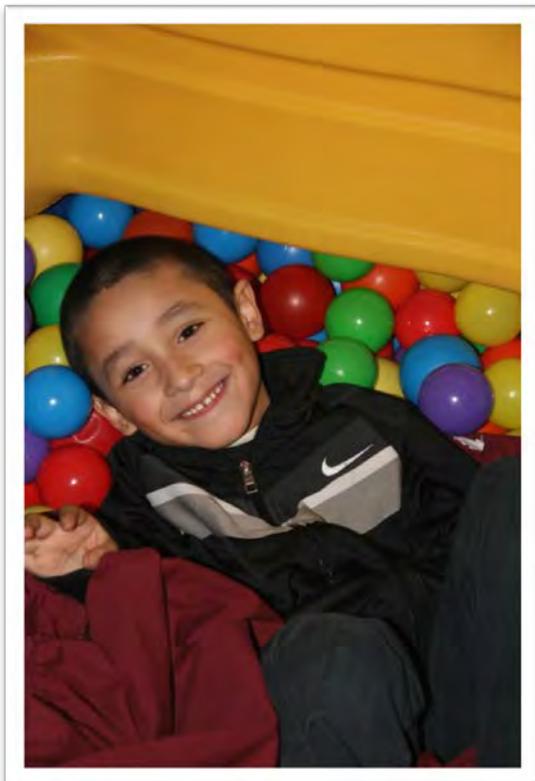
Participant Poll

I am a...

- Parent or caregiver
- Occupational Therapist
- Other professional working in the field
- Other



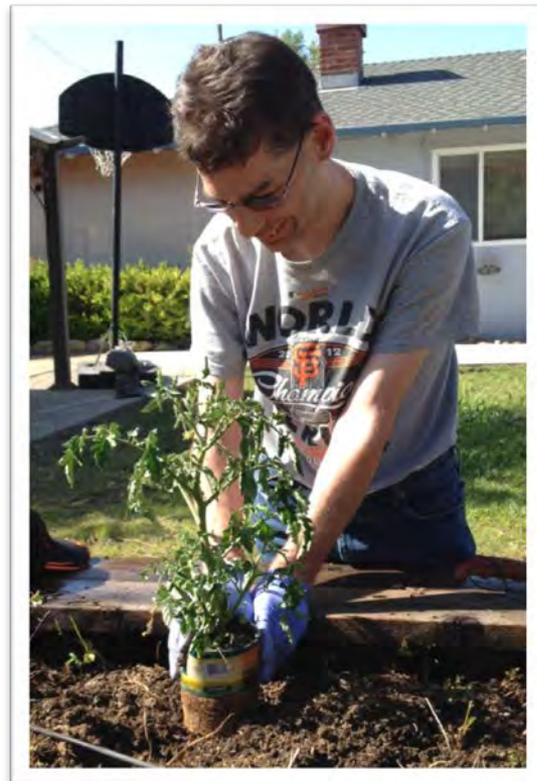
Pacific Autism
CENTER FOR EDUCATION



Children's Services



The PACE School



Group Homes

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Our Mission:

To enhance the lives of people impacted by autism, through innovation, exceptional education and compassionate care.

Porchlight

- Specifically designed to reach out to the autism community
- For parents and caregivers to use when they need it at home, 24/7
- Designed by PACE multidisciplinary team, OT's, SLP's and BCBA's
- Free training modules cover a wide variety of topics such as toilet training, creating a supportive environment, prompting, and functions of behavior
- 20 learning modules available currently on the site

www.porchlighteducation.org

What is autism?

Autism is a neuro-developmental disability that affects one's ability to communicate, interact socially and learn in conventional ways.

Autism



the world from a different perspective

Autism Characteristics

The DSM-V characterizes autism by these 2 characteristics:

- Restricted repetitive behaviors, interests and activities
- Deficits in social communication and social interactions

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders is currently in its fifth edition.

Creating a Supportive Environment Learning Module

The graphic features a black header with the title 'Creating a Supportive Environment' in white. Below the header is a navigation bar with five colored buttons: 'Visuals' (purple), 'Sounds & Smells' (blue), 'Room Organization' (teal), 'A Sensory Corner' (pink), and 'Things Not to Have' (dark blue). The main content area is white and contains a colorful, abstract brain illustration on the left, composed of intertwined ribbons in shades of green, yellow, orange, red, purple, and blue. To the right of the brain, the text 'Welcome to Creating a Supportive Environment' is displayed in blue and purple.

Creating a Supportive Environment

Visuals Sounds & Smells Room Organization A Sensory Corner Things Not to Have

Welcome to
Creating a Supportive
Environment

Sensory Processing and Autism

- Information about our environment comes from our senses.
- Individuals with autism may have trouble processing information they receive from their environment.
- Things that don't bother you can be processed differently by the brain of someone with autism.

The Seven Senses

1. Sight
2. Hearing
3. Taste
4. Smell
5. Touch
6. Proprioceptive (body awareness)
7. Vestibular (balance and movement)



Sensory Processing & Autism Characteristics



Caregivers may not notice something that may be causing a child's distress.

Possible Effects

- Can create fear and apprehension of certain people, places or activities
- Can create avoidance or refusal of things
- Can contribute to difficult behaviors such as loud vocalizations, aggression, self injurious behavior
- Can increase mal adaptive efforts to self calm

Goal of Supportive Environment

1. **Calming** Environment or Space

and / or

2. **Engaging** or **Stimulating** Space

Goal of Creating a Supportive Environment

Create an environment that:

- Is **predictable** and **manageable**
- Reduces potentially **overwhelming** stimuli
- Encourages **positive social interactions** and opportunities to communicate
- Encourages **safe exploration**



Participant Poll

What type of supportive environment are you interested in?

- Calming
- Engaging
- Both

KEY PRINCIPALS

1. Decide what your goal is:

CALMING and / or **ENGAGING**

2. Start with general principals.

3. Become a **SENSORY DETECTIVE!**

Consider your child's **unique** responses to different sensory input; sight, smell, sounds, touch, movement and balance.

4. Follow your child's lead!

5. **REMEMBER** "one size does not fit all."



How to be a Sensory Detective

Sensory Detective Checklist

1. **Stop** and be still.
2. **Identify** one by one different type of sensory input.
Such as what you hear, see, feel or smell.
3. **Notice** your child's **response** to the presence or absence of different input.
4. **Check out** each room.
5. **Make changes** and **Monitor**.



Visual

1. Choose pastels or soothing, muted colors for wall paint.
2. Reduce items that are too busy, like bright decorations and objects.
3. Use natural lighting or incandescent lighting and change light fixtures to create a “soft” light.

Elegant White ICC-20	Violet Essence ICC-34	Tranquil Retreat ICC-4	Cup of Cocoa ICC-52	Toasted Grain ICC-61
Baked Scone ICC-21	Blue Reflection ICC-35	Lavender Bouquet ICC-4	Cozy Blanket ICC-53	Pumpkin Butter ICC-62
Haze ICC-22	Serene ICC-36	Calming Space ICC-45	Peony ICC-54	Terra Cotta Pot ICC-63
Silver Tradition ICC-2	Beach Glass ICC-37	Soft Denim ICC-46	Hydrangea Blossom ICC-	Heirloom Quilt ICC-64
Cashmere Sweater ICC-3	Lime Juice ICC-38	Pewter Tray ICC-47	Green Tea ICC-56	Relaxing Blue ICC-65
Oat Flour ICC-31	Antique Ivory ICC-40	Aspen Mist ICC-48	Dried Thyme ICC-57	Quiet Moment ICC-66
Naturale ICC-32	Butter Cookie ICC-41	Joyous ICC-50	Crisp Celery ICC-58	Meditation ICC-67
Soft Feather ICC-33	Comforting ICC-42	Sweet Marzipan ICC-51	Brown Bread ICC-60	Minced Ginger ICC-68





Sounds

1. Make note of your child's reaction to sounds. Be a **SENSORY DETECTIVE**.
2. Consider loud noises.
3. Continuous low noises or hums.
4. Reduce those sounds that cause discomfort.





Smells

- Smells can effect some children to either calm or overwhelm. Be a **SENSORY DETECTIVE!**
- Try to ventilate their room or play area.
- Avoid strong fragrances and cleaning products, candles, air fresheners, etc.
- Ventilate when cooking foods with strong odors, good or bad. Open windows.





Creating a Calming Space

- Individual child's space
- Designated purpose for the space
- Space that minimizes sensory input
- Child feels safe & not overwhelmed

Calming Sensory Area

It can be easy and inexpensive to create a sensory corner.

Use items that you may already have on hand.

Include:

- Muted lighting
- Comfortable seating (bean bag chairs are great)
- Only a few comforting toys or objects
- Soft music as desired
- Favorite blanket
- Noise-cancelling headset



Calming Space Ideas



More Ideas



Additional Ideas



White noise can often be helpful.



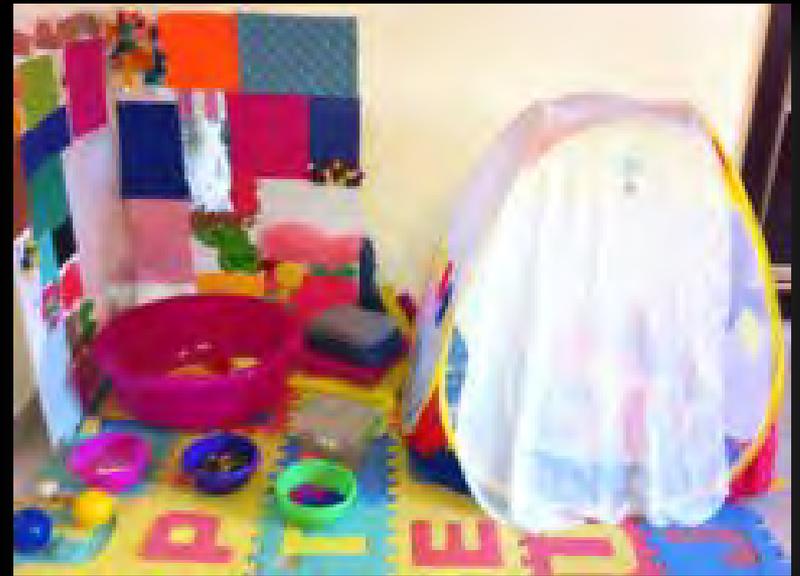
Make sure that your child has his/her own space.



Engaging Sensory Space

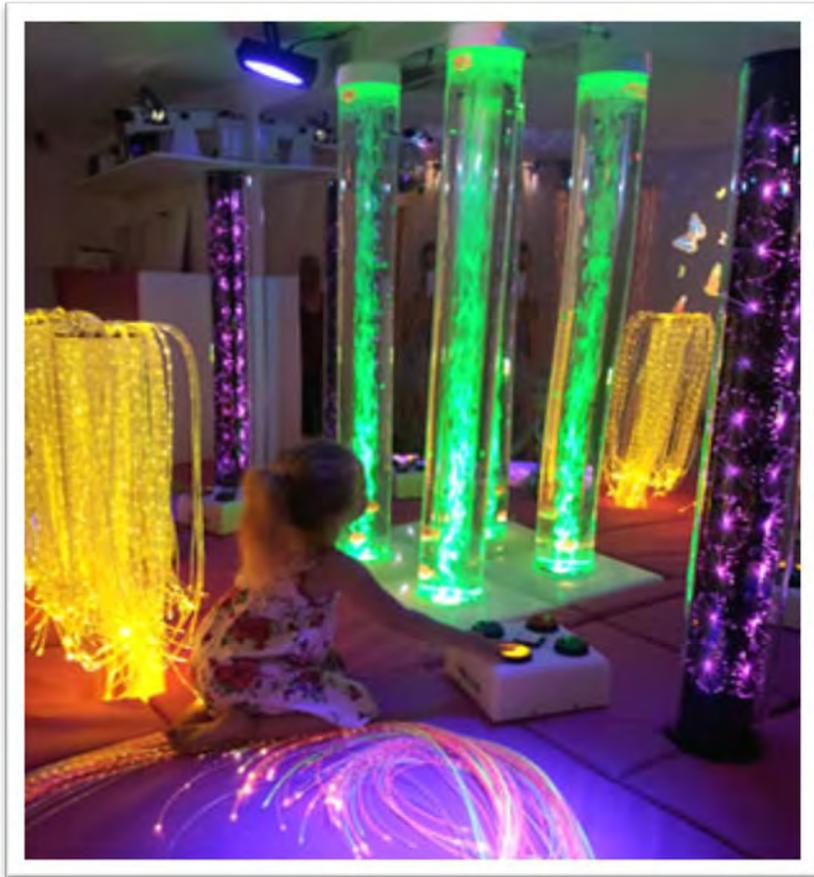


Engaging Sensory Space





Sensory Engaging Ideas



→ Goggle “sensory rooms” for more ideas!

Summary

A supportive environment can be:

- a **Calming Space**

and / or

- an **Engaging or Stimulating Space**



*You must become a **sensory detective**, and consider your child's **unique** responses to different sensory input: sight, smell, sounds, touch, movement and balance.*

Questions?



Please type your questions in the chat window now.



Additional Resources

Autism resources

- www.autismspeaks.org
- www.nationalautismassociation.org

Sensory resources

- www.pinterest.com/pacificautism/

Connect with PACE

Find PACE on:



- www.pacificautism.org



- Facebook (pacificautismce)



- Twitter (PacificAutismCE)

Watch for our next webinar!



Independent Play Skills

Check this link for times and dates:

<http://www.porchlighteducation.org/therapy-services/>

Please help us improve Porchlight!



Please complete the post-event survey that will pop up once you close this window.

Unanswered Questions?

If we haven't answered your questions today, please email us at:

info@pacificautism.org