

## Tigger Zone - Transcript



Welcome back to our miniseries on sensory integration.

In this video we will discuss how to notice and respond when your child is showing signs of being in the high alert Tigger zone.

When in the Tigger zone you may notice that your child is struggling to stay still, for instance they may fidget or move around very quickly in their environment. They may find it difficult to remain on one task for a very short period of time. They may struggle to take in and process information or instructions that you're giving to them. They may appear to become over excited very easily or they may become very agitated or angry very quickly. Some parents can refer to this as having a meltdown. When in this zone, children require activities that will be calming to their system.

We will now give examples of how you can use feedback from the different senses to help provide calming input for your child.

Please remember that your child should be supervised at all times when taking part in the activities we will be discussing.



**Using the movement system.** Provide slow rhythmical movement e.g., going backwards and forwards and side to side. Try to avoid spinning at this point as this can further raise their levels of alertness!

In this clip we will be using a therapy ball. If you don't have one of these at home you can use an exercise ball, an airbed, a space hopper or a rocking horse or a rocking chair.

A therapy band. If you don't have one of these at home, you can use an exercise band, a skipping rope or even a cord from a dressing gown.

A scooter board. If you don't have one of these at home, you can use an everyday skateboard.

Have your child sit on the therapy ball or item that you are using. They may start to automatically bounce up and down. If not ask them to bounce or move their body around on the ball.

You can have them sit on the ball for everyday activity such as schoolwork, watching TV or playing computer games.

You can also incorporate fun activities whilst sitting on the ball such as throwing a ball backwards and forwards or playing balloon tennis with an empty kitchen roll as a bat.

You can be as creative as you like during these activities as long as you are providing movement.

Alternatively, you can carry out activities with your child lying over the therapy ball such as rolling over to collect items, bowling, taking part in games such as Connect 4, build a jigsaw puzzle or even playing on their iPad.

Using either a scooter board or skateboard, have your child lie on the board on their tummy and whilst having their hands at their side, pull themselves along. You can make this activity fun by asking them to pick up items as they go and turning it into a race.

You can also try tying therapy band or rope around a door handle or sturdy item and get your child to pull themselves along. Other items you may have at home that will provide movement might be a mini trampoline, a swing or scooter or bikes that can be used in the garden.

If your child enjoys spending time watching YouTube videos or spending time on their iPad, why not encourage them to take part in children's yoga activities or a child based exercise routine that are widely available online.

Every day household tasks such as loading the washing machine, hanging out the washing on the washing line, sweeping or hovering will also provide movement so try to get your child involved in chores around the home.

Encouraging your child to take part in just 10-15 minutes of movement at regular points throughout the day will support them to stay in the "just right" zone.



**Using heavy muscle work.** Any activity that activates the muscles and joints within your child's body will provide them with heavy muscle feedback.

Create obstacle courses within the home such as climbing over a chair, stepping across cushions on the floor, and climbing under a duvet or blanket. Create mini workout circuits at home such as wall push ups, squats, and chair dips. You can make this activity fun for younger children by incorporating animal walks like bunny hops or bear crawls.

Engaging your child in household chores that involve lifting like helping to carry a laundry basket or washing a car using big arm movements will provide this kind of feedback.

Adding weight to your child's body when they move such as weighing down jumper by placing beanbags on their pockets will make their muscles work even harder therefore providing this feedback.



**Using the touch system.** The use of touch, particularly deep touch can be very calming to our levels of alertness.

Try wrapping your child up in a blanket or encourage them to squish between cushions when seated. You can play games such as making a sandwich and ask your child to lie on the floor use a therapy ball or a cushion to squish them

and ask them what they want on their sandwich. Pretend to spread butter and then add the tomatoes. Again be as creative as you like here and get your child involved.

Provide a firm hug or massage all over their body. It's especially helpful to apply pressure by pushing down gently on their shoulders or they apply this pressure themselves. You can also encourage them to apply firm pressure to their body using massage.

Wearing lycra clothing such as a vest under their usual clothing, can provide deep touch feedback. This can be especially helpful for children who struggle to tolerate the textures of their clothes.



**Using the smell system.** Try to identify a smell your child finds calming, then use this to support them be in the "just right" zone. For example, if your child likes the smell of vanilla, use this smell during times that your child is calm such as bath time

of when calmly watching their favourite TV programme. You can then progress to using this when their alertness levels rise such as a room spray.

**Creating a sensory retreat at home.** Identify an area within the home, preferably not your child's bedroom that has minimal sensory input, such as soft lighting, minimal noise or use a calming noise or smell that they might find relaxing. You could try lavender, camomile, or vanilla for example. Provide them with access to blankets and cushions that they can get under.

Encourage your child to use this space at regular intervals during the day and when they are likely to be in the Tigger zone to help them regulate. This is especially helpful when you have a busy household where your child is likely to become over stimulated very quickly.



Please go on a look at our next videos which will discuss how to notice and respond when your child is showing signs of being in the low alert, Eeyore zone and finally how to meet your child's day to day sensory needs.