

Creating Sensory-Friendly Spaces at Home

Simple, practical adjustments to support regulation

Why the Environment Matters

Our surroundings constantly feed information to the nervous system. A space that matches a person's sensory needs can make it much easier to feel calm, focused, and able to participate in daily life, while a mismatched environment can contribute to overwhelm.

Considerations by Sense

- **Lighting:** natural light, dimmer switches, or warm-toned globes instead of harsh fluorescent lighting.
- **Sound:** reducing background noise, offering headphones, or adding soft furnishings to dampen echo.
- **Touch and texture:** soft, tag-free clothing and bedding; a choice of textures for seating.
- **Movement:** access to a rocking chair, floor cushions, or space to pace or move freely.
- **Smell:** unscented or low-scent cleaning and personal care products where smell sensitivity is present.

Creating a Regulation Space

A small, dedicated space, even a corner with cushions, dim lighting, and a few calming items, can give a person somewhere to retreat to before overwhelm builds, rather than only after it peaks.

Involve the Person

Wherever possible, involve the person themselves in shaping their space. Autonomy and choice are part of what makes an environment feel genuinely safe and regulating, not just quiet or tidy.

Start Small

You don't need to overhaul a whole house at once. Start with one or two changes in the space where they'll have the most impact, and build from there.

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