

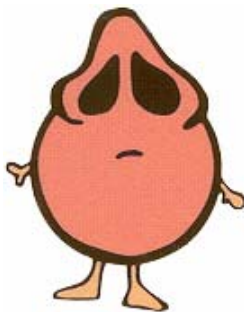
Olfactory system

THE RECEPTORS FOR THE OLFACTORY SYSTEM ARE LOCATED IN THE NASAL STRUCTURE. THESE ARE CHEMICAL RECEPTORS, AND ARE IMPORTANT FOR OUR AWARENESS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND OUR BASIC SURVIVAL. NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO OLFACTORY SENSATIONS CAN IMPACT BEHAVIOR, SOCIAL INTERACTION, OBJECT MANIPULATION, MOVEMENT, AND SELF CARE.



Using the Olfactory System to Change Arousal Levels

The olfactory system is one of man's oldest and most basic sensory systems. Olfactory input can evoke memories, make a situation more pleasant, or quickly bring a situation to an abrupt halt. Think about the first time you smelled your favorite cologne or perfume. What does the smell of coffee make you think of? What does the cafeteria smell like during lunch at school? Imagine sitting next to a smelly trashcan while you try to concentrate on work. The added sensation of smell can entice participation in an activity or quickly make a student refuse to complete the project. For many people, smells that are sweet tend to be more calming — cinnamon rolls or va-



nilla. Scents that are more acrid tend to be more alerting — smoke or skunk. Not everyone perceives every scent in the same manner. A pleasant smell for one person may be intolerable for the next. A careful examination of the school or home environment can reveal hidden olfactory triggers that can significantly influence a student's participation. Planning for olfactory activities can reduce nega-

Alerting Activities

- ☼ Allow the use of scented markers or crayons
- ☼ Allow frequent use of scented lotion or soap between activities
- ☼ Spray a citrus room deodorizer before an academic task
- ☼ Include scented materials within projects—science project including citrus fruits
- ☼ Use scratch and sniff stickers as a reward



CALMING ACTIVITIES

- ☼ Burn a vanilla scented candle during academic tasks
- ☼ Place potpourri in the classroom
- ☼ Consider classroom arrangement in relation to the trashcan, bathroom or cafeteria
- ☼ Consider whether perfumes, lotions, deodorants, shampoos, etc. are bothersome to students
- ☼ Include preferred scents within academic tasks — science experiments with perfumes, completing writing assignments with a scented pen

Hints for Olfactory Sensory Input

- ▣ Acrid scents are ALERTING
- ▣ Sweet scents are CALMING
- ▣ The same scent can have different meanings for different people
- ▣ Examine the environment and activities closely for sensory input

