

Paging Through the Penn State Berks Sensory Story



By Brett Spencer

Links in the Chat:

- **Virtual Tour of Sensory Room:**

<https://www.thinglink.com/media/1837256645118263782>

- **Penn State Berks Thun Library Sensory Spaces & Kits Libguide:**

<https://guides.libraries.psu.edu/berks/wellness/sensory>

- **Multisensory Met: Touch, Smell, and Hear Art**

<https://www.metmuseum.org/perspectives/multisensory-met>

- **Sensory Tips for Thriving in the Classroom**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nPiDpKlvs1kn52InfRb0QxCQYAk6Rsuff8e6XlGi2S8/edit?usp=sharing>

- **Virtual Sensory Room:**

<https://sites.psu.edu/virtualsensoryroom>

- **The SENSE Community**

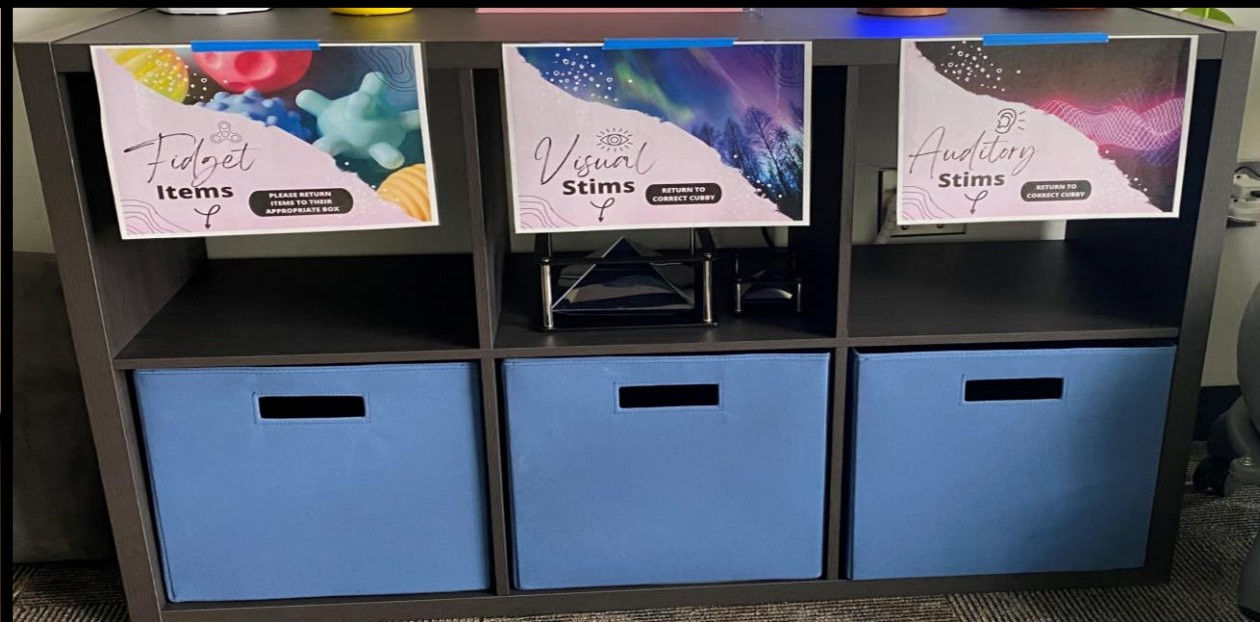
<https://sites.psu.edu/sensory/>

Main Sensory Room



Main Sensory Room ([360 Virtual Tour](#))

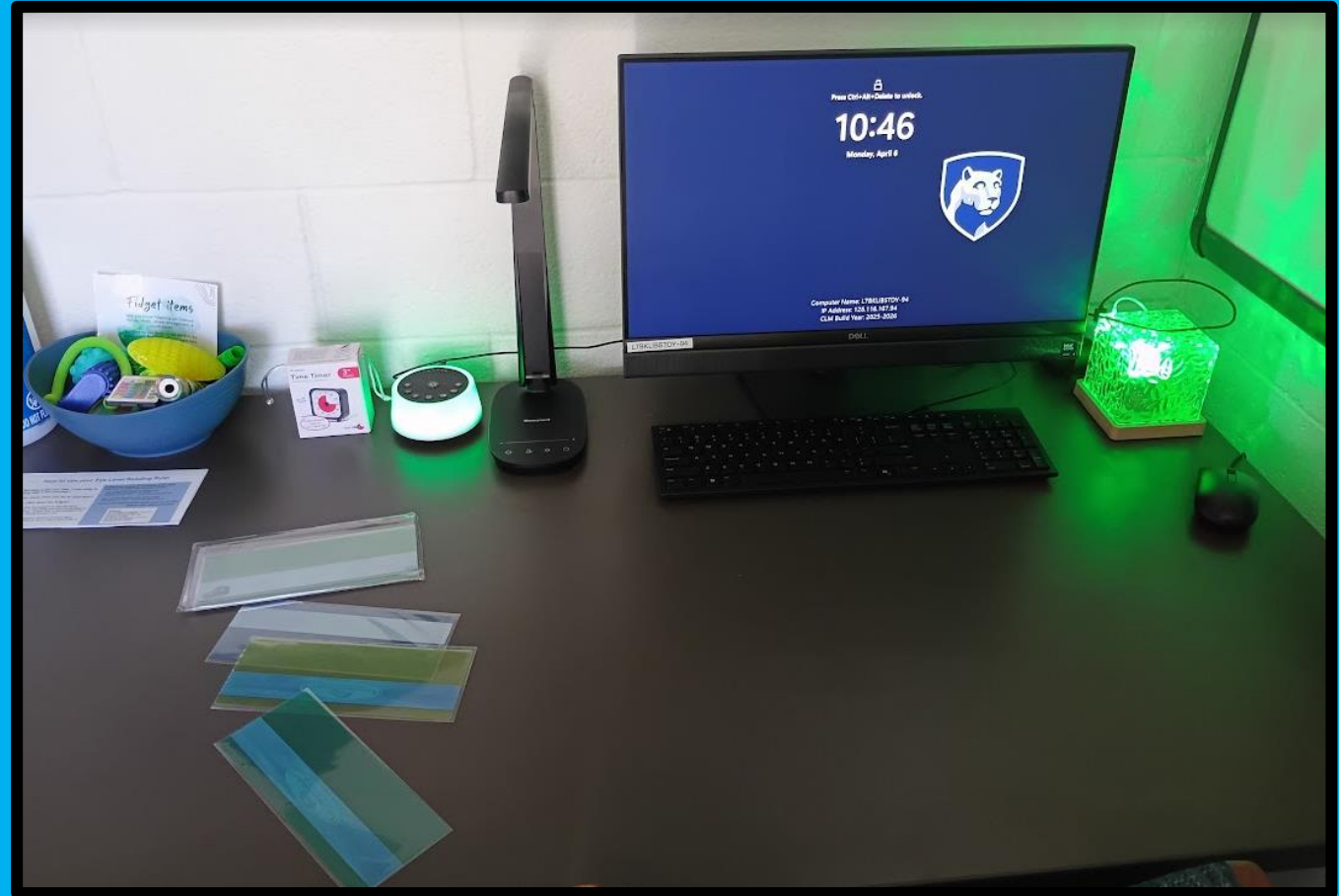
- Goal: Intensive sensory modulation & relaxation
- Group or Individual Use; 90 minutes



Sensory-Friendly Study Rooms

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- Goal: Facilitate studying
- Individual use: 3 hour





Thun Library Sensory Kits

- **Back-up to sensory room**
- **Sensory-rooms-on-the-go for campus outreach events**

Empower students to carve out neuroinclusive spaces anywhere in the library or around campus!
(“sensory agency”)

Multi-Sensory Exhibits

- **Multiple Sensory Media**—engaging several senses to appeal to all cognitive preferences
- **Penn State Berks Examples:**
 - **Nature Mosaic**
 - **Collaboration with Artist**
 - **Recordable Buttons**

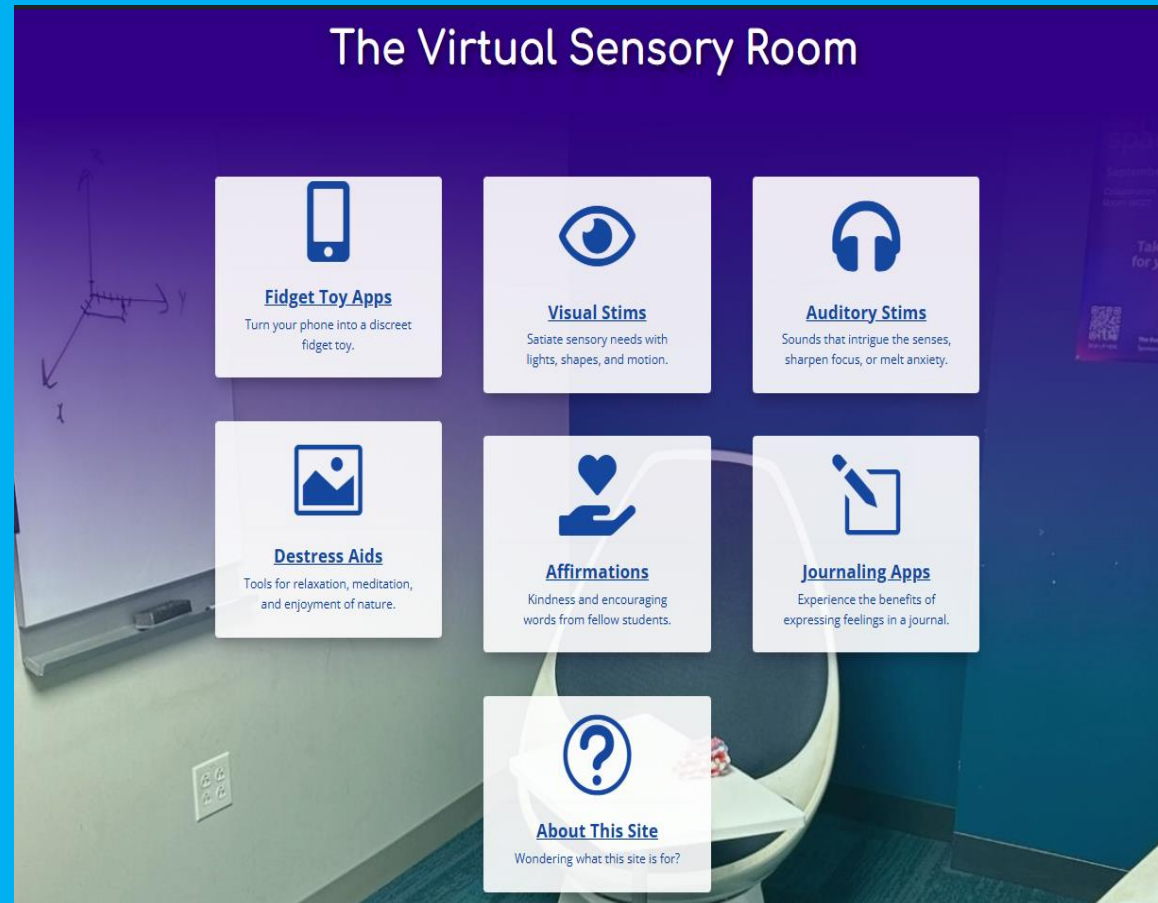


Classrooms

- **Neuroinclusive learning spaces—moveable furniture, varied seating options, mobile touch screens.**
- **Fidgets as instructional incentives—promote wellness and destigmatization while stimulating class participation.**
- **Teaching opportunity—talk to students about sensory literacy.**
- **Sensory Tips for Thriving in the Classroom (link in chat)**



Sensory Social Justice in a Digital Space



<https://sites.psu.edu/virtualsensoryroom/>

Conclusion:

Every campus should have spaces designated for deep sensory relief.

In addition, we can create sensory-friendly spaces throughout our campuses.

Libraries have always striven to enable sensory and information modulation for their communities and campuses. Collaborating with partners to create sensory-friendly spaces throughout campuses expands on that mission.

Bonus: Tips on Dealing with Resistance

- “We don’t want to lose study space.”

-Rebuttal: We’re not losing study space. We’re making the space we have more inclusive!

- “I don’t like sitting in ruckus chairs/wobble stools/canoe seats so students won’t either.”

-Rebuttal: Different neurotypes have different body position preferences. You may prefer a traditional chair, but many students may prefer something else.

- “We don’t know that our campus community wants a sensory space in the library.”

-Rebuttal: Create a cross-campus advisory board for your sensory space with co-conspirators and ask them to help you rebut/advocate.

- “Giving out fidgets in classes is a silly distraction,”

Rebuttal: Adding a “sensory edge” to general programs and instruction can make these experiences memorable, especially for neurodivergent students.

- “Students probably won’t use the space.”

Rebuttal: This is a pilot project, we’ll collect feedback. The sheer creation of a sensory space helps neurodiverse students feel that their needs are recognized. It communicates validation and support.