

SENSORY Minute

February/March 2017

What if I can't get someone into the single point swing?

That is a great question that comes up quite a bit. If someone has an aversion to getting into the swing or they are defensive to movement, you will need to help them be gently desensitized to use the swing. This is accomplished much like trying to get someone to be okay with going to the dentist or doctor. Little by little, one step at a time. It may take weeks or it may take months. It's progress, not perfection. Please NEVER force someone into a swing.



Set Up (Older Children and Adults):

It is important to have everything set up before beginning the gentling process.

- This will take two helpers to accomplish.
- If you are using a net, platform, or swing chair, place a chair with wheels under it. (Or a chair that's easy to slide.)
- The swing should be resting on the chair.
- The height of the swing should never be higher than the chair it is resting on.
- One helper should stabilize the chair with wheels while the other brings the individual to the swing.
- The helpers will need to agree upon a predetermined sign so they can communicate when to remove the chair. Helper Two (who is in front of the individual) will be the one to determine WHEN this should occur.
- Before bringing the individual to the chair, provide them with deep pressure touch and joint input to help calm their sensory system.
- Have a lap pad and a weighted neck wrap to use once they are sitting down.
- Be prepared to stop at any time the individual shows distress.

Steps for Success:

1. Have the individual sit in the swing on the chair without any movement. If no sign of distress, continue.
2. Helper One is behind the individual and Helper Two is in the front of the individual. Helper Two's hands are placed gently but firmly just above the knees. The helpers begin moving their bodies in a synchronized rocking motion (forward-and-back, side-to-side) without moving the swing. If no sign of distress, continue.
3. Helper One begins to slowly roll or slide the chair forward and back. Helper Two stays in the same position while maintaining contact with the individual while moving their body in synchrony with the motion. If no sign of distress, continue.
4. Helper One continues their motion of moving the chair forward and back while Helper Two gently lifts the individual's legs off the floor and holds them while moving in synchrony with the motion. If no sign of distress, continue.
5. When Helper Two decides it is appropriate, they will use the predetermined sign to communicate to Helper One that they can remove the chair in synchrony with the movement. If no sign of distress, continue.
6. The gentle rocking should continue forward-and-back, forward-and-back, and STOP; forward-and-back, forward-and-back, and STOP. If no sign of distress, continue.
7. The gentle rocking can continue in a side-to-side, side-to-side, and STOP; side-to-side, side-to-side, and STOP motion.
8. Helper One stabilizes the swing, Helper Two assists the individual in getting out.
9. Follow-up with proprioceptive input such as joint compressions, stomping, or wall presses, etc.