



Choice. Respect. independence.

Ocean Sensory Bin

CRI, Choice. Respect. independence. (formerly known as Community Residences, Inc.), is a community-based organization with a focused effort on providing people with developmental disabilities and/or mental health needs the resources, supports and services they need to live their lives with purpose, actively engaged in communities of their choosing. CRI's mission fully supports a person's ability to exercise control of their life's choices, and to live in and contribute to communities of their choosing, as young adults through aging in place. We believe in serving individuals within the communities in which they live and supporting the individual's choices and independence.

Part of CRI's wholistic approach includes access to Recreational Therapy, which is "a treatment service designed to restore, remediate and rehabilitate a person's level of functioning and independence in life activities, to promote health and wellness as well as reduce or eliminate the activity limitations and restrictions to participation in life situations caused by an illness or disabling condition". ([About Recreational Therapy - American Therapeutic Recreation Association \(atra-online.com\)](#)). Recreational Therapy utilizes games and fun activities to positively encourage individuals to develop their physical and cognitive skills.

CRI's Recreational Therapists utilize multifaceted activities to help engage an audience with a broad set of skills and abilities. In this case, Sensory Bins are tools that can offer visual, tactile, and olfactory stimulus to promote the use of fine motor skills and increase understanding of the world. Sensory bins can help individuals with mental health needs that rely on their senses to understand and explore the world, such as autism, and developmental disabilities work on directing their focus and practicing their motor skills while using their senses to learn about the world. These individuals are typically non-verbal and may have other sensory impairments (hearing, visual, etc.) who need maximum support to carry out tasks of daily living. Sensory bins present multiple stimuli that are great therapeutic outlet for residents and provide tools to staff to encourage continued development at their fingertips.

This is a great project to complete with children as young as 5 years old.

Our goal is to get 50 individual bins, one for each resident who participates in our Recreational Therapy Program.

Ocean Sensory Bin Instructions

Help provide developmental tools to residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These tools can be used to provide stimulus in the comfort of their own home. For those unfamiliar with the disability community, and even for those who are, this project provides insight into how some of our individuals experience the world around them.

[Create an Ocean Sensory Bin for Kids - Green Kid Crafts](#)

Supplies

- Plastic tote with a top to store the items – Ideally 14" L x 8" W x 4 7/8" H (6 Quart)
- 3 - 4 Cups of Sand
- Blue Food coloring to later add to the water.
- Assorted plastic/rubber sea creatures
- Shells
- Fish tank rocks
- Boat that floats
- Toy Shovel (or spoons, forks, etc.)
- Sand molds?
- Gallon/sandwich Ziplock bag for storage
- Essential oil – what does the ocean smell like to you?

How To Get Started

1. Go on a quest to find all the items you'd like to add to your bin! Are there other ocean themed items you can think of? You can add as much variety as you'd like! This will help keep the bin engaging.
2. Make sure the sand is dry before adding it to a ziplock bag to make sure no mold accumulates from the moisture. You can spread it out on a cookie sheet and leave it in the sun to help the process.
3. Add few drops of the essential oil of your choice to the sand in a ziplock bag. Massage the bag to disperse the oils. Make sure it's not so much that the sand is wet again.
4. Once the sand is dry, assemble your bin for testing (refrain from adding the water as you'll just have to dry your sand again!)
 - Are there enough items?
 - Is there a good variety of sizes, textures, and colors?
5. Once you are satisfied with your bin, separate all the items into their own ziplock bags and put them in the bin.
6. On the lid of the bin, create a little guide with everything that is in your "Ocean Bin" so staff can easily identify the bins and their contents as they get distributed to group homes and reused!

Sensory Bins can be dropped off to the following addresses:

Chantilly HQ

14160 Newbrook Dr, Chantilly, VA 20151

Donation boxes are located in the lobby beyond the double glass doors

Accepting donations Monday – Friday from 8am to 5pm and Saturdays from 10am to 12pm

Arlington/Falls Church Maintenance Office

7297A Lee Hwy, Falls Church, VA 22042

Donation boxes are located in the lobby just inside the front door

Accepting donations Monday – Friday from 10am to 2pm