



Choice. Respect. independence.

Rainbow Rice for Sensory Bins

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.

Rainbow Rice 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. Rainbow rice will help supplement and elevate existing sensory bins. Having extra dyed rice on hand will be helpful once the rice goes bad, if there are liquid spills, or if more filler needs to be added to an existing bin.

Things To Note

- When dying the rice, please be sure to only use food coloring and not paint of any type. Some of the individuals have PICA which means they tend to put nonedible items in their mouth. Other individuals are very food motivated, so if something looks like food or looks yummy, they're going to try to eat it. Even though the residents will have staff supervision when working with the sensory bins, we want to make sure we play it safe.

Supplies

- 6 Gallon or quart Ziploc bags
- 12 cups of rice
- Food dye – Green, blue, red, yellow, orange, purple (or you can go primary colors – blue, yellow, red – and mix to make secondary colors)
- White vinegar
- Baking sheet

How To Get Started

1. Start by sectioning out your rice. Each color gets 2 cups.
2. Add your rice to a gallon size ziplock bag.
3. Add 1 Tablespoon vinegar for each 1 cup of rice.
4. Add quite a few drops of food coloring.
5. Seal the bag and massage the food coloring into the rice.
6. Add more food coloring until all the rice is dyed to the desired color. We're looking for bold and brilliant!
7. Spread the rice out evenly onto a baking sheet to dry. This will help prevent mold from building. We suggest a few hours to overnight to be safe as it will depend on how much food coloring was used.
8. Test that the rice is dry by holding a fistful. Does the color come off on your hand? If so, rice isn't dry yet.
9. Start again to make another rainbow!

Rainbow Rice 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