



## **Beth Tzedec's New Sensory Room Pop-Up**

We have terrific news to share with you! As part of our congregation-wide commitment to member inclusivity and engagement, Beth Tzedec is proud to offer a Sensory Room Pop-Up for each of the High Holy Day services.

### **What is a Sensory Room?**

A sensory room is a comfortable, safe environment where individuals have access to specially selected equipment that stimulates the senses to promote relaxation and exploration. Our Sensory Room Pop-Up has been designed as a calming space.

### **Why is Beth Tzedec creating this space?**

The Beth Tzedec community includes individuals with neurodiversity / sensory processing considerations. CONNECT is one of our CORE VALUES, and we hope that families who might otherwise not come into the shul, especially at a very busy time of the year, will feel welcome, included, and benefit from this initiative over the High Holy Days.

If this pilot is successful, we will assess the possibility of making the Sensory Room Pop-Up available throughout the remainder of the year.

### **Who is the Sensory Room for?**

Sensory rooms are versatile and can benefit a wide range of individuals with neurodiversity / sensory processing considerations. Some examples include those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Sensory Processing Disorders (SPD), Developmental Delays, ADHD, and Anxiety Disorders.

While our pilot program will be open to children ages 4 to 18, we hope to be able to invite the broader neurodiverse Beth Tzedec community to participate in the future.

### **How do I know if my child qualifies to participate?**

Available by pre-booking only, each session can accommodate up to 2 children ages 4-18 with neurodiversity / sensory processing considerations who are accompanied by a parent / caregiver over 18 years old.

### **Will there be a facilitator in the Room?**

A staff member will be present to register participants, facilitate the use of the equipment – not educate – and clean equipment between bookings. In an emergency, the facilitator can contact security immediately.

## What items will be in the Sensory Room?

Some examples of equipment that can be used to engage with the user's senses of sight, touch, and to a limited degree, sound, include the following (See Appendix 1 for more detailed information).

- Tactile wall-mounted devices, some of which change with the heat of one's hand
- A colour-changing Air Column filled with "snow beads" that go up and come down with air flow
- A weighted lap pad to provide gentle pressure and deep touch stimulation for a sense of security and calm
- Shatter-proof wall-mounted mirrors of varying sizes for visual exploration and processing
- Small hand-held devices for visual and tactile stimulation



## How do I register?

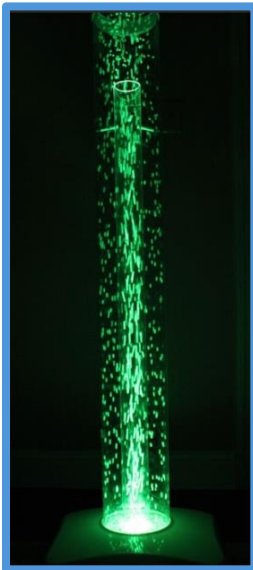
Registration is free, but space is limited! It is available by pre-booking only on the Beth Tzedec website. Please read the guidelines below to make sure using the Sensory Room Pop-Up is an appropriate fit for your child(ren).

Your booking will be confirmed by Beth Tzedec staff after which a **waiver form and guidelines for use** will be sent for your review and signature. Please click [HERE](#) to register now.

**Please check the attached APPENDICES for more information about Guidelines, Neurodiversity and the products we will use in our sensory room.**

## Appendix A: Beth Tzedec Sensory Room Equipment

All equipment below was selected for its use with and benefit to individuals with neurodiversity / sensory processing considerations. Most descriptions are modified from the TFH Canada website.



The **Interactive Whirlwind Column** is a soothing visual sensory experience.

The 1.75m/70” Bubble Column has no water - it has beads that act like Popcorn! The adjustable air flow pushes a current of "snow beads" up the centre of the tube and gravity gently brings them down. Colours can be modified by the user. The Air Column sits in a padded podium.



This engaging **Aura Projector** is perfect for visual tracking, allowing users to follow the mesmerizing shapes and colors as they shift and form captivating patterns. The light level is dimmable.

For safety, the projector will be mounted out of reach of children. Enjoy the projection and please do not look directly into the light source.



The **Fibre Optic Star Square** contains no heat or electricity. The fibre optics are woven into the pile, and you can safely touch and feel these tactile glowing pins of light that illuminate like stars.

Our shimmering, colour-changing starscape will be wall-mounted to make it more easily accessible and to ensure longevity.



### **Fibre Optic Tails:**

This captivating spray of clear 100 fibre optic tails slowly changes to a variety of colours and includes a Sparkle Light Source.

These colourful tails will catch and retain an individual's attention, providing multiple visual stimulation and tracking opportunities for sensory satisfaction. Strands are meant to be manipulated with fingers, tracked with the eyes, shone through fingers and ear cartilage, **but not put in the mouth or inside the ears**. This tactile play develops fine motor skills.

The LED light source for the Fibre Optic tails is quiet and does not get hot.



### **Gel Floor Tiles:**

Encourage sensory integration and gross motor skills with these **squishy and colourful liquid floor tiles** that move with your step, dance, or soft hop! Leak proof, non-toxic cosmetic liquid inside and anti-slip foam layer on back side.



### **Heat-sensitive Hands Circle:**

Warm hands hold the magic to change the "picture" on the black surface of this tactile, visual interactive cause-effect wall panel. Your image holds for a few moments and then fades - ready for the next warm touch. These wall circles are a mess-free finger-painting activity!



### **Big Foot Sensory Mats:**

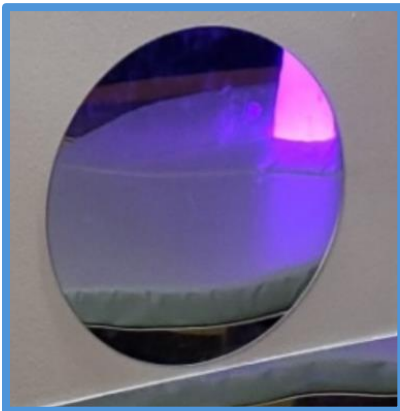
Each mat offers a different unique surface to stimulate your senses. Engage with 6 textures of grass, glitter, sandpaper, plush, "snake skin", and carpet!

Our Big Foot Sensory Mats will be wall-mounted to make them more easily accessible.





**The Square Mirror with 8 Bubbles** is scratch-resistant and provides visually distorted play with an element of sensory exploration and fun. Discover optical illusions and visual differences with four large and four small mirror bubbles on one lightweight wall panel. Convex mirror domes provide a fun distorted view to explore a sensory corner or calm space.



**Large acrylic bubble mirrors:**

Similar to the bubble panel above, these are shatter-proof and durable.

Ours will be mounted at different heights around the room to offer users different visual and sensory processing opportunities around colour, shape, and perception.



These lap pads offer gentle pressure, similar to a comforting embrace or snug blanket, to bolster relaxation and a sense of security.

Use the entire length or a portion as an invaluable tool in promoting focus, reducing stress, and enhancing overall well-being.

**Weighted Lap Pad (23" X 11"; 7.5 lbs):**

Provides proprioceptive feedback and a sense of stability to help calm the wiggles and fidgets.

Designed to provide deep touch pressure stimulation, this weighted vinyl lap pad is a specialized sensory tool crafted from soft, comfortable, non-flammable, and durable vinyl material.



**The IKEA Poäng Chair:**

- Comfortable back and neck support
- A bentwood frame designed for resilience and very gentle movement
- A relaxing seat whatever one's height

**Please Note:** Maximum weight 110 kg



**Bean bag chair:**

This comfortable bean bag chair is used in and by many reputable hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and schools. Known for its long-lasting fill, buttery soft, breathable and water-resistant vinyl, and extra comfortable support structure. It can be used in 3 different positions.

**The following “smalls” are hand-held sensory devices and fidgets.**

**As with all the Sensory Room equipment, for sanitary reasons and to ensure longevity, they are not to be mouthed or chewed.**



**Round Bubbles Push Pop**



**LiquAmaze Gel Fidget**



**Textured Silicone Tiles Set**





**Sensory Tube Fidget Set**

**Ready to Register?**

***CLICK [HERE](#)***

## Appendix 2A: Beth Tzedec Sensory Room Guidelines

1. Registration information includes a waiver that must be completed by the parent/ caregiver and the adult accompanying at the time of booking. The waiver will be sent after registration.
2. A maximum of 2 participants per session between the ages of 4-18 years **MUST** be accompanied by a parent / caregiver over the age of 18 years who has completed the waiver as well.
3. All adults accompanying children are responsible for room use and must be familiar with the equipment. See Appendix 1 for details.
4. All sessions will be 40 minutes. Start and end times will be strictly respected in fairness to other participants.
5. A staff member will be present to sign-in participants, facilitate the room's use (not educate), and clean equipment between bookings.
6. Entry is available only to those identified on the completed registration form and waiver.
7. Participants **MUST** be accompanied by a parent/caregiver who has signed this waiver.
8. To maximize the number of families who can participate, **only 1 booking per family is available** over the Chagim.
9. **Special considerations:** Please review the Sensory Room Pop-Up equipment carefully, as some pieces may not be suitable for children/accompanying adults with seizure disorders or other conditions.

## Appendix 2B: Beth Tzedec Sensory Room Rules

1. The Sensory Room is **fragrance-free** to protect users with serious allergies and those who may be challenged by smells. All participants must use the fragrance-free hand sanitizer provided before entering the room.
2. All participants must check in with staff at the desk outside the room. Please arrive no more than 5 to 10 minutes early to avoid congestion and noise in the hallway.
3. **Timeliness:** A 10-minute grace period will be given after which the booking is void. Your 40-minute session includes any transition time your child/children may need to wrap up their experience and leave the Sensory Room so it can be cleaned for the next user(s).
4. Shoes or bare feet are not permitted in the room for sanitary reasons and to protect the equipment. Please bring your own clean foot coverings (e.g., socks).
5. Please do not allow children to mouth or chew any of the equipment.

## APPENDIX 3: MORE ABOUT NEURODIVERSITY

### Processing and Understanding Our Environment

The environment around us, wherever we are, is rich with information, information to which we have access and understand by processing it through our senses (sight, touch, hearing, smell, taste). Our reactions and responses can be a diverse combination of feelings and expressions.

You may have experienced being more or less sensitive to your surroundings, perhaps sometimes feeling a stimulus or situation is “too much” (hypersensitivity) or, while others may be more engaged, you have a milder reaction or seemingly no reaction (hyposensitivity). Our experiences can be any combination of those (e.g., excited then withdrawn).

Whether we are in our own living spaces, outdoors or in nature, or participating in the broader community (e.g., school, work, grocery shopping etc.), there is a wide range of ways different people may receive, process, and respond to the same information.

### What is Neurodiversity?

“Simply put, neurodiversity refers to differences in the way people’s brains work. These differences affect how individuals interpret and interact with the world and have a significant impact on thinking, learning, emotional regulation, and behaviour. [...] Some neuro-differences have been associated with specific medical diagnoses or learning disabilities. Each of these neurodevelopmental conditions, present since birth, results in varying degrees of functional impact.”

*Neurodiversity in the Workplace, 2023*  
Western University

### Percentage of Canadian Kids Who Are Neurodiverse

Based on recent research by the *Kids Brain Health Network* partnered with *Statistics Canada* and researchers from McGill University and the Universities of British Columbia, McMaster, Ottawa and Calgary, **9.15% of Canadian children come under the umbrella of neurodiversity.**

*Neurodisabilities: Canadian Prevalence*  
*Kids Brain Health Network*

## Appendix 4: Does the Sensory Room follow Halakha?

We asked our senior Rabbi, Steven Wernick, for his position on whether the Sensory Room complies with Halakhic principles. After extensive research and consultation, Reb Steve has determined the following:

*“The use of electronic devices for a Sensory Room on Shabbat and Yom Tov is permitted only for people with neurodevelopmental challenges. It is permitted because the use of these devices is not aish (fire), because there is a medical necessity (pikuah nefesh), and because according to the Rambam too many stimuli create ruah ra’ah and the extinguishing of a flame on Shabbat is permitted to provide quiet and comfort.”*