Sensory Strategies
Classroom Accommodations Checklist

Calming Strategies:
_____ Use natural lighting whenever possible, try to avoid fluorescent lights
_____ Allow the use of stress balls or fidget toys while listening or doing seat work
_____ Avoid rushing the child
_____ Allow frequent position changes including laying or sitting on the floor during certain tasks
_____ Provide “heavy work” chores when child appears to be escalating. For example, have child carry a milk crate full of books to the library – this allows a “time out” while providing calming deep pressure input
_____ Play classical music during seat work times
_____ Allow child to wear headphones if bothered or distracted by background noises
_____ Refer frequently to the schedule so child can mentally prepare for what comes next and look forward to sensory breaks
_____ Provide a “time in” area such as a small tent with pillows or beanbag inside

Strategies to improve focus:
_____ Keep a metronome on in the classroom to give the brain something rhythmic to assist with concentration
_____ Encourage child to keep a water bottle (the kind with a straw is optimum) at desk
_____ Allow snacking during seat work
_____ Allow gum-chewing or sucking on mints while listening or working
_____ Minimize visual distractions in the classroom – consider limiting curtains/décor to one or two colors, keep walls free of posters/signs, etc.
_____ Use alternative seating equipment such as therapy balls, t-stools, move ‘n sit discs, and air wedges
_____ Provide frequent movement breaks such as standing to do one or two yoga poses, a two-minute stretch break, wall push-ups, or action songs
_____ In circle time, provide defined boundaries, such as carpet squares for each child
_____ Provide weighted lap pads during circle time or seat work (these can be made easily – sew fabric into a rectangular pillow shape and fill with dry beans)

General Sensory Strategies:
_____ Establish eye contact before stating directions
_____ Encourage child to repeat directions back to you to demonstrate understanding and reinforce what is expected
_____ Provide a study carrel or a quiet corner to allow child to complete difficult tasks
_____ Make sure schedule allows opportunities for recess, P.E., or longer duration movement breaks (>10 minutes) at least every 90 minutes for younger kids and every 2 hours for older kids