

# Thesis Abstract

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Thesis Title  Tactile Toys - The Design and Development of Three-Dimensional Textiles into Tactile Toys to be used as Tactile Therapy for Children with Tactile Dysfunctions			
Thesis Summary  Touch is a very important sense. Through our skin, we receive information regarding touch, pressure, texture, temperature and pain. Being able to react positively to touch sensations enables us to feel comfortable and emotionally secure. However, there are certain groups of children who are diagnosed with Sensory Processing Disorder who experience Tactile Dysfunction and have difficulty accepting touch; or are unaware of the sense of touch or even constantly seeking touch. To help this group of children, a series of tactile products known as Tactile Toys are designed specifically for their use during therapy to enhance, improve and encourage their sense of touch.  Tactile Toys are developed from three-dimensional textiles known as Tactile Textiles, which are constructed into three-dimensional forms by utilizing the thermoplastic qualities of synthetic fabrics. The design of the three-dimensional forms will attract children to feel and touch the textiles, and also encourages them to play with the toys. Tactile Toys are used in occupational therapy sessions, and the usage of specific Tactile Toys for each individual child with tactile dysfunction as tactile therapy will also be monitored by the occupational therapist.  Tactile therapy through the use of three-dimensional structural textiles will provide a variety of tactile sensations and explorations involving touch. The implementation of Tactile Toys as tactile therapy will better equip children with appropriate therapeutic tactile sensory benefits, with a focus in helping children with different tactile sensory needs to improve their ability to regulate, interpret and execute appropriate behavioral responses to			

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touch sensations. The goal of tactile therapy for children is to help them develop appropriate responses to touch sensation so that daily tasks can be competently performed. As these competencies will increase with effective tactile therapy, the child's self-esteem and self-regulation will also improve, allowing them to live their lives in a functional manner.