

Sensory Sensitive Solutions: Trauma in the Body and Movement



We learn about ourselves, and we learn about the world through our bodies, through our senses.

*- Mariah Rooney, MSW, LCSW,
Co-Founder Trauma Informed Weight Lifting*

Whether it's by substance abuse, violence and acting out, or dissociation and hiding away, youth who have experienced trauma are trying to make sense of it in their bodies. Through biopsychosocial treatments and approaches, we can help youth cope with trauma, regulate their bodies, and find success with healthy and healing approaches.

SMART¹

- SMART (Sensory Motor Arousal Regulation Treatment) is an innovative mental health therapy for children and adolescents who have experienced complex trauma to help them with emotional, behavioral, and interpersonal regulation.
- SMARTmoves is dedicated to the well-being and growth of people and families impacted by trauma through exploring movement and rhythms to promote an embodied sense of self and to build relationships.

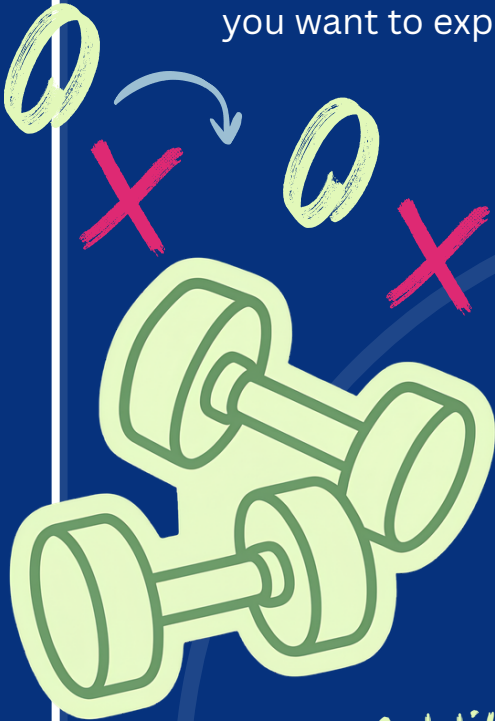


SMART utilizes an array of therapeutic equipment in shared play, such as weighted blankets, balance beams, fitness balls, and large cushions, to support children's natural ways of regulating their bodies and their emotions. This facilitates attachment-building and allows for embodied processing of traumatic experiences.

Mitt work



- In a webinar from the Center for the Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorders (CTDD), a school's social worker, Dr. Hydon, uses an innovative technique, therapeutic "mitt work", to help Vanessa process intense emotions before transitioning into reflective conversation.
- Mitt work helps in a couple different ways:
 - it helps physically connect with your body
 - It helps physically by just letting things out
 - It helps people understand that you have emotions that you want to express but you're not out of control



Trauma-Informed Weight Lifting (TIWL)

TIWL was founded to help people who have experienced trauma heal and build resilience.

It aims to:

- Foster resilience
- Increase a felt sense of agency and empowerment
- Cultivate healthy nervous system functioning
- Facilitate positive relational connections to self and others

Additional Reading:

- **Sensory Pathways to Healing from Trauma: Harnessing the Brain's Capacity for Change** explores the impact of psychological trauma on the brain's sensory pathways and demonstrates the crucial role sensory-based interventions can play in recovery.
- **Sensorimotor Psychotherapy: Interventions for Trauma and Attachment** is a book for clinicians and clients to use together that explains key concepts of body psychotherapy.



Scan for the Trauma in the Body Roadmap for Change Podcast Episode!

If a kid doesn't know what their body is communicating to them— that's an incredibly overwhelming experience.

- Mariah Rooney MSW, LCSW,
Co-Founder Trauma Informed Weight Lifting



Scan the QR code for more CTRJJ Resources!

1. Warner, E., Finn, H., Westcott, A., & Cook, A. (2020). Transforming trauma in children and adolescents: An embodied approach to somatic regulation, trauma processing, and attachment-building. North Atlantic Books.
<https://smartmovespartners.com/book-transforming-trauma-in-children-and-adolescents/>