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## **Grow Associates has created a Sensory Room to benefit the people we serve, adults with developmental disabilities**

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Randolph, MA Sensory rooms provide a soothing space that helps individuals calm down by stimulating their senses in various ways. Sensory rooms started in the 1970s in the Netherlands, and were originally called “Snoezelen rooms.” These rooms were designed for people with learning disabilities. As time went on, they decided to make these rooms available to people with all different disabilities. Sensory rooms did not start appearing in the United States until the early 2000s. More recently they have become quite popular, people are adding them to their homes, schools, and community centers. Sensory rooms can be beneficial for all but are designed for those who are hypersensitive.

You may be asking yourself, what exactly is in a sensory room? Each sensory room is different depending upon the needs and preferences of individuals. Most sensory rooms include colorful led lights, light tubes, or darker lighting. Because bright lighting causes over-stimulation, it is better to have green or blue lighting, since these colors elicit calm feelings. These rooms also may include seating that could include bean bag chairs or a couch that is form fitting for those who like being embraced, or a wooden chair for those who prefer less touch. A swing or ball pit, a sound machine that has soothing music or white noise, weighted blankets or tactile pillows, fidgets and sand trays are popular options. In the room, there should be objects that stimulate all five senses; touch, smell, sight, hearing, and taste.

There are countless benefits that Sensory rooms provide. It can help to enhance motor skills, improve social skills, and help people express their emotions and feelings. A sensory room was designed to make people feel safe and secure, and to help some regulate their behaviors. The different sensory items in the room can help individuals express how they feel and to relax through safe play. Why not enjoy a little relaxation that is as easy as sitting in a bean bag chair with blue led lights on, listening to the sounds of waves. We all have our own versions of sensory rooms, from noise canceling earbuds to man caves, and she-sheds. Grow is happy to offer this sensory respite for the people we serve.

Save the date for a sensory celebration at its 50th Anniversary Gala Big Dreams for Brighter Futures, October 13th, 2023 at the Four Points Sheraton in Norwood. Event details will be posted on the Grow website [growassociates.org](http://growassociates.org).

Grow Associates, Inc. is a nonprofit 501 (c) organization, EIN# 237378144, connecting people of all abilities with opportunities since 1973. Grow provides a wide range of services: Day habilitation,

community-based day supports, vocational training and employment services. Grow's programs help the people we serve to succeed at work, develop life skills, as well as provide different forums for social integration in the broader community. We are serving over 200 individuals, ranging in age from 2282, from over 24 local communities. The organization employs 50 human service professionals.

As a leading community health and human services organization in Massachusetts, Grow Associates is licensed, certified, and accredited by a range of agencies and organizations, guaranteeing the highest quality of services to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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