



TACPAC®
– communication through touch and music

What is Tacpac®?

Tacpac® is an activity resource for helping people with sensory or neurological impairment, developmental delay, profound and multiple learning difficulties, tactile defensiveness, and limited or pre-verbal communication. It provides a structured, emotionally safe framework for the

'receiving partner' to make contact with their own bodies, their environment and other people, and develop a relationship with these. The 'giving partner' ensures that each tactile experience is well organised and sensitively offered, and adjusted to suit the receiving partner's responses.

What happens?

Tacpac® begins with the simple sense of touch with a familiar, easy-to-get-hold-of, everyday object, such as a kitchen sponge, a wooden spatula, or some furry fabric. The experience is then enhanced through the principle of 'sensory alignment'. We have then composed a piece of music specifically to match the texture, character and even the emotional quality of the touch experience. The activity and object is announced on the CD before each piece of music starts. The receiving partner 'hears' what they see and what they feel on their skin: sensory alignment - and sensory reinforcement for seeing, hearing and touching.

tools for beautiful moments of contact
Robert Orr, Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)



Through linking what becomes familiar music with objects, actions and people in a pattern of different activities, the partners communicate with each other.

Each Tacpac® session lasts around half an hour, and consists of 6 of these experiences in a sequence carefully planned for maximum variety of stimulus, always ending with a relaxing piece of music. To set up a session, you need a disturbance free zone, the Tacpac® CD, a CD player, the objects themselves, and the colour-matched A4 laminate that describes the six activities.

Using Tacpac® over time

A session like this could be repeated with the receiver perhaps twice a week for three to four months. To begin with, they might be unfamiliar with it, and wary of the touch experiences - 'tactile defensive'. Their reactions will give clues

When I first did Tacpac I sat fighting back the tears. Finally I had found something that was specifically designed to meet the needs of my child.

Mother of a child with severe and complex sensory impairment, and global developmental delay

to what they like and dislike (see guidance booklet included with every pack). As you repeat the sessions over a number of weeks or months (or over a few days eg within short term respite care visits), the receiving partner begins to recognise the music, and anticipate the next touch experience; they can relax more into the sessions, actively showing anticipation of their favourite objects or music, and interacting with them more. Over time, they may also begin to relate more obviously with the giving partner. It is the building of this trust which can help both giver and receiver develop greater confidence in communicating with each other, perhaps meaningfully for the first time.



an absolute life saver
Sue Carlyon, Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI) Education Adviser, Sense

There are two packs – Tacpac® One and Tacpac® Two. Each pack contains 3 CDs with matching laminates, so material for 3 distinct sessions or potentially a year of work with each pack.

Who can benefit?

Tacpac® is used by infants, children, siblings, parents, portage workers, therapists, carers, education (nursery, primary and secondary) and health professionals, and is now also finding applications in adult day care centres and colleges, mental health, geriatric and dementia settings.

whilst giving structure and freedom, Tacpac has no limits to the range of its impact
Sally Zimmerman,
RNIB Music Adviser

We are delighted that the quality of our work has been recognised by becoming a prizewinner in the UK Special Educational Needs Awards 2007 sponsored by nasen (National Association for Special Educational Needs) and the TES (Times Educational Supplement).

Tacpac® Training

Tacpac is user-friendly and very easy to run. The more you use it, the more you will discover how adaptable it is to the different developmental needs of receiving partners. Tacpac® Trainings have been created to give a greater understanding of how our senses work, and how this relates to music, communication, observation skills, development and session planning. If you are interested in learning more, and would like to receive training in your organisation or area, please get in touch with us.

inspiring, practical and fascinating – very useful for our work with children
Child Development Centre

If you would like to learn more about Tacpac®, you can visit our website at: www.tacpac.co.uk. You can order online, or contact us at: info@tacpac.co.uk or +44 (0)1865 772213