**Hair care**

**Sensory Strategies**

* If sensitive to touch, use a brush with a large head. A soft bristled brush may be preferable
* Vibrating hairbrushes are available. Some children find these easier tolerate to than standard hairbrushes as the vibration provides a calming deep touch pressure.
* When brushing, use firm strokes (firm pressure touch has a more organizing effect than light touch.)
* Use (firm touch) massage to the scalp prior to hair care.
* Style hair in front of the mirror so that the student can see what is happening.
* Consider other sensory stimuli within the environment (e.g. style hair in a quiet, uncluttered environment where possible.)
* Encourage the student to brush their own hair to begin with – this will help them to get used to the sensation while they is in control.
* Sitting with a weight on the lap (e.g. weighted blanket or toy) may help them to tolerate hair care.
* If the student requires regular movement breaks, offer this prior to hair care.
* Children with sensory hypersensitivity may prefer having their hair washed in the bath rather than the shower. The bath may also be preferable if your child has poor balance or coordination.
* Trial different shampoos (e.g. perfumed/unperfumed). Those designed specifically for children may be preferable as they do not sting the eyes.

**Other Strategies**

Follow a set routine for hair care – stick to this wherever possible (e.g. same room, same chair to sit in/calming music playing/reward when completed hair brushing for set number of brush strokes.)

Give preferred toy/book/picture/dvd to look at during hair care.

Here are a couple of sites for hairbrushes

<http://www.knotgenie.com/>

<http://www.amazon.com/Tangle-Teezer-Salon-Elite-Purple/dp/B003GDK6F2>

<http://www.flaghouse.com/Vibrating-Hair-Brush-item-37608>