



SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER

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Did you know humans have eight senses (vision, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, vestibular, proprioception, and interception) and they are used for understanding and taking in the world around us, without having to give too much thought or effort to the process.

Sensory Processing



Sensory processing is the neurology of how people experience their world. It shapes our experiences and impacts our feelings. It provides individuals with emotional stability and the ability to interact with others socially. It also informs our distress tolerance.

When does it become a disorder?

It becomes a disorder when an individual's sensory input becomes distressing instead of useful information. This may look like temper tantrum or big feelings, a sudden shift in mood, or a need to suddenly move around or leave an area.



3 Categories of the Disorder

Sensory Modulation

The most common form of SPD. It occurs when the brain does not know when to pay attention or ignore information. This looks like individuals seeking sensory input, avoiding sensory input or under processing sensory input.

Sensory Discrimination

Occurs when there is confusion about the information that is being taken in. It can cause clumsiness or not knowing when you are hungry.

Sensory Motor

Occurs when the brain has difficulty following directions for sequencing steps. This can lead to struggling to get dressed. It also affects motor control, which can lead to difficulty sitting for long periods of time, or trouble with balance.

Symptoms that may be seen in the school setting

Sensory Seekers:

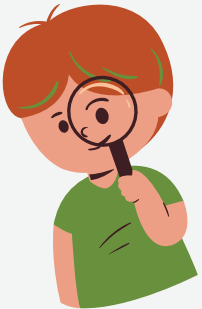
- Engages in rough play with others
- Chewing on inedible objects such as pencil erasers
- Has difficulty following directions
- Likes to spin or hang upside down in the classroom and outside
- personal space struggles

Under processing Sensory Input :

- Has difficulty paying attention
- Clumsy, tripping when they walk or runs into things
- Does not notice loud noises
- limited appetite that may result in being underweight

Sensory Sensitivity:

- Dislike the sounds of the automatic toilets and hand dryers.
- Dislikes being messy: such as having paint on their hands
- Does not like walking on grass or certain textures
- Certain smells may bother them



Strategies to use in the school setting

- Create a safe space for students. Allow them to assist with this task. As a class, pick fidgets they would like, comfy items such as pillows or a rug, provide noise canceling headphones, and a way to block out the bright lights of the classroom
- Create a signal that you can use with your student that tells you they are feeling overwhelmed or need a break from what is occurring.
- Be mindful that students with SPD may need extra time when completing activities, as they may be easily distracted by their environment.
- Provide varying seating options such as firm cushions, soft pillows, a wobble stool, or simply a carpeted space