Sensory Processing

Sensory Processing Disorder

Sensory processing is when the nervous system processes the message it has received from the senses and the resulting motor or behavioural response. In sensory processing disorder (also known as Sensory integration disorder / dysfunction), the sensory signals are not interpreted in the typical way. A person with SPD will find it difficult to process and respond to the information received from the senses.

There are three main subtypes:

Sensory Modulation Disorder

Difficulty regulating response to sensory stimuli.

This subtype is broken down further into three: Sensory Over Responsivity, Sensory Under Responsivity, Sensory Craving.

- · tinted lenses
- wide brimmed hats / sunglasses

Hypersensitive

- avoid glare / bright lights
- use of blinds, lamps
- minimise visual clutter consider a calm area with minimal visual clutter, relaxing and calming items
 - consider their colour preferences

Hyposensitive

- sensory lights, bubble tubes, lava lamps
- mirror balls, disco balls
- spinning tops and wheels
- pouring play, e.g. pouring sand, water, rice, confetti, glitter

Sensory Based Motor Disorder

Difficulty with balance and coordination + skilled motor tasks.

This subtupe is broken down into: Duspraxia and Postural Disorder

Hypersensitive

- · messy food play playing with food, using food to make things, e.g. pictures from dried pasta etc.
 - trays / plates with sections to separate the foods

Hyposensitive

- cooking activities
 - snack times

Hyper

Receiving too much information

Receiving too little information

Sensory Discrimination Disorder

Difficulty in understanding sensory stimuli, i.e. difficulties in understanding what is seen, heard, tasted, felt, smelled. This subtype is broken down further into each of the sensory systems.

Hypersensitive

- warn before touching
- avoid approaching from behind
- use firm pressure when touching
 - offer heavy work, e.g. carrying books etc.

- in the timetable
 - timetabled

Hyposensitive

- · messy play, e.g. mud, foam, paints, ice etc.
- fidget toys, e.g. stress balls, koosh balls etc.

Tactile

SPD can occur in each of the sensory systems: Visual, Auditory, Vestibular (Movement), Smell, Taste, Tactile, Proprioception (Body Sense)

> These are some ideas you could try:

Hyposensitive

- rolling
- spinning
- · balance activities, e.g. space hoppers, balance board, therapy ball
 - swinging

Hypersensitive

- Practise balancing at their own rate
 - · Warn of sudden movements

Hyposensitive

- banging on pots, pans etc., wind chimes, rain makers
 - musical instruments
 - cause and effect toys
 - · listening to music
 - give time to respond to speech

Hypersensitive

- giving warning about noises that are about to happen
- avoid sudden loud noises / shouting / use visual cues
- a guiet, calm space with dim lighting
 - listen to preferred music
 - soft tous / tous that make a gentle sound
 - headphones / ear defenders

Propioception

Hyposensitive

- pushing /pulling activities
 - jumping
- weighted objects

Hyposensitive

- Use a range of smells some are relaxing, calming, stimulating. Add scents to playdough.
- Create a 'smelloru' a range of different smells on cotton wool in small containers / herbs / plants etc
 - Sensory gardens with fragrant herbs and plants

Hupersensitive

 slowly introduce movement activities allow time to process

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Hupersensitive

- Try to find out which smells are having a negative effect consider hand creams, shower gels, aftershaves, perfumes, cleaning products etc.
 - · Play with foods