

BABY BYTES

For families with infants and young children

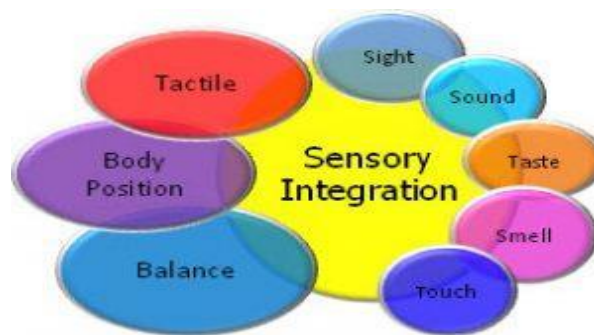
Sensory Integration/Processing

Sensory integration helps people “make sense” of the world around them. Sensory integration is also known as sensory processing. Sensory integration is the process of using our senses to:

- Quickly take in sensory information
- Organize this information
- Use it for success in everyday activities



We receive information from many senses: sight, sound, taste, touch (tactile) and smell, as well as our body position in space (proprioception) and through balance and movement (vestibular). Think of all the sensations you experience throughout day, i.e. dressing, bathing, eating, etc.



DID YOU KNOW???

- Most activities require us to combine information from many different senses at the same time. For example, a toddler uses touch to explore the texture of his food, proprioception to bring the food to his mouth, smell and taste to identify different types of food, and the vestibular sense to sit upright during the meal.
- Sensory input can be received from both inside and outside of our body.
- As children grow, they learn how to take in and process all this sensory information at the same time and focus their attention on particular sensations while ignoring others.

- Some children have difficulties receiving and processing incoming sensations, making everyday tasks frustrating.
- Anyone can have difficulty processing certain sensory input (ie. a certain touch, smell, taste, sound, movement, etc.) and we all have sensory preferences.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SENSORY INTEGRATION/PROCESSING ISSUES

- Overly (hyper) or under (hypo) sensitive reaction to touch, movement, sights, or sounds in the environment
- Unusually high or low activity level
- Easily distracted; poor attention to tasks
- Delays in speech, motor skills, or learning activities
- Coordination problems; appears clumsy or awkward
- Poor body awareness
- Difficulty learning new tasks or figuring out how to play with unfamiliar toys
- Difficulty with transitions between activities or environments
- Immature social skills
- Impulsivity or lack of self-control
- Difficulty calming self if upset, excited, etc.



Intervention is recommended when sensory processing problems interfere with a child's daily functioning. Because a preschooler's nervous system is still developing and the brain is most open to change early intervention can impact the child's functioning well beyond the preschool years.

See Baby Bytes Activities for Children with Sensory Processing Disorder

Source: Stock, C. & Kranowitz, M.A. (2005). *The Out-of-Sync Child.*

Building Bridges Through Sensory Integration.., Aquilla, P., & Sutton, S. (2002).

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