



11 Common Signs of Sensory Processing Disorder or Difficulties

Sometimes you need to be a detective to recognise sensory difficulties as the underlying cause of a problem. If possible see an Occupational Therapist as they are great at assessing the child's sensory processing.

Here is a list that may help you identify children's underlying sensory difficulties:

1. Extra sensitive to touch – they don't like to be touched or can't be touched enough.
2. Sensitivity to sounds – they may cover their ears when the same noises don't bother others.
3. Picky eaters – they will only eat a limited range of foods and those they are familiar with.
4. Movement – unusual body posture, seek constant movement or have difficulty with movement.
5. Hyperactivity – they can't sit still during the day or get to sleep at night, or calm themselves down.
6. Fear of crowds – crowded areas bothers them to the point of frequent public meltdowns.
7. Poor fine or gross motor skills – they have difficulty with handwriting or kicking a ball.
8. Excessive risk taking – they may be unaware of touch or pain or heights or danger.
9. Avoidance of sensory stimulation – they won't put their hands in anything messy such as glue, clay or mud. They only wear certain clothes.
10. Trouble with balance – they may be accident-prone or fall more often than others and have a preference for sedentary activities.
11. Easily distracted – particularly by noise, movement, and touch.

By using a range of sensory activities children learn to feel "just right." Every child needs to work out their own preferences. Here are some ideas to try:

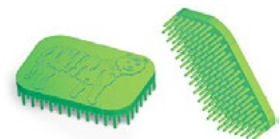
10 Calming Activities

1. Massage.
2. Sitting on Bean Chair.
3. Slow rocking.
4. Soft, slow music.
5. Joint compressions.
6. Stretching.
7. Chewing.
8. Sucking.
9. Fidget toys.
10. Squeezing ball.



10 Top Alerting Activities

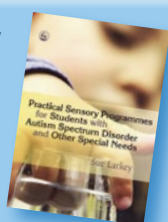
1. Brisk rubbing.
2. Chewy food / Chewy Tubes.
3. Any push/pull, run, skip, jump, heavy lifting.
4. Fast, irregular movement (swing, trampoline, therapy ball).
5. Kick, bounce, and throw a ball.
6. Strong tastes / odours.
7. Loud, fast music.
8. Fidget toys.
9. Sitting on sensory mat.
10. Physical exercise.



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Practical Sensory Programmes

By Sue Larkey



Songames for Sensory Processing

By Audrey Lande and Bob Wiz



Full range of Sensory Toys

Available at www.suelarkey.com

