

Are You A Sensational Teacher?

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What is Sensory Processing Disorder

It is a neurological disorder characterized by disruption in the processing and organization of sensory information by the central nervous system, characterized by impaired sensitivity to sensory input, motor control, unusually high or low activity levels and emotional instability.

American Heritage Medical Dictionary

Are you in the box?

SPD can be challenging in the classrooms. It requires teachers and parents to think outside of the box in order to meet the child's needs. Traditional classrooms and learning methods do not foster a well balanced "sensory diet"

Sensory Seekers

- Touches/tastes everything
- Unaware of dirty face/runny nose
- Prefers strong flavors (spicy, salty, sour)
- Seeks messy play
- In constant motion
- Spins or swings excessively
- Jumps/runs/hops where ever they go
- Rough houses
- Intentionally falls on the floor or crashes into things
- Chews on pens/pencils/sleeves
- Presses too hard with pencil when writing
- Makes noise
- Talks self through tasks

Sensory Avoiders

- Cringes with light touch. May say “ouch”
- Avoids standing near others in line or on risers
- Dislikes messy play/having hands dirty
- Avoids certain textures (flannel, sand, glue)
- Tags and seams in clothing are problematic
- Picky eater
- Avoids swings/slides/merry go rounds
- Fears being upside down
- Difficulty with jumping jacks (especially with eyes closed)
- Poor balance
- Clumsy
- Easily distracted by noise (lights, clock ticking, fan)
- Covers ears with loud noise

What To Do In The Classroom

- Familiarize yourself with your classrooms sensory needs
- Talk to your local Occupational Therapist
- Make up jobs that fit the need of the student
- Create spaces within the classroom that offer variety
- Brainstorm different ways to get a task accomplished
- Build your schedule around your students needs
- Avoid power struggles, it is not always a conscience decision
- Pat yourself on the back for making a huge difference in a child's life