





- Some children may be over sensitive to sensations and will be fearful or withdraw from certain activities or sensations. Other children may be sensory seeking and find many of these activities enjoyable. You must carefully observe your child's reactions and respect them.
- A child who is indicating fear or distress should not be forced to participate. The child's fear and discomfort is based on his or her nervous system's reaction to sensation and is real, and not under his or her control.
- Many children fluctuate between sensory sensitivity and sensory seeking behaviors, and others may be sensitive to certain sensations but seek other ones. Each child's patterns may be highly unique and individual, and it is not uncommon for those patterns to change depending upon the context the child is in (where, when, what is going on, etc.).
- Sensory seekers tend to be very active children, who are always on the go. Positive behavior responses often come in the wake of intense forms of sensory stimulation that promote heavy jumping, falling, crashing, spinning, stomping or pushing. Creating ways to incorporate these sensory needs in a safe and fun manner will lead to your child learning ways to self regulate their sensory system.
- Children who are highly sensitive and reactive to specific sensations (e.g. light, sound, touch/texture, smell) may like or seek out activities that provide sensory input to their vestibular and proprioceptive system. In general, these inputs are calming for the sensory system.
- Finally, watch for signs that the child is becoming over stimulated by certain sensations such as spinning, jumping, and crashing. Watch for sudden changes in skin color, clammy skin, or dizziness. If you notice these, stop immediately and SLOW DOWN to ensure their safety. If necessary find something more calming for your child to regain their internal sensory "homeostasis" or balance.

The best way to approach sensory based activities is to present some ideas to the child and allow their preferences to guide you. We hope that this information will help you get started and help you find other similar ideas to create a list of sensory "go to" activities.

Thank you and let us know if you have any questions – we're here to help!

