

IT'S ALL INTERCONNECTED

*Sensory Processing and Social
and Emotional Development
for Infants and Toddlers*

Part I





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DEC RPs

- **Family 2:** Practitioners provide the family with up-to-date, comprehensive, unbiased information in a way that the family can understand and use to make informal choices and decisions.
- **Family 3:** Practitioners are responsive to the family's concerns, priorities, and changing life circumstances.
- **Instruction 1:** Practitioners, with the family, identify each child's strengths, preferences, and interests to engage the child in active learning.



What word comes to mind when you think of the term sensory?

OBJECTIVES

- ① Broaden sensory awareness
- ② Create shared meanings /Decode sensory terminology
- ③ Explore the intersection of sensory and social-emotional development through a sensory lens





Which Activity Utilizes All 8 Senses?



Reading a Book

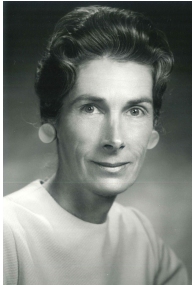


Listening to Music



Eating Food





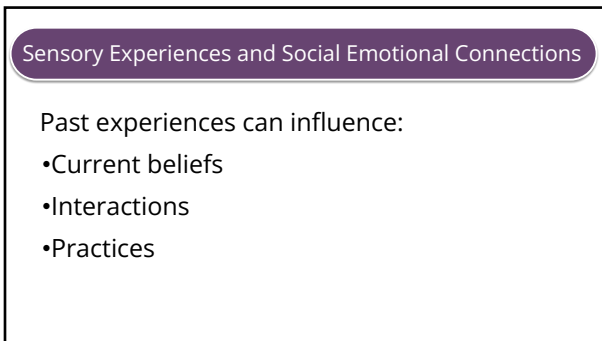
"It is an **unconscious process** of the brain that organizes information detected by our senses and gives meaning to what is being experienced. This process allows us to act or respond to the situation we are experiencing in a purposeful manner known as an **adaptive response**."

- Dr. Jean Ayres, Ph.D











What do you prefer for optimal functioning as an adult?

Sensory Experiences and Social Emotional Connections



Uniqueness In
Sensory Processing
Influences



Our Interactions And
Environmental
Preferences



Our Participation
And Functioning
(Adaptive Response)

Making The Connection

Co-regulation

Adaptive Responses

Dysregulation

Regulation

Regulated and Ready to Learn and Connect

Dysregulation

Unavailable for Learning Under Dysregulation

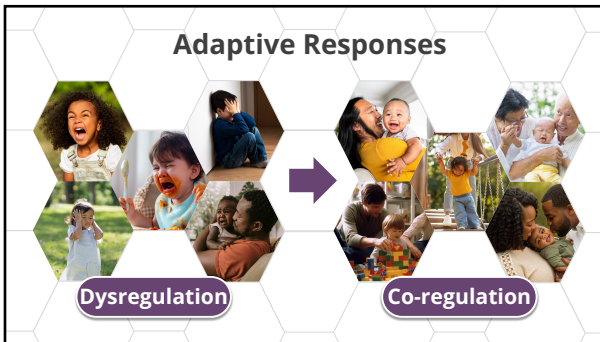
Co-regulation

Practice for Self-Regulation

Typical Development

Age	Typical Responses In The Development Journey
0-6 months - Primary need to feel safe/connected, sleep and early movement exploration	Inconsistent newborn sleep patterns, always wanting to be held, arching (not related to reflux)
6-12 months - Developing language and motor skills	Throwing, Exaggerated response to new experiences- textures such as sand, grass, food progressions, Putting "everything" in their mouth including toys, Separation Anxiety
12-24 months - Independence, more competent in communication and motor	Running around is a game, parallel play, not sharing/snatching, hitting, Separation Anxiety, Defending Toys ("mine!"), Limited attention span
24-36 months - Big feeling, greater social interests forming	Not sitting still, difficulty with napping, whining, limited cooperative play

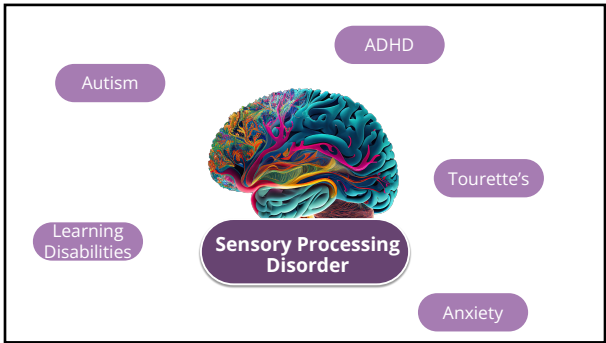
Adaptive Responses

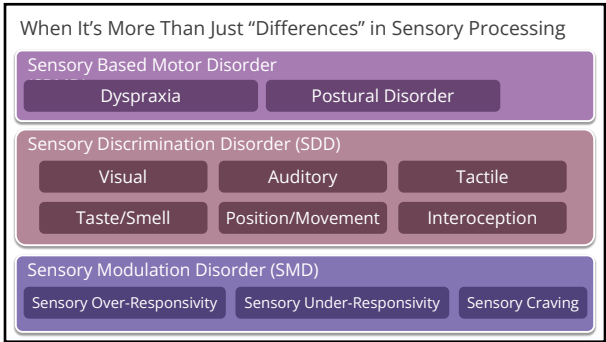


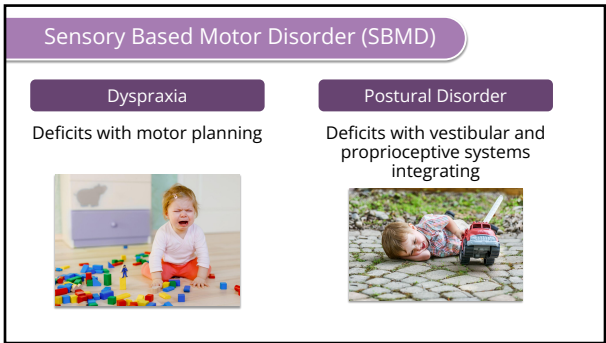
Relationships and Sense

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Sensory Motor: Social Emotional Impacts





What activities does your
sensory system find
enjoyable or exciting?

Sensory Discrimination Disorder



Visual



Auditory



Tactile



Taste/Smell



Position/Movement



Interoception

Vestibular: Balance and Spatial Awareness
Proprioception: Body Awareness (grade force & pressure)

Understanding the internal state of one's body

Social Emotional Impacts



Sensory Modulation Disorder (SMD)



Sensory Over-Responsivity

Tendency to respond too much, too soon, or for too long to sensory stimuli.



Sensory Under-Responsivity

Tendency to be unaware of sensory stimuli, to have a delayed reaction, responses are muted or respond with less intensity.



Sensory Craving

Driven to obtain sensory stimulation, but getting the stimulation results in disorganization.

Sensory Over-Responsivity (SOR)

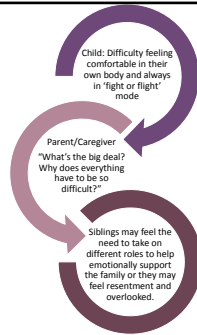
Characteristics:

- Sensory avoidance/ defensiveness
- Heightened Reactions
- Fight or Flight



STAR Institute: <https://sensoryhealth.org/>

Social Emotional Impacts of a SOR



Sensory Under-Responsivity (SUR)



Delayed response to stimuli



Slower processing time to achieve a task



Lacking awareness of stimuli

Sensory Seeking/Craving (SS/C)

Characteristics:

- Insatiable craving for sensory stimuli
- Higher activity level
- Always on the move
- More sensory input leads to a disorganized state



STAR Institute: <https://sensoryhealth.org/>



What quotes come to your mind when you think of a sensory seeker/craver?

Stop climbing on the table.

Let's settle down.

Don't touch that!

Possible Early Signs of Sensory Processing Problems

- Delayed motor skill acquisition (without any underlying physical impairments)
- Difficulty learning new skills
- Uncoordinated movements
- Limited play skills
- Difficulty with textures
- Fearful of movement
- Insatiable need for movement
- Sleeping difficulties
- Eating difficulties

Family/ Caregiver Considerations

Family barriers	Connection and Compassion
I don't know how they will respond in the community • I need a closed in playground/We just don't go out	Let's go and practice together
I can't leave him with a babysitter.	What do you think is the biggest challenge for this to happen
He is too loud to be in a group or community activity.	Let's talk through an example, What supports can we offer him
I never know how she will respond.	Would it be helpful to make a list of an If/Then action plan
Should I tell them (childcare/school) about her challenges?	Personal preference, discuss family's thoughts and feelings (helpful/ stigmatized/different/supports)
He doesn't have any friends	What have you noticed in social situations -discuss expectations, encourage small successes
Should he to go to daycare	Childcare is a personal family decision -Discuss family perception of daycare (benefits/challenges)



Stay tuned for next month!

1



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2



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3



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