

Sensory Differences



What is sensory?

It's the body's way of **organising information** from the body and the surrounding environment.

When thinking about our senses we usually think of what we **see, hear, touch, taste** and **smell** but, there are two more senses to consider.

The other two senses are:

Proprioceptive: the sense of movement and body awareness in relation to the environment around you.

Vestibular: the sense of balance and your position in space.

Imagine your sensory system is a bottle and your sensory experiences are the water filling up the bottle. Throughout the day your sensory system fills up with the sensory experiences you encounter. When children become overwhelmed and are not able to calm/empty their system they can spill over into a meltdown.

Children with a sensory processing difference (SPD) will find it difficult to interpret this information and may respond differently to those with a well balanced sensory system.

Children can be **hyper sensitive** (avoid sensory input) e.g: hands over ears and **hypo sensitive** (seek sensory input) e.g: needing to climb. It is important to remember that children can fluctuate between these two states depending on the situation and the environment. Their behaviour is a way of communicating their feelings.

How can I help?

- Observe and assess the child using the "Sensory Processing Resource Pack: Early Years"
- Implement recommended strategies.
- Further reading and advice for parents: "Making Sense of Sensory Behaviour"