

*The Sensory Diet: for children highly sensitive,  
under sensitive and everything in between  
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- Ellie Bean, The Drama Queen; Jennie Harding, 2011
- I Like Birthdays...It's the parties I'm not sure about!; Laurie Renke, 2005
- Learn to Have Fun with your Senses: The Sensory Avoider's Survival Guide; John Taylor, 2011
- Making Sense of Your Senses: A Workbook for Children with Sensory Processing Disorder;  
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- Squirmy Wormy: How I Learned to Help Myself; Lynda Farrington Wilson, 2009
- Why Does Izzy Cover Her Ears? Dealing with Sensory Overload; Jennifer Veenendall, 2009
- Too Loud, Too Bright, Too Fast, Too Tight; Sharon Heller, 2002

**What is Sensory Integration?**

Sensory Integration is the Process of taking in information about the world around us with all our senses and from inside our own bodies. Through integrating and organizing all these senses of vision, touch, movement, muscle sense, hearing, and smell, we are able to interact comfortably and efficiently in work, play and in caring for ourselves and others.

Proprioception: This term combines the Latin word, "proprio," which translates to "within the body," and the English word "receptive." It is the awareness of ourselves gained through muscles and joints and through other receptors within our own bodies.

Vestibular System: The sensory system with receptors in the inner ear. It responds to changes in head position to help us keep our balance. This system is constantly "checking in" with our eyes, muscles, and joints to keep us oriented to gravity and to how we balance and move our bodies.

Hypersensitivity: Acute awareness of environment, sometimes to the point of pain. Although one sense may be more "raw" to the environment than another, there is frequently hypersensitivity in most of the basic senses: smell, touch, movement, vision, and hearing. A person who is very sensitive may react with avoidance or with strong aversion.

Hyposensitivity (Undersensitivity): “Muffled” or dampened sensory awareness of the environment. This diminished sensory perception manifests as an unusually high tolerance for typically aversive stimuli, such as acute pain, or loud noise. To truly assess hyposensitivity, pathological causes, such as nerve damage, must be ruled out.

**A Sensory Checklist:**

**Auditory-**

*Hypo*\_\_\_\_\_ *Hyper*

**Visual-**

*Hypo*\_\_\_\_\_ *Hyper*

**Oral- (Taste & Texture)**

*Hypo*\_\_\_\_\_ *Hyper*

**Smell-**

*Hypo*\_\_\_\_\_ *Hyper*

**Tactile (Touch, pressure)**

*Hypo*\_\_\_\_\_ *Hyper*

**Proprioception**

*Hypo*\_\_\_\_\_ *Hyper*

**Vestibular**

*Hypo*\_\_\_\_\_ *Hyper*

**When is it Sensory Integration Disorder? When it is time to seek out intervention?**

**What is the treatment for Sensory Integration Disorder?**

Occupational Therapy

Walberger Therapeutic Brushing

Therapeutic Listening ([vitallinks.net](http://vitallinks.net))

Auditory Therapy- Berard Auditory Intervention Therapy

Child Psychologist- Play Therapy

Vision Therapy ([www.optometrists.org](http://www.optometrists.org))

Allergist

Nutritionalist

## **Design the Environment to Support the Sensory Development of ALL Children:**

An effective environmental design incorporates the appropriate amount and type of sensory inputs for indoors and outdoors, taking various senses into consideration:

- Lighting and color choices (visual)
- Sound Levels (auditory)
- Arts & Creative Materials (tactile)
- Manipulatives, Toys, Sensory Table (tactile)
- Playground/ P.E. activities (vestibular & proprioceptive)

Think about whether the environment will be over-stimulating or under-stimulating for each young child.

You need to look for the “just right” challenge for each child.

## **Observe the children in your classroom:**

- Is the child interacting and cooperating during play?
- Does the child appear attentive and interested in the materials or activity?
- Does the child transition smoothly?
- Is the child engaged and alert when appropriate for the activity?
- Is the child calm and focused when appropriate for the activity?
- Does the child appropriately engage peers in learning activities and play?

## **Creating a Sensory Diet for the Classroom or at Home:**

### **Teachers: The Biggest influence on the Child’s Educational Environment**

- Monitor your voice level
- Follow a routine
- Simplify Instructions (and repeat)
- Offer Appropriate Choices
- Prevent Problems
- Promote Self-Awareness
- Respect the Child’s Emotions
- Provide Consistency

### **VISUAL ENVIRONMENT**

- Organize the Classroom

-Reduce Clutter

-Provide Personal Space

### **AUDITORY ENVIRONMENT**

-Aware of ALL sounds

-Careful use of music

-Tones of voices

### **TACTILE (TOUCH) ENVIRONMENT**

-Use Firm Touches

-Introducing Touch Input

-“I Touch” Center

### **VESTIBULAR (MOVEMENT & BALANCE ENVIRONMENT)**

-Rotate Activity Level between Active & Quiet

### **PROPRIOCEPTION (BODY POSITION) ENVIRONMENT**

-Heavy work activities

### **Useful Websites:**

[www.alterprogram.com](http://www.alterprogram.com) : This is the Alert Program website. It describes the program and offers products, conference information, articles and other resources related to the Alert Program.

[www.henryot.com](http://www.henryot.com) : This is the Henry Occupational Therapy Services, In. site. It includes a variety of products useful to parents, teachers and students. It also provides information about workshops, articles and other resources related to sensory processing disorders.

[www.sensoryresources.com](http://www.sensoryresources.com) : The Sensory Resources website specializes in sensory issues. It offers products such as books, CDs, DVDs, as well as information on workshops and conferences.

[www.sensorysmarts.com](http://www.sensorysmarts.com) : This is the website by the authors of Raising a Sensory Smart Child (Biel & Peske, 2005). It includes several useful sections with tips and resources for parents of children with sensory processing disorder.

[www.SIFocus.com](http://www.SIFocus.com) : This is the website for S.I. Focus, the international magazine dedicated to improving sensory integration.

[www.spdconnection.com](http://www.spdconnection.com) : This is the website for Jenny’s Kids Inc. founded by Jenny Clark Brack, OTR/L. The site dedicated to providing sensory integration solutions for parents, teachers and therapists. It lists activities, products and services.

[www.spdnetwork.org](http://www.spdnetwork.org) : This is the website for The Sensory Processing Disorder Foundation. It is a project of the KID foundation, a nonprofit organization that focuses on research, education and advocacy related to sensory processing disorders.

# Sensory Integration Checklist for Parents & Teachers

From Article by Tracey le Roux

## 1. Tactile Processing

A child who is hypersensitive to touch tends to overreact to unexpected light touch, and may also be fussy about the textures of clothing. She may complain about the labels and seams in clothing, and may prefer either to cover up her body completely, or to have as little clothing on as possible. An oversensitive child may dislike having her hair washed, cut or brushed; her nails cut; or her face washed. She may also be averse to messy play. A child who is underresponsive to tactile information may constantly touch and feel objects, and may crave touch and hugs. She may be completely unaware of having a runny nose or dirty hands, and may underreact to pain.

## 2. Oral Processing

Children with oral processing difficulties are often very fussy eaters who eat food with a limited variation of textures or tastes. They may gag on new foods and usually prefer bland foods. A child who struggles to process sensory information from his mouth often puts inappropriate toys in his mouth and may chew on his clothing, nails and hair.

## 3. Auditory Processing:

A child who is oversensitive to sounds tends to be easily distracted and bothered by sounds that don't bother others. The noise at parties and movie theaters is overwhelming and he may misbehave or cry because of the noise. Some children with poor auditory processing struggle to identify and make sense of sounds. It is hard for them to tell the difference between similar-sounding words, and they may struggle to follow verbal instructions accurately.

## 4. Visual Processing

If a child is hypersensitive to bright sunshine and bright/flashing lights, rubs her eyes a lot and avoids eye contact, then there may be a visual processing problem. This can result in difficulty with visual perceptual tasks and games such as puzzles, spot the difference and mazes, and may cause the child to lose her place when reading. Letter reversals and word reversals may also occur when reading or writing.

## 5. Vestibular Processing

The vestibular system in the inner ear gives the brain feedback about the movement of the body, and is vital in balance and coordination. A child whose vestibular system is oversensitive may avoid playground equipment, elevators and escalators. He may struggle to keep his balance in gross motor activities, and may be very clumsy. Conversely, a child who is

undersensitive to vestibular stimulation may be constantly in motion--always jumping, hopping or spinning--and may struggle to sit still in class. □ □

6. Proprioceptive Processing

The muscles and joints give proprioceptive information to the brain about how the body is moving, its position and what the muscles are doing. A child with poor proprioceptive processing tends to bump and crash into things, and seems to do everything with more force than is necessary. She may accidentally break toys or rip the paper she is drawing on because of the excessive force she uses. Children with poor proprioceptive processing often chew on things or grind their teeth when they are forced to sit still. □ □

7. Coordination Skills and Motor Planning

A child who is clumsy and uncoordinated may have problems with bilateral integration and motor planning. His coordination skills may be poor, which affects his ball skills and gross motor abilities, as well as fine motor skills. Poor motor planning can cause difficulties with following instructions and learning new tasks. □ □

Sensory Integration Checklist for Parents & Teachers | eHow.com

[http://www.ehow.com/info\\_8133845\\_sensory-integration-checklist-parents-teachers.html#ixzz29NLHDsO4](http://www.ehow.com/info_8133845_sensory-integration-checklist-parents-teachers.html#ixzz29NLHDsO4)

*Presenter is available for Private Consultation to schools, teachers, &/or Parents*

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