



What is Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)?

There are several types of Sensory Processing Disorder. Each may result in numerous behavioral and sensory patterns. People with SPD misunderstand everyday sensory information within their environment. These include touch, sound, and movement. They may feel bombarded by information, seek out intense sensory experiences, or have other symptoms.

“Sensory processing” is our ability to take in information through our senses (touch, movement, smell, taste, vision, and hearing) organize, interpret that information, and make an appropriate response.

SPD affects the way the brain interprets the information taken in and how they act on that information in terms of emotional, behavioral, motor, and other responses.

Children Who Avoid Sensory

Some children with SPD are over-responsive to sensation. Their nervous systems feel sensation too easily or too intensely. It feels as if they are being constantly bombarded with information. These children often respond in a “fight or flight” manner.

They may:

- respond to being touched with aggression or withdrawal from the touch
- fear movement and heights
- be cautious and unwilling to take risks or try new things
- feel uncomfortable in loud or busy environments
- be picky eaters or overly sensitive to food smells

Children Who Seek Out Sensory

Some children are under-responsive to sensation. Their nervous systems do not always recognize the sensory information that is coming into the brain. As a result, they seem to have an almost insatiable desire for sensory stimulation. They may seek out constant stimulation or more intense and/or prolonged sensory experiences, such as taking part in extreme activities or moving constantly.

They may:

- appear hyperactive as they seek more sensation
- not be aware of touch or pain, or touching others too often or too hard (may look like aggressive behavior towards others)
- take part in unsafe activities, such as climbing too high
- enjoy sounds that are too loud, such as a loud television or radio

Motor Skills Problems

Some children have trouble processing sensory information properly, resulting in problems with planning and carrying out new actions. They have particular difficulty with forming a goal or idea or developing new motor skills.



Sensory Processing Disorder

They may have:

- poor fine motor skills, such as handwriting
- poor gross motor skills, such as kicking, catching, or throwing a ball
- difficulty imitating movements
- trouble with balance, sequences of movements, and bilateral coordination
- a preference for familiar activities or play
- a preference for activities that require no activity

These children may get frustrated easily and may seem manipulative and controlling. Some may try to compensate with an over-reliance on language and may prefer fantasy games to real life. They may also try to mask their motor planning problems by acting like a “class clown” or avoiding new group activities.

Adapted from **Impact for Special Needs**

For more in-depth information visit the Impact for Special Needs Website at;

<http://impactofspecialneeds.weebly.com/sensory-processing-dysregulation.html>