

Learn at Home

Sensory Processing & the Learning Environment

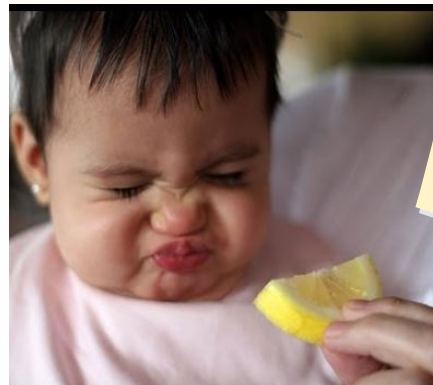
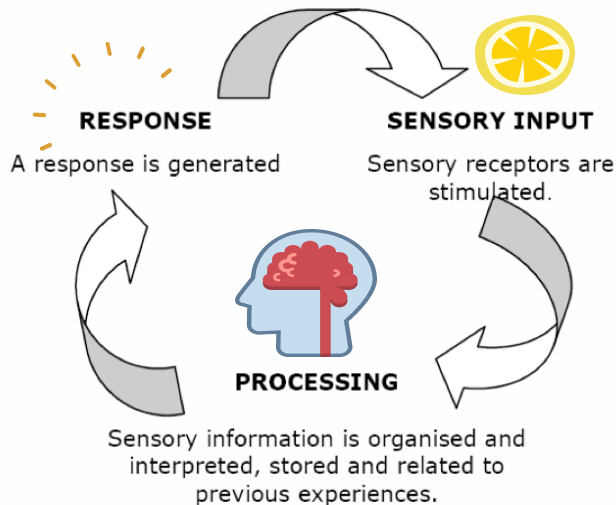
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What is Sensory Processing?

- We use our senses to **gather information** from our environment.
- Each sense provides different information which is combined and **interpreted by our brain**.
- Our brain processes this information so that we can **respond** accordingly.
- Effective sensory processing helps us **filter out** unimportant information (ex. background noise) so that we can focus on what we have to do (ex. read this slide)



Sensory processing is automatic and happening all the time!

Too Much Sensory Information

While everyone is different, it is not uncommon for children to become **overstimulated** by sights, sounds, etc. in their environment.

This means that their brain is trying to process **more information than they can comfortably handle**. (sensory overload)

It becomes **hard** for the brain **to ignore**, or filter out, extra information and focus on a task (like school work).



Reducing unnecessary or extra information can help a child focus.



Detective Work

Children may not understand or recognize overstimulation and sensory overload.

It may take some detective work by adults to identify possible sources of sensory overload.



Clothes feel itchy



Strong smells



Cluttered work space



Uncomfortable seating causing back pain



Screen time with stimulating visuals



Other activity in the house



Lights too bright



Television on in background



Strategies at Home - Preventing Overload During Homework

Signs of Sensory Overload:

- difficulty focusing
- restlessness
- irritable
- stress
- overly excited
- covering ears or eyes

Triggers of overload are different for different people.

Any sensory information that is distracting, and which a child has trouble ignoring, could contribute to feeling overstimulated.



Set up a space just for homework. Position the work space away from busy places in the house.



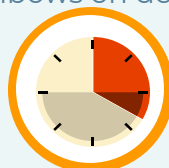
The table/desk and chair set-up fits the child. Feet flat on floor/ footstool, can rest elbows on desk.



Take a "mindful minute" to check the environment. When quiet and still - what can you hear? see? feel? smell? Are there any distractions?



Lighting is not too bright - Avoid fluorescent lighting. Use sunlight when possible.



Schedule homework time when child is not tired. Schedule breaks every 15 minutes.



Headphones or ear plugs are available if needed.

Online Resources

Click sticky notes to go to websites and documents for parents and educators

3 minute
video: **Intro to
Sensory
Processing**



Learn More
About Your
**Sensory
Preferences**
with this
Adult Checklist



**Sensory
Strategies & Tips**

Middletown
Centre for Autism



Sensory
Processing
Disorder

Info Sheet, CHEO



Self Regulation
**Tips for
Homework
Time**



**Checklist -
Sensory**
Considerations
for the **Learning
Environment**



References

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