

SENSORY: The Key to Regulation

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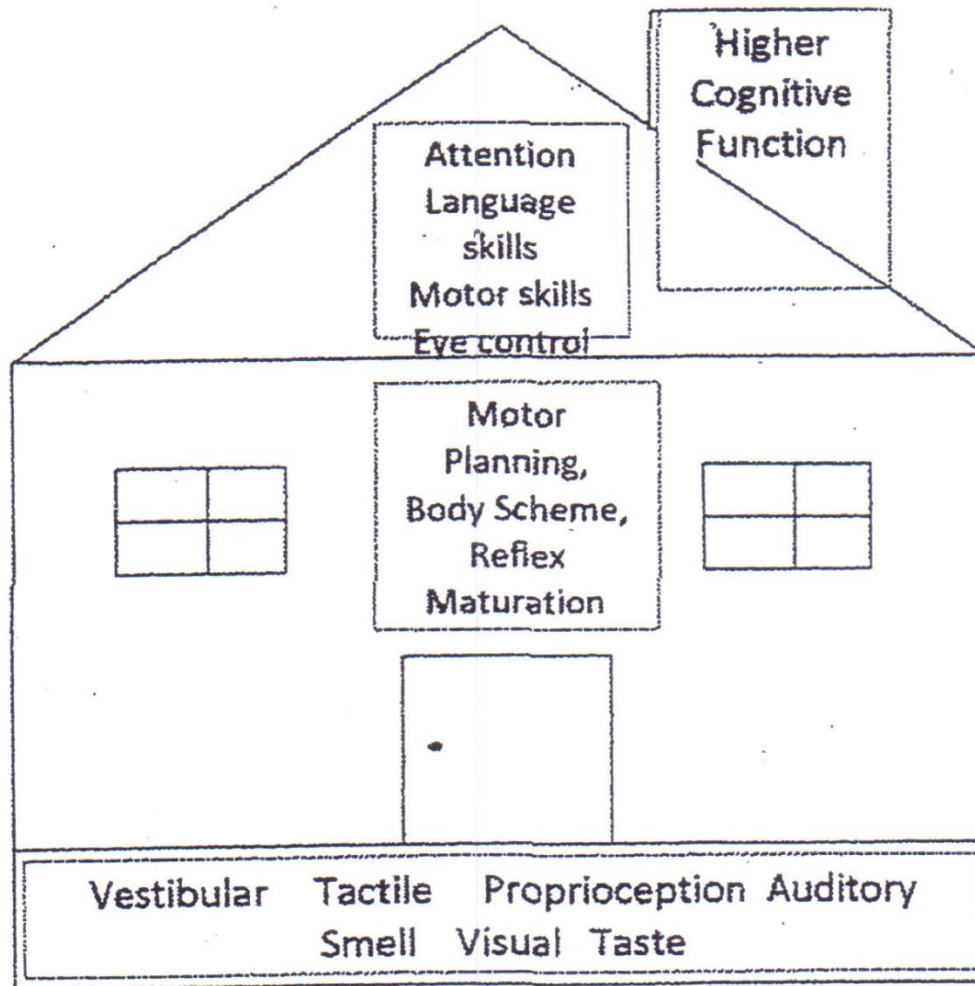
Learning Objectives

- Understand the role sensory processing plays in self regulation
- Recognize the sensory processing challenges children face
- Become comfortable with modifying sensory experiences and the environment

- VIDEO

What is included in our senses?

- Vision
- Hearing
- Smell
- Taste
- Touch
- Movement (vestibular)
- Body Awareness (proprioception)



P. Aquilla
C. Vickary

SPD

**WHAT IS
SENSORY
PROCESSING
DISORDER?**

Sensory Processing Challenges

Regulation Challenges:

- The Over-Responsive Child
- The Under-Responsive Child
 - Low Arousal
 - Sensory Seeker



Regulation: The Over-Responsive Child

- Avoids movement (swinging, car rides, sliding, climbing, riding toys, roughhousing, walking on uneven surfaces)
- Avoids eye contact
- Avoids messy play, touching food, eating a variety of tastes and textures
- Strong clothing preferences
- Doesn't like to be touched, hugged or cuddled
- Sensitive to noise or lights
- Difficulty with grooming activities
- May be difficult to console





Regulation: The Under-Responsive Child (Low Arousal)



- Props themselves
- Tires quickly, low energy
- Appears unmotivated
- Moves slowly
- Doesn't notice when clothing is twisted on body
- Doesn't notice if face is messy



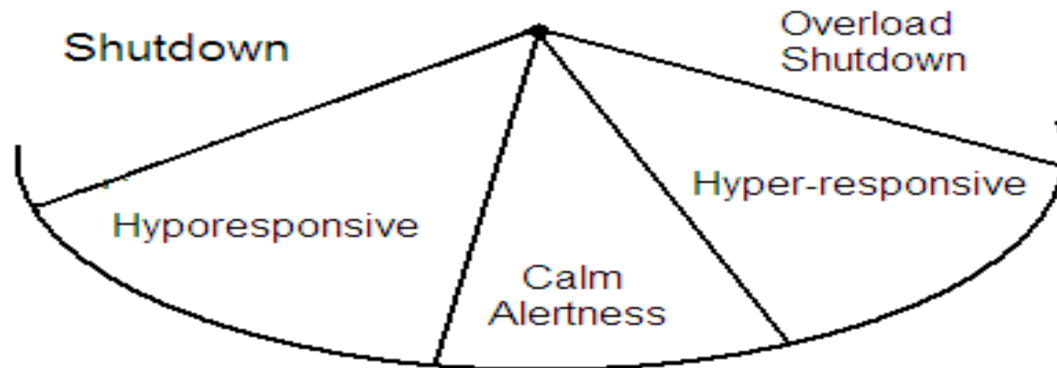
Regulation: The Under-Responsive Child (Sensory Seeker)

- High activity level, "on the go"
- Touches things and people
- Likes to climb, run, bang, crash, spin
- Smells or mouths
- Trouble sitting and playing with one toy for more than a couple of minutes
- Risk taker
- Has difficulty understanding personal space
- Overly affectionate
- Difficult to calm



Pendulum of Arousal States

An approach for helping children achieve optimal arousal for learning, interacting and responding



Organizing the Senses

- Goal is to achieve **Self Regulation**
(a calm and alert, ready to learn state)
- **HOW?**
Provide **MORE** sensory experiences
Provide **MODIFIED** sensory experiences
ADAPT the **ENVIRONMENT**

The Over-Responsive Child



MORE Calming Activities

- Slow linear swinging
- Deep pressure
(massage, snuggling, bundling)
- Fidgets
- Quiet tight spaces
- Chewing gum or
eating foods that are a lot of work
- Sucking

The Over-Responsive Child



MORE Organizing Activities

Heavy Work Activities

- Chewy or crunchy snacks
- Wear a heavy backpack
- Toys that you push or pull (wagon, pouring water, sand, rice)

Deep Pressure to the Joints

- Animal walks
- Rolling, Crawling, Jumping, Bouncing

Organize before introducing a new challenge!

The Over-Responsive Child



MODIFIED Sensory Opportunities

- Dry messy play before wet
- Use tools with messy play or wear a glove
- Put a stool under feet for toileting, sitting at table

ADAPT the ENVIRONMENT

- Adjust the lights
- Pay attention to background noise
- Use visual supports
- Have a consistent routine

Regulation: The Under-Responsive Child (Low Arousal)



MORE Alerting Activities

Activities with intensity, complexity, unexpectedness

- Swinging
- Spinning
- Quick bouncing
- Riding wheeled toys
- Chewing/eating cold or spicy foods
- Cold water play/messy plays
- Playing musical instruments
- Active games like tag and chase

Regulation: The Under-Responsive Child (Low Arousal)



MORE Organizing Activities

- Heavy Work
- Deep Pressure to the Joints

Regulation: The Under-Responsive Child (Low Arousal)



MODIFIED Movement Opportunities

- "Just Right" Challenge

ADAPT the Environment

- Movin' Sit Cushion
- Fidgets
- Use Visuals
- Bright lights, fast paced music
- Build movement breaks into the schedule
- Consistent Routines

Regulation: The Under-Responsive Child (Sensory Seeker)



MORE Organizing Activities

- Add a heavy work component to regular routines
- Deep Pressure to the Joints

MORE opportunities for movement

MODIFIED sensory experiences (add intensity!)

Regulation: The Under-Responsive Child (Sensory Seeker)



ADAPT the Environment

- Use a movin' sit cushion
- Sit upon
- Weighted lap animal
- Fidgets
- Use visuals
- Consistent Routines

Questions?



Resources

- www.fdmnt.ca
- www.toystoolsandtreasures.com
- Building Bridges
- Tools for Tots (sensory strategies for toddlers and preschoolers)
- Boardmaker
Mayer Johnson www.mayer-johnson.ca