

Sensory In The Classroom

Natalie Ritzema, OTR/L
Elim Christian School

Goal!

- Give a new perspective on why some of our students behave in a particular way
- Give ideas for how to meet student needs in order for them to be better classroom participants and reach their GOD given POTENTIAL!

Sensory Processing

The organization of sensory input for use in everyday living.

5 Senses

- Taste
- Smell
- Sight
- Sound
- Touch

BUT.....there is more!

The VESTIBULAR System

The system that responds to changes in head position and body movement and to the pull of gravity.

Tells us how to interact in a situation without thinking about it.

Ties our senses together

- Activated by our own movements
 - Not by wheels on a car
 - Not by being carried in a carrier as infants
- Overuse primary gaze
- Secondary sense used is vision and this takes cognition

The **PROPRIOCEPTIVE** System

Tells where each part of the body is and how it is moving.

Bilateral Integration

A neurological process which integrates sensations from both sides of the body

This is the basis for being able to participate in Bilateral Coordination activities.

Bilateral coordination is the ability to use both sides of the body together in an

Crossing the Midline

Being able to reach across the body with arms or legs. Also includes the ability to scan across midline with one's eyes.

4 Types of Sensory

- Seeking
- Sensitivity
- Registration
- Avoiding

Seekers

Seekers add sensory to every experience

- Chew on things–clothing
- Fidgeting in their seat
- Getting up often
- Making noises or outbursts
- Touching things or people
- Seem to not recognize safety during

Sensitive

Direct their attention to the latest stimuli

- Caution due to missing something
- Difficulty in group situations
- Notices small det
- Emotional outbursts because someone or something distracted them
- Difficulty tracking

Poor Registration

Miss input

- Dull affect
- Leaning head on arm or desk, sprawling in seat
- Not appearing to hear what you're saying (when you know they do not have difficulty hearing)
- Not following environmental cues

Avoiders

Keep sensory input away

- Eloping/withdrawing from potentially harmful situations
- Emotional Outbursts
- Ritualistic
- Resistant to change
- Viewed as stubborn, but may be trying to limit sensory input in their world

So **WHAT** are we going to do about it?!



Carry Objects



Stack



Seat Cushions



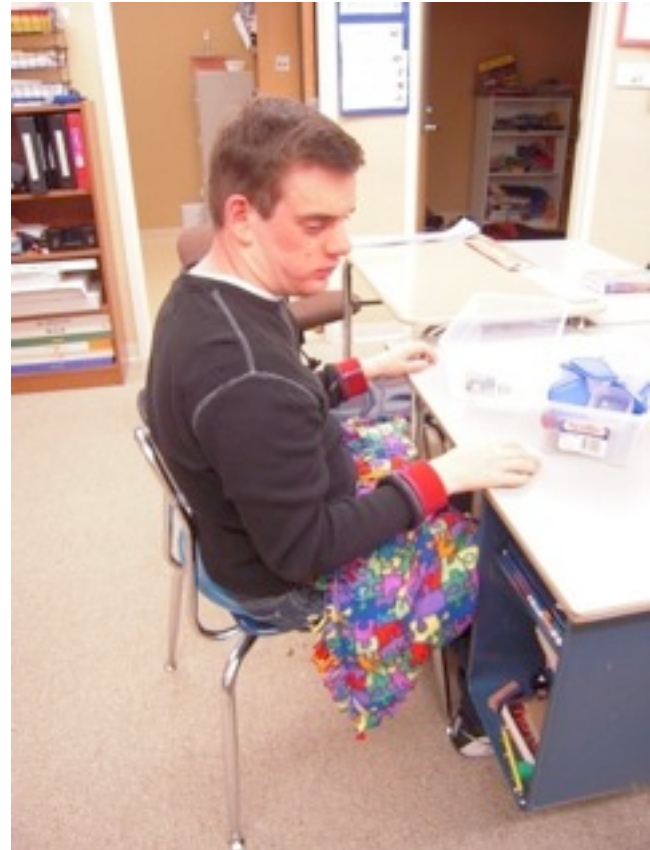
Ball



Foot Cushions



Lap



Wear Weights



Slant



Theraband



Quiet Areas



Move, Get Deep Pressure and Invert the Head



Motor Breaks



Stay Hydrated!!



Other Ideas!

- Thinker Pose
- Fidget Toys
- Discrete Tactile board under desk
- Dim the lights
- Clean blackboard/whiteboard
- Sand paper or foam under writing surface
- Work with belly on ball or desk chair
- Use music or rhythm in teaching
- Reduce feeling of inadequacy

- Back packs full of books to carry in transitions
 - Not too heavy!
- Prepare kids for what is coming
- Give Choices
- Series of simple exercises before work
- STOP and GO for writing
- Mr. Spaceman or finger for spacing
- Sky, Grass and Dirt letters

Be Creative!!

Allow kids to be their own advocates

Remember it takes **time**, **consistency** and
patience!!