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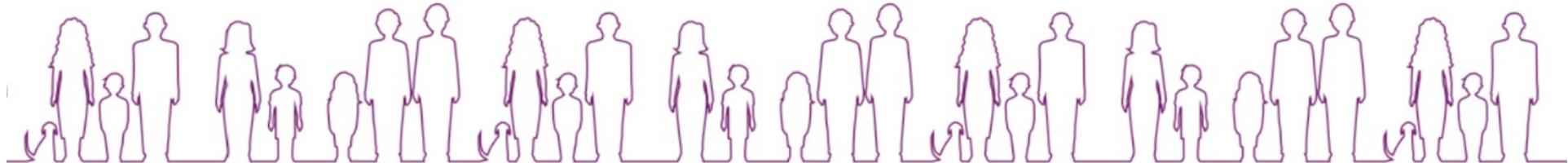
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# Sensory Integration for Parents Webinar with Mandy 22/03/22



Mandy Ruddock  
Occupational Therapist  
and Sensory Integration Practitioner  
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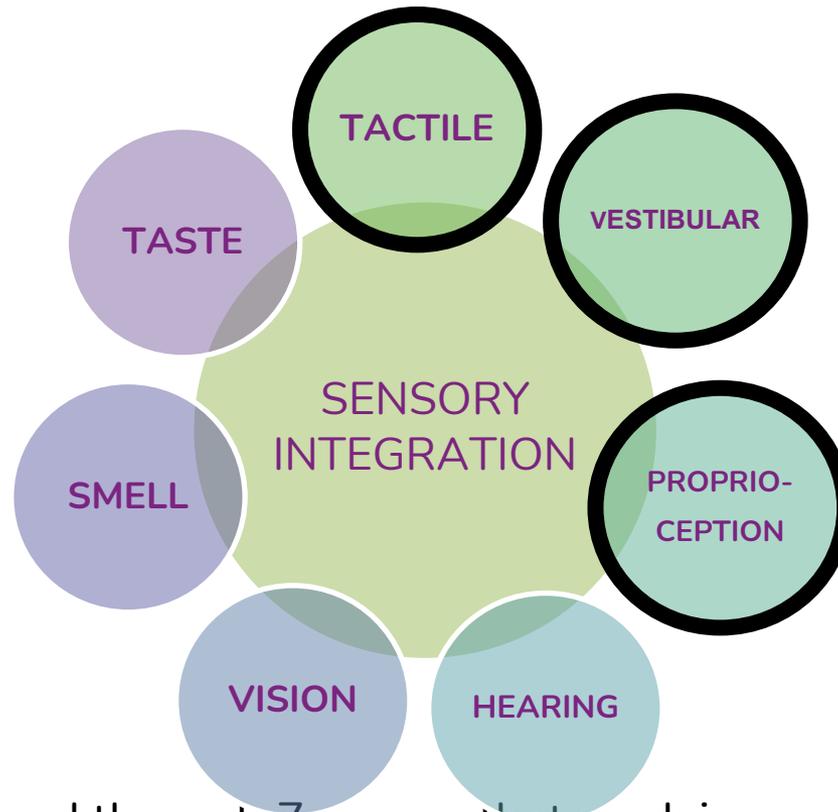


# Aims of Today's Webinar

- To give you a brief overview of Sensory Integration (Sensory Processing) theory – what's going on behind the scenes!
- An opportunity to think about your child's and your own sensory systems
- Some general ideas for regulation at home



# Did you know we have 7 Senses!



Information is received through 7 senses that work in combination to allow us to feel safe, to learn and to interact successfully within our environment.



# Sensory systems awareness exercise



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# Identify a feeling in this list for at least 2 sensory experiences during the sensory awareness exercise?

Auditory	Like	Dislike	Disinterested
Smell & Taste	Interesting	Irritating	Nothing
Tactile	Curious	Annoying	Drowsy
Vestibular	Calming	Avoidant	
Visual	Soothing	Bothersome	
Proprioception	Relaxing		
	Alerting		



Dr Jean Ayres, who developed  
Sensory Integration, said...

‘Behavioural, social and  
emotional issues arise when  
a child’s sensory foundation  
is not firmly established in  
early life’.



Sensory Integration is the body's ability to receive sensory information into the nervous system, process it and then allow the body to respond appropriately



# Tactile System (Sense of Touch)

- First sensory organ to develop in the womb
- Skin is largest sense organ
- Quality of early attachment vital for development
- Exploration of the environment with mouth and hands is vital for development
- Survival system– alerts the system to potential threat
- Helps to discriminate between different kinds of tactile stimulation
- Contributes to body image, sense of self and safety



# What are Tactile-rich Activities?

Messy art activities  
cooking



Hands on



Hugs

Building

Games with  
peers



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# What do difficulties with touch look like?

## Over-responsive (tactile defensiveness)

- Upset when asked to join a queue or line up
- Meltdowns at the beginning and end of the day
- Avoidant of unexpected touch
- Over-react to even being touched lightly/ or someone brushing by
- Over-react to having dirt, paint or mess on their hands
- Bothered by the feel of their clothing and may wear very tight or loose clothing
- May be unkempt in appearance, because of avoidance of grooming tasks
- Eating and feeding issues – bothered by food textures

## Under-responsive

- Seem not to feel pain
- May be unaware when they need to go to the toilet or are full of food (interoception)
- Cannot find things in their pocket/back pack without vision

## Or Under-responsivity which can lead to seeking more touch:

- Touch everything and everyone (to the point of irritation to others)
- Suck, mouth and lick non food item
- Disinterested in bland food, seek hot spicy flavours



# Vestibular System (inner ear)

- Tells us where our heads and bodies are in relation to gravity.
- Tells us whether we are upright or upside down
- Informs us where we are going & how fast.
- Important influence on balance, motor coordination, postural control & feeling safe when moving.
- Strong influence on our emotions, & self-regulation.
- Impacts arousal and attention





# What do vestibular difficulties look like

## Over-responsive (gravitational insecurity):

- Generally fearful of movement
- Fearful of some playground equipment
- Hold tightly onto rail when climbing stairs

## Under-responsive:

- Low arousal levels – hard to focus
- Sitting upright is difficult and may slump at the desk
- Poor balance skills

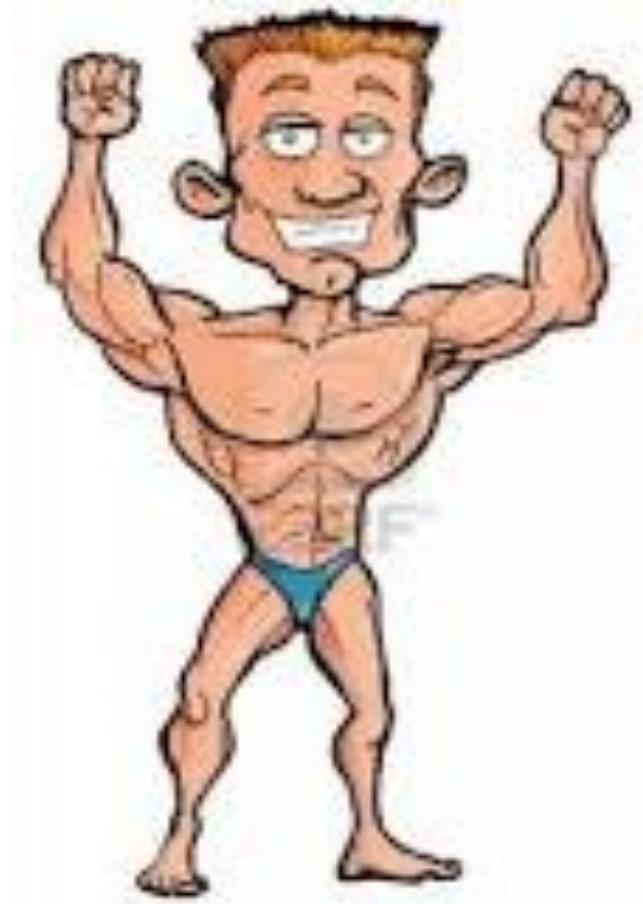
## Under-responsivity that can lead to seeking more vestibular input:

- Constantly on the move, fidgets, running, jumping and moving around a lot
- May spin and whirl themselves for no particular reason a lot
- May like to watch things spin
- No fear of movement and impulsive/may want to get up high
- May need/want to do a lot of gymnastic type movement



# Proprioceptive System (Muscle and Body Sense)

Knowledge about how and where the body is moving is gained through the proprioceptors, the sensory receptors in the muscles, tendons, and joints.



# What do difficulties with proprioception

- May be constantly on the move and fidgety
- Be driven to seek activities such as pushing, pulling, dragging, lifting, and jumping
- Kick, hit, push when dysregulated
- Not know how much pressure to exert to a task such as pencil pressure
- Bang into things and seem clumsy
- Chew on non-food objects



# What Are Proprioceptive-Rich Activities?

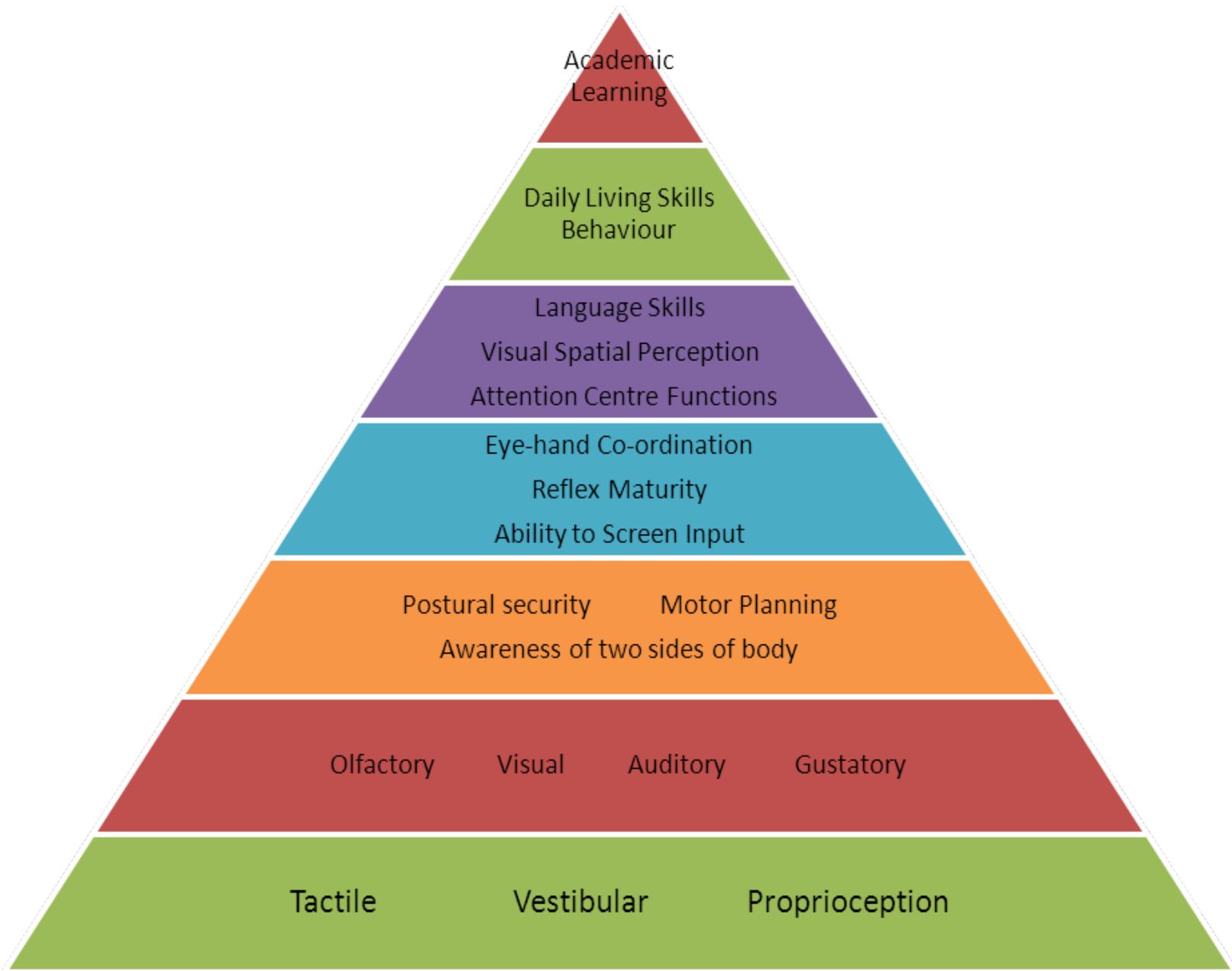


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# Foundations of Child Development



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# Foundational role in developing every day skills

- For enjoyment of life
- Feeling comfortable in our bodies
- Feeling safe
- Developing self-regulation skill
- Developing motor & coordination skills
- Developing ability in our every day skills



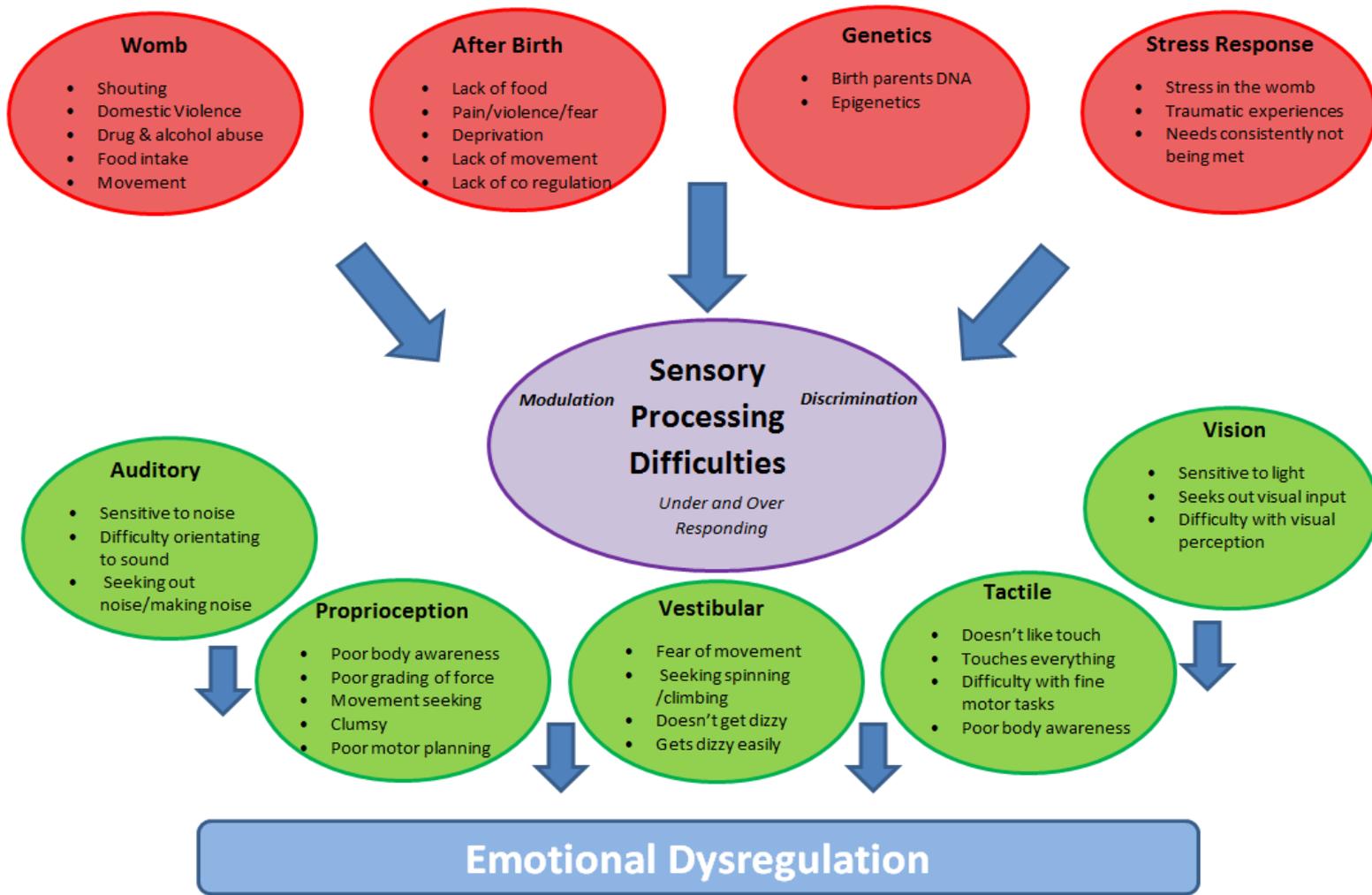
# Importance of sensory integration in child development

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1\\_luj8dr9oY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_luj8dr9oY)

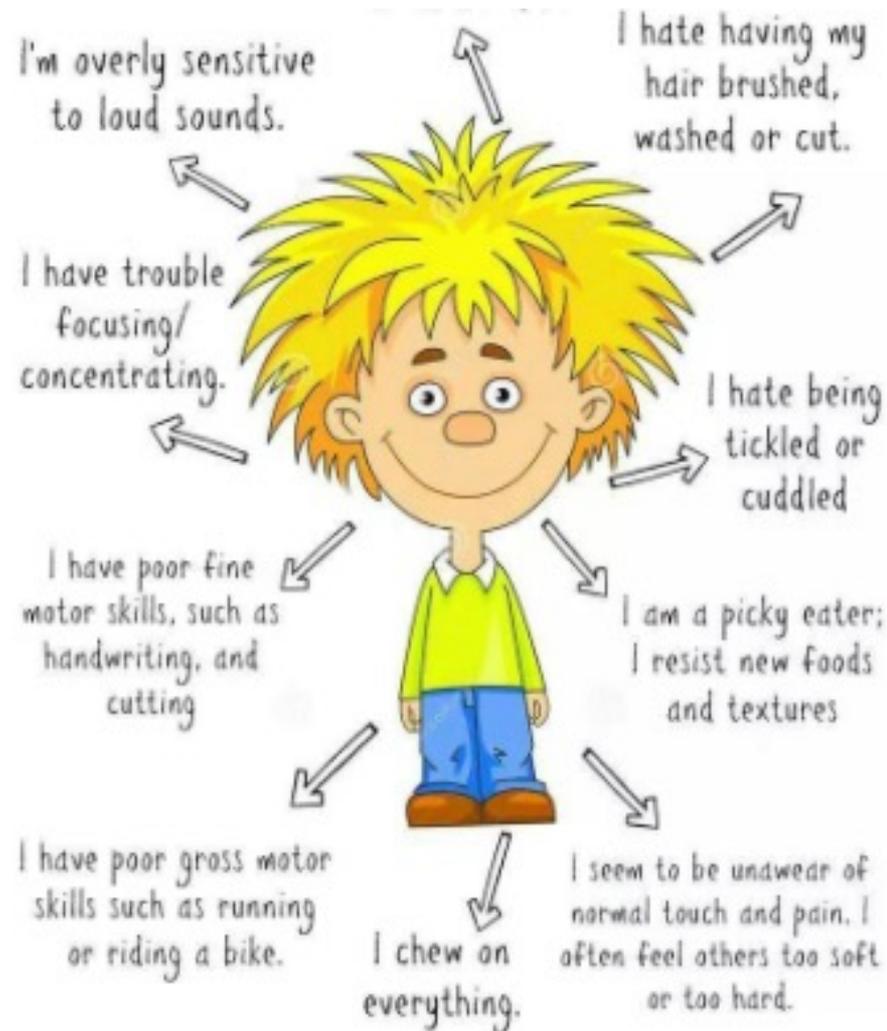


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# Trauma impacts Sensory Development

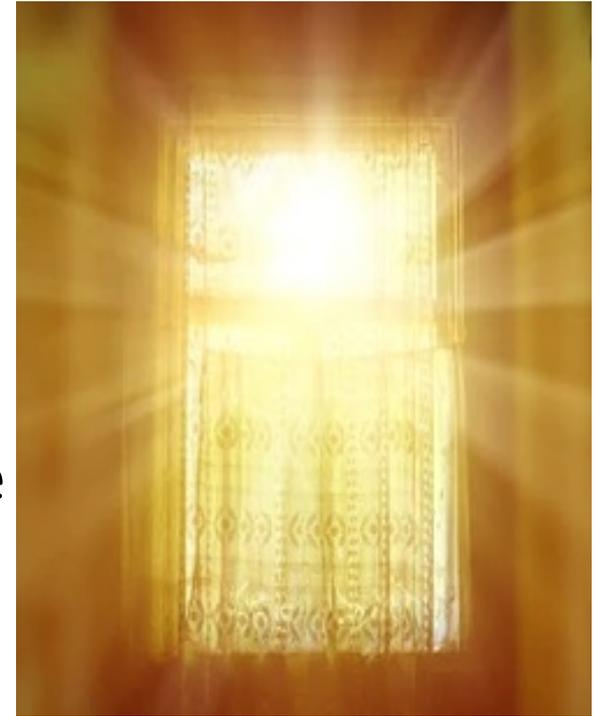


# I have sensory processing difficulties



# So what might bother our sensory systems?

- A sudden unexpected noise
- Bright sunlight
- Uncomfortable seating
- Sitting for too long
- A zip or seam in the wrong place
- Smell of your neighbour
- Paint and messy activities



*All of our sensory response is exacerbated by anxiety, worry, fear, hunger and poor sleep.*



# How some children may appear when bothered by everyday sensory inputs

- Externally expressed
  - Clamp hands over ears
  - Squint
  - Fidget
  - Hit another child
  - Swear and shout
  - Blame others
  - Walk out and avoid
- Internally expressed (masking)
  - Quiet
  - Distant
  - Overly polite/compliant
  - People pleasing
  - NB Look for large pupils and flushed face



# Sensory Issues Affecting Attachment Relationship

Have you ever thought about your sensory needs/responses?

You may have a very different response to sensory input to your child and you may naturally have different sensory needs to your child.

Consider what the sensory commonalities are between you and your child – these are the building blocks for your child's sensory development and your attachment relationship

**Further reading:**

**Too Loud, Too Bright, Too Fast, Too Tight** by Sharon Heller and **Sensory Intelligence** by Annemarie Lombard 2006



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# Home life can be an opportunity for sensory developmental catch up: general notes.....

- Play with your child or be alongside child – be with them doing what they want to do (set time aside)
- Find out what you like doing together
- Use the local playground daily
- ‘Think Toddler’: high nurture & low challenge – consider child’s emotional age
- Play on the floor - crawling and tummy time
- Be aware of your child’s signs of survival – fight – flight – freeze (try to be aware of your child’s ‘*window of stress tolerance*’)



# IDEAS FOR REGULATING ACTIVITIES 1.

## 'Heavy work' Proprioceptive Activities



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# Ann and her pull-up bar



# IDEAS FOR REGULATING ACTIVITIES 2

- Deep Tactile Pressure
- Something to fiddle with
- Chew



# Sensory Integration-informed OT Assessment (SI OT)

The OT can identify if the child has sensory integration differences or difficulties that are interfering with participating in everyday life.

FF provides trauma-informed SI assessment

Help finding a sensory integration trained OT:  
<https://sensoryintegration.freshdesk.com/support/solutions/folders/42000094660>



# Further training...

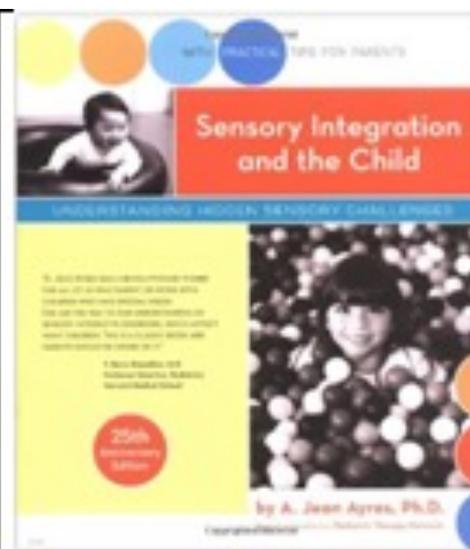
- **Family Futures Bespoke School training:**  
FF can provide SI training for your child's school:  
Please just ask and we can design a training for you.

- **Link to FF scheduled training:**  
<https://www.familyfutures.co.uk/training>

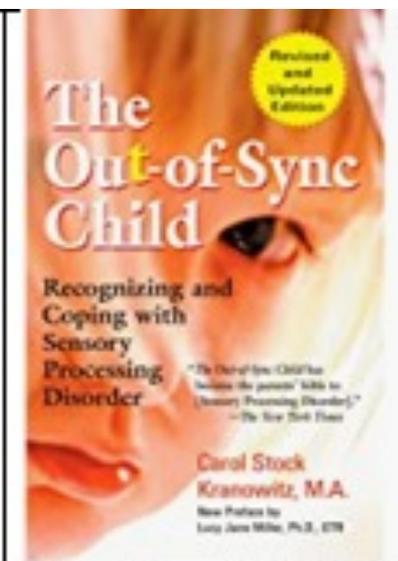
- **Sensory Integration further training:**  
<https://www.sensoryintegrationeducation.com>



# Books about children with SPD, & for children

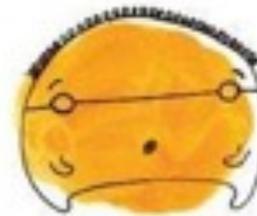


Sensory Integration and the Child by Dr Jean Ayres



Out of Sync Child by Carol Stock Kranowitz

The Scared Gang



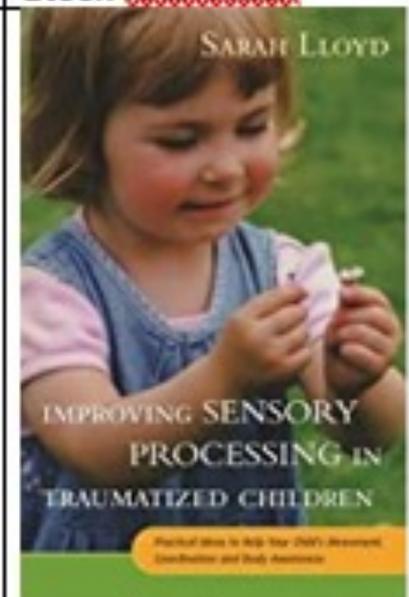
written by

Eadaoin Bhreathnach

illustrated by

Síge Bhreathnach-Cashel

The Scared Gang by Eadaoin Bhreathnach

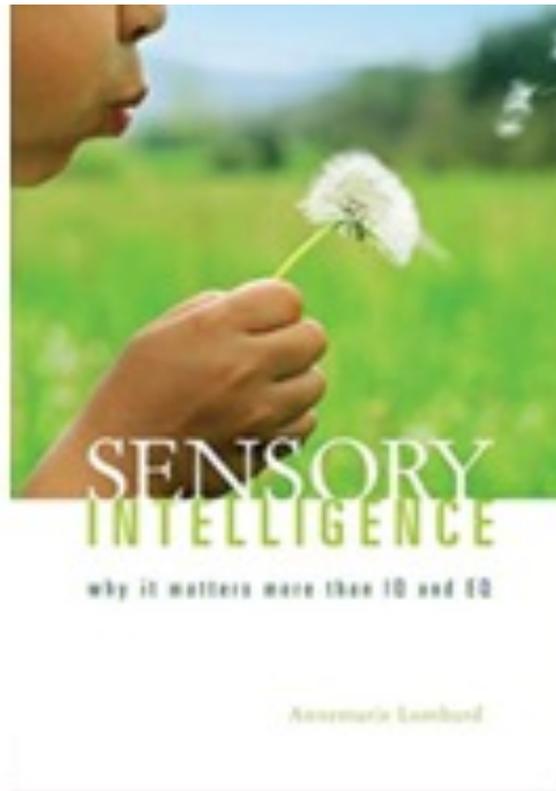


Improving Sensory Processing in the Traumatized Child by Sarah Lloyd

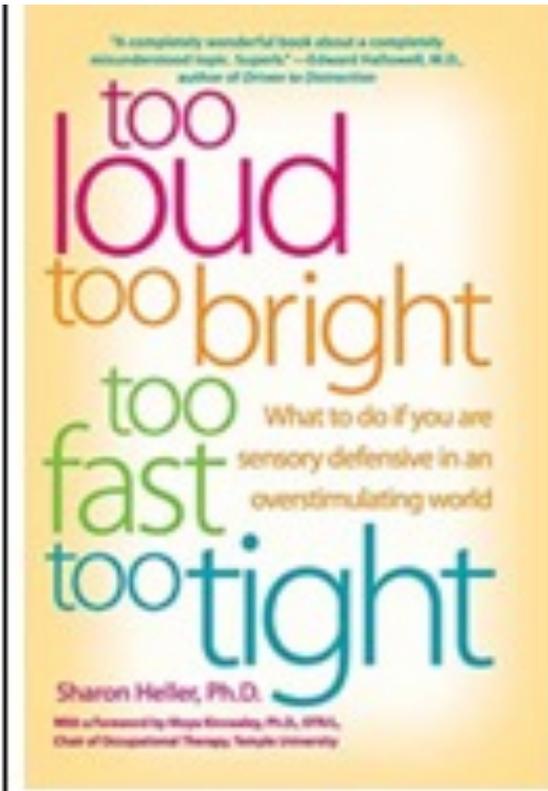


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# Books for adults with SI difficulties



Sensory Intelligence by Annemarie Lombard



Too Loud Too Bright, Too Fast, Too Tight by Sharon Heller



# Thank you!

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