

Related Services Update

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Sensory processing in the schools, Part 1

As a therapist or classroom teacher we often set up our classrooms or treatment areas to be supportive of our personal sensory preferences. We often fail to consider that many of our student’s sensory preferences and processing skills are not the same as ours. It is important for us to gather some information about the sensory preferences of the student, observe what is happening in the environment and observe the students’ responses to input to better understand their processing needs.

This issue:

- Sensory processing, Part 1
- Spring conference!
- Upcoming trainings
- Current openings

Everyone processes sensory input differently and has certain sensory preferences. Winnie Dunn’s Model of Sensory Processing Styles describes sensory processing styles based on the neurological threshold and behavioral response to the sensory stimuli. A high threshold indicates that a child needs more exposure to a stimulus to be able to process it. Conversely, a low threshold indicates that too much input can overload that person and contribute to behaviors intended to avoid or flee the stimulus. One way to help understand thresholds is to imagine the threshold as a bucket that holds sensory information. When the bucket is larger, it takes more input to fill it. When the bucket is small it overfills easily. With this idea, when the bucket is “just full” then the student is able to process sensory information and produce the appropriate response to the task and the environment.

The 4 processing style are as follows:

Processing Style	Threshold	Response	Characteristics
Low/ Poor Registration	High/ Big Bucket	Passive / not actively seeking input	May appear to be insensitive or disconnected Does not pick up on environmental cues Requires very clear and frequent directions Tends to be oblivious to what is going on around them if not directly engaged.
Sensory Seeking	High/ Big Bucket	Active/ actively seeking input	Needs and enjoys high levels of sensory stimulation. Often seeking new input and moving onto something else when the novelty wears off. At times can be unsafe or take risks in movement
Sensory Avoiding	Low/ Small Bucket	Active/ actively avoiding input	Perceives most input as aversive Will try to limit exposure to new input May try to control the environment May seem rigid or uncooperative
Sensory Sensitive	Low/ Small Bucket	Passive/ not actively avoiding input	Detects more sensory input and comments on it rather than avoiding it Tends to be distractible Complains often Overwhelmed by unstructured and disruptive input.

A student’s sensory processing style can be determined by completing a Child Sensory Profile-2. A less formal sensory checklist can also give you an idea of how a child is processing sensory input from the environment.

Resources:

Dunn's Model of Sensory Processing. From "The Impact of Sensory Processing Abilities on the Daily Lives of Young Children and Families: A Conceptual Model," by W. Dunn, 1997, *Infants and Young Children*, 9(4), p. 24. Copyright © 1997 by Aspen Publishers. Reprinted with permission.

https://www.teachingei.org/disabilities/primers/Sensory_Processing_Disorder.pdf

<https://childmind.org/article/how-sensory-processing-issues-affect-kids-in-school/>

<https://www.sensorismarts.com/sensory-checklist.pdf>

Are you an administrator receiving these updates? Please make sure you are forwarding these newsletters to your related services providers.

For previous newsletters, go to: <http://sde.ok.gov/sde/newsupdates>

Spring Related Services Conference

Breaking old habits: Re-thinking service delivery in the schools

Our related services conference is scheduled for **Thursday, April 26, 2018** and will be located at the Moore-Norman Vo-Tech Center. The conference will be **FREE** to related services providers! The topics will include: re-thinking our service delivery model, goal writing, teletherapy, medical necessity, assistive technology and other helpful topics. Registration will be open within the next two weeks. For more information, twarwick@todaystherapysolutions.com.

Upcoming Trainings & Resources

February 9th, 2018, 10:50a.m.-11:50a.m. – Elam-Plowman Lecture

Dr. Susan Bazyk from Cleveland State University will present information about "Every Moment Counts."
http://www.everymomentcounts.org/view.php?nav_id=27.

To register contact Judith Grove, Judith-grove@ouhsc.edu or (405) 271-2131, ext 47130.

February 13, 2018 – Differentiating Sensory from Behavior, Tulsa, OK

For more information: <https://summit-education.com/course/CEENDJ.1/differentiating-sensory-from-behavior#/live/6-ceus/tulsa-ok-2018-02-13>

If you need technical assistance regarding related services, looking for related services providers, or are a current related services provider looking for work in the schools, contact Tara Warwick at twarwick@todaystherapysolutions.com.