

Sensory Strategies

Vestibular - system is located in the inner ears and provides a sense of balance and where the body is in space. Information is received by movement (spinning, tumbling, sliding, rocking, swinging)



When you notice your student avoiding or seeking sensory, but not sure what to do, try some of these:

Sensory seeking (under responsive or hypo-sensitive to sensory stimulus)	Sensory Avoiding (over-responsive or hyper sensitive to sensory stimulus)
<p>Does child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Constant motion <input type="checkbox"/> "ants in pants" difficulty sitting still <input type="checkbox"/> Shakes leg when sitting still <input type="checkbox"/> Rocks body <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys riding in wagon <input type="checkbox"/> Jumps on furniture <input type="checkbox"/> Spins for hours with becoming dizzy <input type="checkbox"/> Craves intense movement (rollercoaster, teacup) <input type="checkbox"/> Spins in swivel chair <input type="checkbox"/> Risk taker <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys swinging <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys unexpected movements (bump in road) <input type="checkbox"/> Climbs on furniture, ladders <input type="checkbox"/> Somersaults/rolling <input type="checkbox"/> Can't get enough of trampoline jumps 	<p>Does child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Avoids movement - quite content to be a "couch potato" <input type="checkbox"/> Cling to adult when expected to move <input type="checkbox"/> Fearful of stepping from curb or step/stairs <input type="checkbox"/> Dislikes change in position, particularly inverted <input type="checkbox"/> Loses balance, falls for no reason <input type="checkbox"/> Clumsy in movement patterns <input type="checkbox"/> Does not like surface changes (grass, sand) <input type="checkbox"/> Fearful of one sided balance (hopping, hopscotch, riding bike) <input type="checkbox"/> Fearful of feet leaving the ground <input type="checkbox"/> Avoids closing eyes <input type="checkbox"/> Avoids fast or sudden movements <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid linear or rotary movement (swinging./spinning)

Activities to support sensory seeking

- ☺ Jumping - mini trampoline
- ☺ Jumping rope
- ☺ Crash mat
- ☺ Somersaults/tumbling/rolling
- ☺ Swing in swing or sheet between two adults
- ☺ Start stop run/walk forward/backward
- ☺ Animal moves (bear walk, cat/cow)
- ☺ Tug of war on scooter boards
- ☺ Scooter board ramps
- ☺ Chair spinning -swivel chair both directions
- ☺ Chair rolling
- ☺ Wall front/back rolls
- ☺ See saw
- ☺ Bending over to pick things from floor and standing to place or shelf or in higher bucket
- ☺ Combine movement with heavy work activities

Activities to support sensory avoiding

- ☺ Visually demonstrate while verbally giving directive
- ☺ Slow and controlled 3D moves (right/left. Front/back, up/down)
- ☺ Ball chair to allow exploration of movement
- ☺ Slow rocking in rocking chair
- ☺ Wagon - pulled slowly with slow introduction of stopping
- ☺ Controlled sliding down slide
- ☺ Pair activities with proprioceptive input (deep pressure)

Nackley, V.L. (2001). Sensory diet applications and environmental modifications. A winning combination. American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. 24(1), 1-4

Shilling, D & I Schwartz (2004). Alternative Seating for Young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Effects on Classroom Behavior. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders. Vol. 34, #4.

