

Sensory Integration, Sensory System, Self-Regulation

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Due to the limited time only part of this information was presented to the SEPAC parent group. For more information on Sensory Integration contact your Occupational Therapist or myself bzweber@np.k12.mn.us

What is Sensory Integration: Sensory Integration is a Neurological process that occurs in all of us. Our bodies send messages to our brain through our senses. We then process and organize this information so that we feel comfortable and secure. We are then able to respond appropriately to particular situation and environment demands..... Building Bridges through Sensory Integration.

Our Sensory System:

Our 5 senses plus 2 more special systems

1. Auditory- sense of hearing

2. Visual- sense of sight

3. Olfactory- sense of smell

4. Gustatory- sense of taste

5 Tactile – sense of touch

6. Vestibular (close your eye and turn around 3 times, going on rides)

- Found in the inner ear

- Sends information to our brain regarding:

- balance

- movement

- muscle tone

- Coordinates eyes, head and body, we can always work on develop the sensory systems

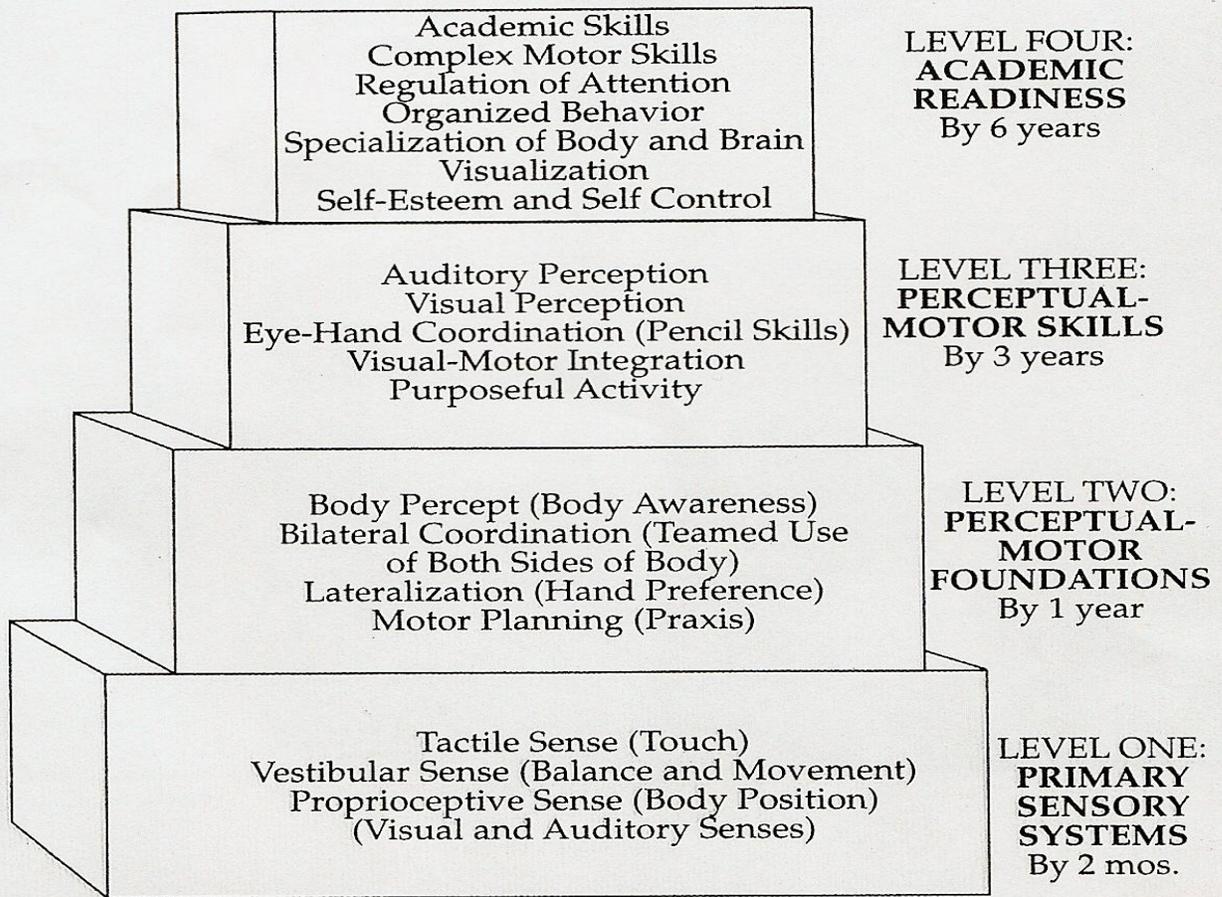
- Sensations from joints and muscles

7. Proprioceptive (in the dark standing on one foot)

- The body's A-Z (Map)

- We can always tell the position of our body, without even looking

The Four Levels of Sensory Integration



From the book "Out of Sync Child"

Sensory Processing

- Our body is like a teeter totter and we make an “adaptive response” to stay in balance and this keeps us regulated.
- Think of your own sensory system we know what we need to get through our day (ie certain towel, cup of coffee, exercise, tap our pencil, sit a certain place in the room, take a break in the day, etc)

Sensory Profile school Companion – is a screening tool that helps determine possible areas of concern related to how a student is able to take in and respond to various types of sensory stimuli in a school environment. The Sensory Profile helps identify different types of sensory processing. After interpretation of results students may be identified in different sensory quadrants of

- Seeker
 - Active, engaging, disruptive
 - Requires novelty
 - Fidgets, explore objects
 - Constantly increasing sensory input
- Avoider
 - Limits sensations
 - Disruptive
 - May have routines, rituals, rules
 - Rigid
 - Avoids or withdraws
- Sensor
 - Aware of surroundings
 - Distractible
 - May be hyperactive
 - Difficulty maintaining attention
- Bystander
 - Appears disinterested and flat affect
 - Low energy levels
 - Appears self-absorbed

EVERY PERSON IS DIFFERENT.

What is calming and organizing to the system for one person may not be calming to another person. As parents and people who work with students we can become deceived by

- **Listen, and listen some more**
- **Validate his/her feelings**
- **Observe what the person seeks out, helps calm them down**
- **Collaborative Problem Solving and give choices:** involve the youth in the solution if possible and Occupational Therapist
- **Offer praise often**

Common Stressors at School

- Unstructured times
 - Bus
 - Before/after school
 - Transitions
 - Lunch
 - Physical education
- Sensory
 - Crowds
 - Space
 - Noise
- Academic
 - Understanding what to do & how to do it
 - Breaking down tasks
 - Writing
 - Organization
- Social
- New Events
- Changes in the day

Ideas We Do at School to Encorate Sensory Strategies

There is 3 Occupational Therapist in the New Prague school. Some of the circulum we use are: How does your Engine Run, Jean Ayes sensory intergration, Sensory Profile, and Zones of Regulation.

Some of the equipment/tools we use: weight lap blanket, noise canceling headphones sit and move cushion, swings, lotion, Breathing techniques, social stories, deep pressure, and a variety of tactile, visual, proprioceptive items for a sensory diet

REFERENCES – Some great Books

- Williams, M.S. & Shellenberger, S. (1996). How Does Your Engine Run? A Leader's Guide to The Alert Program for Self-Regulation, Albuquerque, NM: Therapy Works, Inc.
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- Kranowitz, C.S. (1989). The Out of Sync Child, New York, NY: The Berkley Publishing Group.