Engaging Highly Active Children in the Classroom

Sensorimotor Strategies to Support Children and Teachers

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Introduction

- All about you
- All about us
- What are your questions?
Agenda

- Definition of Sensory Processing
- Brain Development
- Sensory Input and Development
- Who is Highly Active?
- Classroom Observations
- Sensory Strategies
- Resources
Definition

Sensory Processing is the way that our bodies receive input from our senses and create a reliable picture of the world, our place in the world, and how to interact with people and the world around us.
Sensory Processing
Developmental Perspective

- Touch
- Hearing
- Vestibular
- Taste
- Smell
- Vision
- Proprioception
Brain Structures

- Brainstem
- Limbic system
  - Amygdala
  - Hippocampus
- Cortex
- Autonomic nervous System
Touch

- Sensory receptors are in the skin
- Initially protective
- Important for bonding
Hearing

- Sensory receptors are in the ears
- Closely related to vestibular system
- Both protective and discriminatory
Vestibular

- Sensory receptors are in the inner ear
- Detect movement in all different directions
- Important for the development of balance and integration of primitive reflexes
Taste

- Salt, Sweet, Sour, Bitter
Proprioception

- Sensory receptors are in joints and muscles
- Important for the development of balance and body awareness
- Very organizing to the nervous system
Smell

- Goes directly to the limbic system
- Protective
- Strongly tied to emotions through production of oxytocin
Vision

- Peripheral vision is protective
- Central vision is discriminative
Developmental Perspective

- Self-regulation
- Touch Hearing Vestibular Taste
- Smell Vision Proprioception
Self-regulation

Our internal process of attaining or maintaining body-mind balance in the face of external and environmental demands.
Developmental Perspective

- Attention Balance
- Body Awareness
- Eye Hand Coordination

Self-regulation

- Touch Hearing Vestibular
- Taste
- Smell Vision Proprioception
Attention

▪ Alert
▪ Shift
▪ Maintain
Balance

- Requires
  - Vision
  - Vestibular
  - Proprioception
Body Awareness

- Non-conscious
- Proprioception
- Awareness of midline
- Awareness of two sides of the body
Eye Hand Coordination

- Visual perceptual skills
- Rhythm and timing
- Spatial relationships
Who is highly active?

SPD

ASD

ADHD

Highly Active
Sensory Needs Continuum

TOO LOW

JUST RIGHT

TOO HIGH
Highly Active Infants/Toddlers May...

- Have difficulty consoling self; is unusually fussy
- Be slow to roll over, creep, sit, or stand
- Have difficulty tolerating being on his or her stomach
- Resist being held or becomes tense when held; dislikes being cuddled
- Be unable to settle down; has sleep difficulties
- Have difficulty sucking
Highly Active Preschoolers May...

- Be clumsy; fall frequently
- Have difficulty focusing attention or over-focuses and is unable to shift to the next task
- Overreact to touch, taste, sounds, or odors
- Seek out movement-based activities on playground
- Have difficulty transitioning from playground activities
- Have delayed language, fine motor, social development
- Demonstrate fleeting eye contact
Raising Self-Awareness

- Assess your own needs
- Recognizing and responding to children’s needs
- Teaching children to recognize and respond to their own needs
- How does your engine run?
  - HIGH
  - JUST RIGHT
  - LOW

** USE WITH ALL CHILDREN
Visual Supports

How is your engine running?

- Too Low
- Just Right
- Too High
Circle Time

- Engine Check-In
- Great time for whole group activities:
  - Egg rock/Puppy rock
  - Weighted bean bag pass
  - Sniff bottles
  - Core activation
  - Yoga picture cards
Transitions

- Visual cues
- Movements that challenge the body (stop and think)
  - Animal walks
  - Pulling/pushing or carrying heavy objects
  - Make a mountain
  - Cross crawls
Meal Time

- Assist in set-up/clean-up
- Preparing our bodies to eat:
  - Waiting hands/twiddle thumbs
  - Arm lengthening
Nap Time

- Environment
- Set a calming example
- Turning our bodies off to rest:
  - Monster faces
  - Deep belly breathing
  - Spinal walking
  - Jello eyeballs
  - Visualization stories
Resources

- www.spdfoundation.net
- www.brainrules.com
- www.movementbasedlearning.com/
- www.superduperinc.com/
- www.FunandFunction.com
- www.autismcommunitystore.com
Resources

Resources

Thank You!

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