

How to Help a Child with Sensory Processing Disorder

Sensory integration dysfunction is a disorder of the central nervous system. Individuals with sensory issues have difficulty processing information brought in by the senses. In most cases, this puzzling disorder can be managed through therapy and a home program.

1. Learn about sensory integration theory. Several good books include "The Out of Sync Child" by Carol Stock Kranowitz and "Sensational Kids" by Lucy Jane Miller. These books offer reader friendly ways to learn more about sensory integration disorder.
2. Seek professional help. An occupational therapist versed in sensory processing will be more than happy to answer specific questions not covered in this article. Ask around or check your yellow pages for pediatric therapy clinics where SI/SPD treatment is provided.
3. Put your child on a sensory diet. Such diets are created and monitored by a trained professional and involve opportunities for swinging, climbing and touching. Creating a safe environment in your home for such activities is a step in the right direction.
4. Be patient and cater to your child's needs. Children with sensory integration disorder may present with behavior issues (tantrums, stubbornness, erratic moods) that seem difficult to manage. Although behavioral issues should never be ignored, it's important to know that certain sensory experiences (crowds, loud noises, certain fabrics) can be painful or noxious to your child. Limit your child's exposure to activities that have been known to set them off.
5. Be a detective. After a tantrum, go back and use this formula to find the root of the problem. A=Antecedent (write down what happened before the tantrum), B=Behavior (write down what happened and how they reacted to the situation), C=Consequence (describe what course of action was taken with your child during and after the tantrum). Charting this way will show patterns in your child's behavior and allow you to prepare for such situations before they get out of control.
6. Have a plan. Many children with sensory deficits have major meltdowns in public places. Before engaging in such activities, talk to your child about where you are going and what will happen. If a meltdown occurs, take your child out of the situation and go to a quiet place where they can calm down.
7. Look into additional resources to fund therapy equipment. Sometimes the right letter from a therapist will persuade your insurance company to pay for medically needed equipment. In addition, Medicaid may provide help through the Home and Community Based Waiver. Finally, companies who supply sensory products may know of other untapped resources or provide you discounts on therapy equipment.

http://www.ehow.com/how_2085554_help-child-sensory-integration-disorder.html