

## What Classroom Participation Means for a Child with Sensory Needs...



Parents and teachers have difficulty supporting a child or children with sensory needs through daily routines and learning standards. This difficulty leads to a sense of lack of success on the part of the parent, teacher, and the child (Cohn, May-Benson, Teasdale, 2010).

### Review of External Stimuli:

The Rule of Thumb is the *Draw of the Task must Pull from any Potential Distracters...*

The use of sound or noise such as: listening centers to provide homework instructions and literacy materials, use of background music during transition, and white noise to filter classroom buzz of voices can increase attention to task. The use of color, fonts, and other visual qualities can serve to increase arousal, draw attention to key areas,

& scaffold complex processes, greatly reduce frustration and

Rachel Hildreth  
3218 Livonia Center Rd.  
Lima, NY 14485  
(585) 519-6331  
Rlh03987@sjfc.edu



## Creating a Sensory Responsive Classroom

Rachel Hildreth, MS  
Dr. Katrina Arndt  
St John Fisher College



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## Sensory Processing: Why Does it Matter?

### Sensory processing refers to How the Brain Interprets Information through Sensory Input.

Intelligence is defined as the ability to learn and adapt behaviorally. Environmental stimuli can greatly enhance or distract the learning process known as sensory processing or sensory integration. Sensory processing refers to how the brain interprets information through sensory input: vision (sight), audition (hearing), tactile stimulation (touch), olfaction (smell), gustation (taste), vestibular (balance and the sense of movement) and proprioception (the sense of knowing one's position in space (Cosbey, Johnston & Dunn, 2010)). Many students have difficulty registering, regulating and adapting behavior based on sensory sensitivities and sensation seeking experiences within their environment.

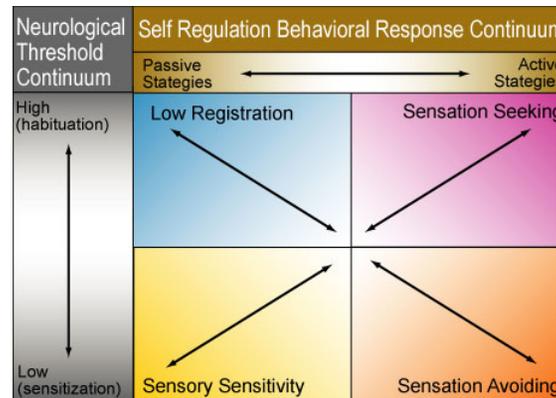
Using research based multi-sensory and intelligences teaching practices, the creation and design of the general education classroom environment can be manipulated to support the needs of all learners. These strategies may include regulation of classroom lighting, use of music during transitional periods, and kinesthetic movement. The child's environment or classroom space must be designed to best fit the needs of the child to promote the level of complexity of social participation that is required for the child to learn and progress (Dunn, Saiter & Rinner, 2002).

## The Sensory Profile

Sensory processing is described through a neurological threshold (person's experiences) continuum and behavioral response (person's behavior) continuum. The neurological threshold continuum is described from high to low. A person with very high thresholds requires a lot of input to generate a response. A person with very low thresholds requires very little to input to generate a response. The behavioral response continuum moves from passive to active self-regulation. A person who uses passive self-regulation refers to a "laissez faire" attitude. A person of active registration uses strategies to control input (Dunn & Bennett, 2002).

The neurological threshold (person's experiences) continuum and behavioral response (person's behavior) continuum often intersect. These intersections are characterized as the four basic patterns of sensory processing: low registration, sensation seeking, sensory sensitivity, and sensation avoiding. No person has one single pattern of sensory processing, but several descriptors. A child can be a sensation avoider to visual stimuli but have another response to auditory stimuli (Dunn, Saiter & Rinner, 2002).

## Sensory Praxis



## Environmental Assessment

Identify or Rule Out the Sensory Basis of Social Behavior... Identify specific Contextual Components Facilitating or Inhibiting Functional Performance.

(Miller-Kuhaneck, Henry, Glennon & Mu, 2007, 148).

### Classroom: Physical Arrangement following

Curricular Responses, Positive Peer Attention, and frequent Teacher Monitoring

Close proximity for positive feedback from the instructor

- With Reduction of potential external distractions (hairstyle, perfume) areas (pencil sharpeners, windows).
- A Closed Safe Area
- Small Group Work Areas
- Mobility