



Help For Kids With Sensory Processing Disorder

(NAPSA)—If you've ever watched a child throw a tantrum in the grocery store, or witnessed a child slam into things, seemingly oblivious to pain, you may have seen the symptoms of sensory processing disorder (SPD). This condition affects 5 to 10 percent of children. Many parents whose children exhibit these and similar behavioral problems may be relieved to know that they are not alone. There may be a medical reason—and effective treatment is available.



Children with SPD benefit from occupational therapy with a sensory approach.

Understanding SPD

Whether you're eating, walking or reading, your ability to do so requires the integration of sensations. SPD occurs when sensory signals don't get organized into appropriate responses. This makes everyday tasks difficult, even though most individuals with SPD are just as intelligent as their peers and many are intellectually gifted.

Signs of SPD

A person with SPD may exhibit such symptoms as:

- Overly sensitive to touch, noises, smells or movement
- Floppy or stiff body; clumsy, poor motor skills
- Difficulty dressing, eating, sleeping or toilet training
- Frequent or lengthy temper tantrums
- Easily distracted, fidgety, withdrawn or aggressive
- Craves movement
- Easily overwhelmed.

Not everyone with these symptoms has SPD and not everyone with SPD has all these symptoms, but if your child has many of them, it may be time to see a doctor.

The Good News

Fortunately, once children have been accurately diagnosed, explains Lucy Jane Miller, Ph.D., OTR, occupational therapy can help them participate in normal activities—playing with friends, enjoying school, eating, dressing and sleeping.

The Bad News

SPD is frequently misdiagnosed or confused with ADHD and other conditions.

The Answers

The Sensory Processing Disorder Foundation provides information at www.SPNow.org and (303) 794-1182.



Note to Editors: October is National Sensory Awareness Month but this article can benefit readers at any time.