



SENSORY PROCESSING 101



by
Dayna Abraham,
Claire Heffron,
Pamela Braley, and
Lauren Drobnjak



HOW TO USE EACH SECTION

Sensory Processing Explained

The Sensory Processing Explained section simplifies the concept of sensory processing for both professionals and non-experts, like parents and educators. Here's a quick overview of what to expect:

1. **Sensory Systems Overview (Chapters 1-8):** Each chapter covers a different sensory system (like touch, hearing, sight, etc.).
 - **Therapist's Point of View:** Offers a clinical, professional explanation of how each sensory system functions.
 - **Parent/Educator's Perspective:** Breaks it down into simpler terms, explaining how sensory processing impacts everyday behaviour. This helps educators and non-experts understand how sensory experiences affect children.
2. **Focused or Comprehensive:**
 - You can choose to read only about specific sensory systems that interest you.
 - Or, you can read about all the systems to understand how they work together to support overall sensory processing.
3. **What Healthy Sensory Processing Looks Like:** The book details what normal sensory development looks like when all systems function properly, helping educators recognize what typical sensory processing in children should be.
4. **Signs of Problems:** This section explains what happens when one or more sensory systems don't work as expected. Educators will learn how to spot common red flags that could indicate sensory processing challenges in children.
5. **Getting Help:** The book also offers advice on when it may be necessary to seek additional support for sensory processing issues. Educators are encouraged to reach out to their supervisor for guidance if they observe any concerns.



Sensory Activities for Kids

The *Sensory Activities for Kids* section provides a variety of fun and practical activities aimed at helping children develop their sensory systems through play. Here's a breakdown of what this part of the book offers:

1. **Favourite Sensory Activities:** The book highlights a range of sensory-based activities that are especially useful for supporting children's sensory development.
2. **Incorporating into Daily Play:** These activities can be easily integrated into everyday routines, especially in the classroom. They fit naturally into playtime or engagement, allowing educators to support sensory development without needing special equipment or complicated setups.
3. **Modifying Activities:** Tips are provided on how to adapt each activity to suit the unique sensory needs or preferences of individual children. Every child processes sensory information differently, so this section helps educators tailor activities to make them more effective and enjoyable.
4. **Variety of Activities:**
 - Some activities are quick and simple, requiring little preparation and can be used in a pinch.
 - Others need more planning and may be ideal for group activities.



Sensory Resources

The *Sensory Resources* section is designed to provide educators with practical tools and information to support children with sensory needs in the classroom. Here's how this section can help educators:

1. **Helpful Websites:** A list of recommended websites that offer information on sensory processing, tailored for educators looking to better understand and support students with sensory needs.
2. **Cheat Sheets:** Quick-reference guides summarizing each sensory system. These overviews are easy to read and provide educators with a basic understanding of how different sensory systems function and how they may affect student behaviour.
3. **Printable Resources:**
 - Educators can print out or copy these materials to share with colleagues or use in their own classroom.
 - These resources help explain sensory needs to other staff members who might work with the children, ensuring consistency in how the children is supported throughout the day.
4. **Red Flag Behaviour Checklist:**
 - This checklist, designed by a pediatric occupational therapist, is a useful tool for educators to observe and identify potential sensory processing issues in students.
 - Educators can use it during classroom observations to document concerns. It's also helpful for communicating observations with parents or school staff when discussing a student's needs.

The book also includes an index organized according to common behaviours that may be associated with sensory concerns. Use the index to locate information and activities that correspond to the specific behaviours you observe in a child.