

Children's Occupational Therapy

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Aims



- To understand the role of the OT within Children and family Health Devon
- To raise awareness of developing independence in activities of daily living for children
- To raise awareness of how sensory processing difficulties can impact children.
- To know where to get help and how to make a referral

What is OT?



Occupational therapy is all about supporting your child to carry out every day tasks, that he or she may find difficult due to physical, cognitive, sensory or social developmental needs.

We provide advice and support within the following areas:

- Equipment
- Access and adaptations
- Activities of daily living
- Education
- Play

Activities of Daily living



What are they?

Self care:

- Feeding
- Dressing
- Toileting



Leisure:

- Indoor Play
- Outdoor Play

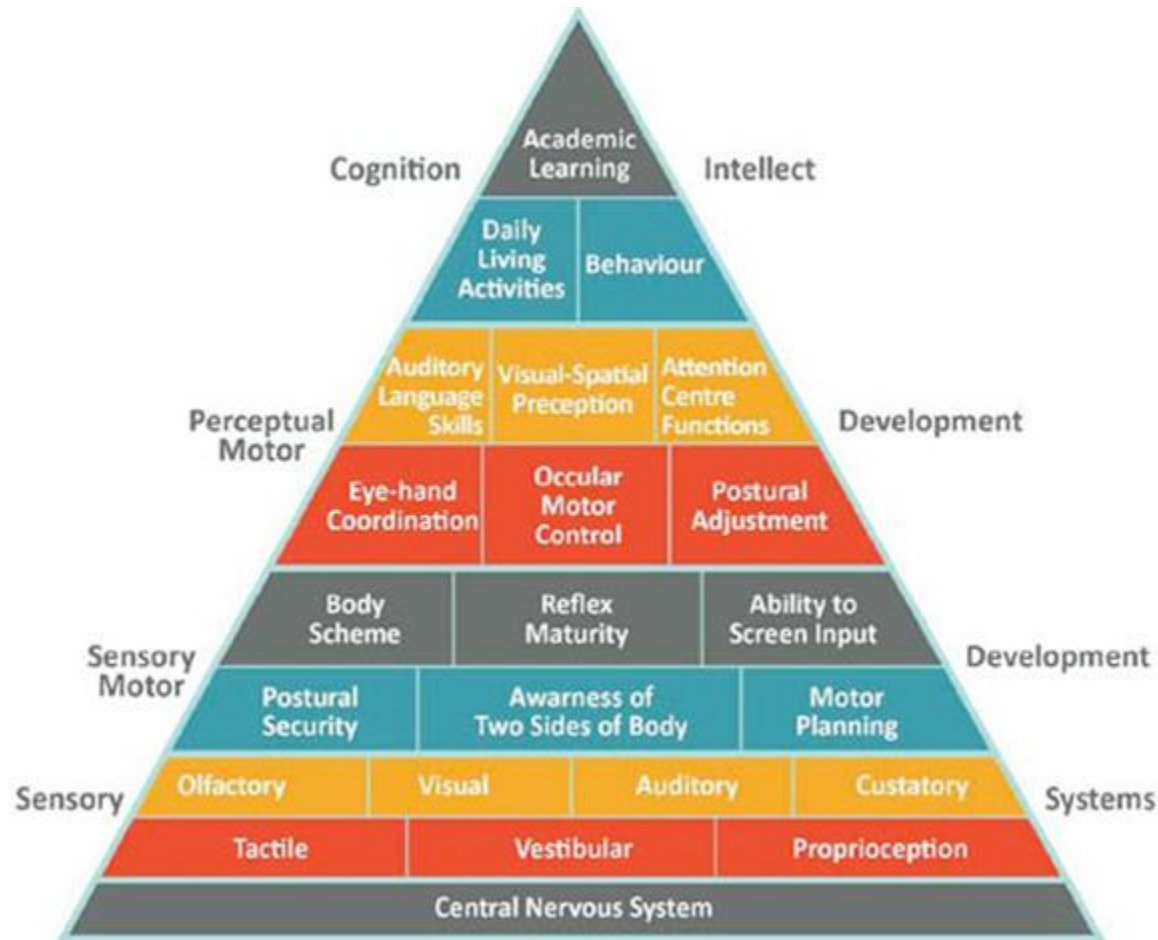


Productivity:

- Handwriting
- Scissor skills
- Mobility and transfers around school
- PE
- Concentration and attention
- Seating/posture



Pyramid of learning



Sensory Processing



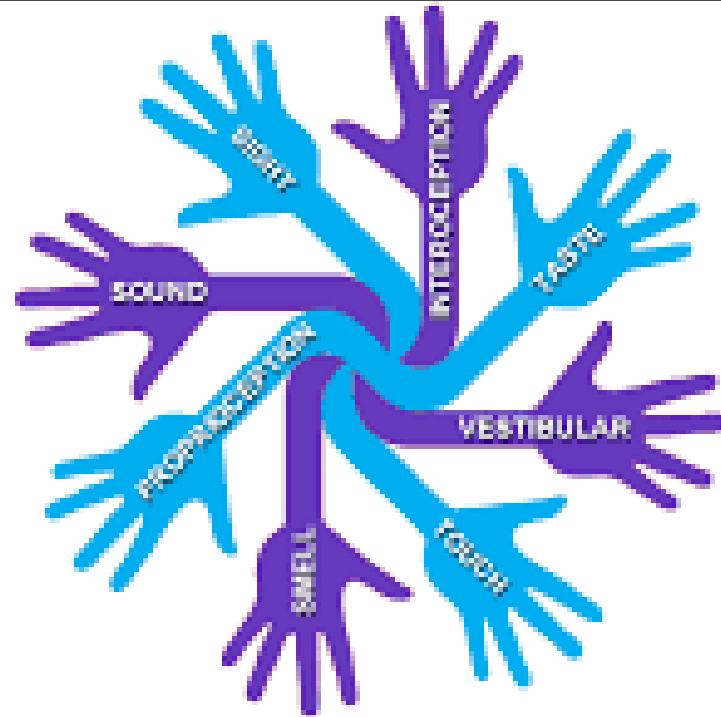
What is sensory processing?

- An unconscious process of the brain
- Organises and sorts information that we get from our senses so that we can focus on what is important
- Enables us to act or respond in the most useful way in any situation in which we find ourselves
- Forms the basic building blocks for learning and behaviour

Whistle stop tour.....



Our 8 Senses



Vision and hearing



- Most powerful predictive sense
- Therefore a very important role to play in keeping safe
- Will over-ride other senses, confuse sensory messages, elicit powerful responses



- Very important for higher cognitive functions (learning)
- Plays major role in communication and socialisation
- Difficult to make up for deficit in this sense by getting information through others

Taste and smell



- Linked closely
- Often features as a sensitivity in Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Sense of smell has powerful emotional overlay and difficult to regulate
- Linked with oral tactile sense



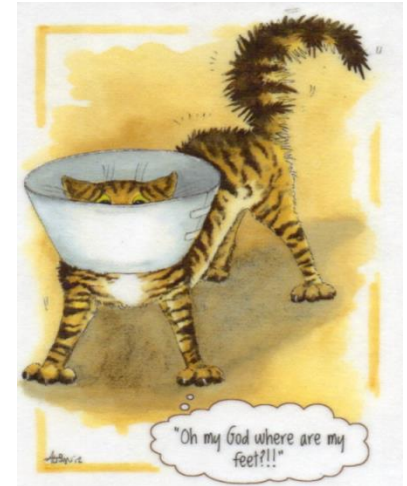
Touch (tactile)



- Information from receptors in skin
- Texture, shape, temperature, weight
- Light touch, deep touch pressure
- Lays down foundation for emotional and social development and attachment
- Defensiveness – again very common in ASC.
- Discrimination – higher level skill, role in safety



Proprioception

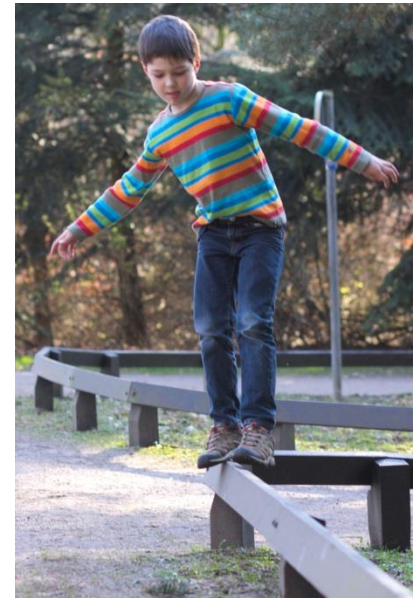


- Position of body in relation to environment
- Role in grading force, direction and effort required
- Very powerful calming and organising role, “heavy muscle work”
- Information from receptors in joints and muscles

Vestibular (balance)



- Information from receptors in inner ear
- Position of head in relation to gravity
- Tells us about movement
- Helps us achieve and maintain the right level of arousal (calm alert state)



Interoception



- Gives us information about the internal state of our body –
Body drive for balance
- Pain, temperature, itch, sexual arousal, hunger, thirst, heart/breathing rates, muscle tension, pleasant touch, sleepiness and when we need the loo.
- We need to be able to clearly sense our body signals in order to identify emotions.



The calm alert state



Over-Responsive

Calm-Alert
State

Under-responsive

Exceeding our thresholds

FIGHT



Flight

- Withdrawing
- Fleeing the classroom
- Skipping class
- Daydreaming
- Seeming to sleep
- Avoiding others
- Hiding or wandering
- Becoming disengaged

FLIGHT Oohlala!



Fight

- Acting out
- Behaving aggressively
- Acting silly
- Exhibiting defiance
- Being hyperactive
- Arguing
- Screaming/yelling

FREEZE



Freeze

- Exhibiting numbness
- Refusing to answer
- Refusing to get needs met
- Giving a blank look
- Feeling unable to move or act

Sensory diet aims



- Decrease over-sensitivity to sensory input
- Improve under-responsiveness to sensory input
- Improve overall sensory processing
- Purposeful activities, which are valued by the child and have intrinsic sensory input
- What is the right combination of sensory activities and stimulation through out the day to keep the right balance of alertness for learning and focused behaviour.
- Ideally 3 sensory snacks a day, Vestibular activities can affect the nervous system for up to 8 hours and proprioceptive activities 4-6 hours.
- Incorporate into all aspects of daily life and any setting
- Choose from a menu rather than a recipe!
- Think about the environment

- How to refer

<https://childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk/>

03300245321 – single point of access

- When to refer
- Use the website advise
- What is the impact on the child, what is it that he or she is not able to do?
- Needs to have a cluster (2-3) functional difficulties in relation to development.



Thank you for listening!

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