

SENSORY NEEDS ANALYSIS

Name of Child/Young Person:

Name of Parent/Professional:

Date:

For each behaviour described in the green, pink columns please tick the box that represents the frequency with which this behaviour has occurred over the last month i.e., never, rarely, sometimes, or often.

	HYPOSENSITIVITY Sensory seeking	Never or rarely	Sometimes	Often	HYPERSENSITIVITY Sensory avoiding	Never or rarely	Sometimes	Often
BALANCE (VESTIBULAR)	Seeks all kinds of movements and this interferes with daily routines				Fearful of activities involving movement (e.g., swings, slides, see-saw etc); anxious about moving from place to place			
	Seeks rough and tumble playful interactions				Dislikes trying new movement activities and may have difficulty learning them – related to moving head and not need for control			
	Becomes overly excitable during movement activity				Becomes anxious or distressed when feet leave the ground			
	Need for rocking, swinging, spinning or jumping - please indicate which				Fear of heights, climbing, open stairs, escalators			
	Head bangs to gain head movement – not due to frustration or anger				Resists change to head position/movement; tenses or becomes irritable if moved by someone else; dislikes head upside down			
	Enjoys swings, roundabouts, being spun round				Avoids participation in sports or active games (because of head movement)			
	Bumps into people and objects				Feels sick or vomits from excessive movement (swings, merry-go-round, car)			
	Often tilts head back or holds head in unusual positions				Avoids activities that involve balancing such as walking on narrow beams or handstands			
	Enjoys being upside down				Avoids putting head upside down or doesn't move head naturally (holds stiffly)			
	Constantly on the move				Tends to be clingy, prefers to sit still			
	Loves car rides – may go to sleep				Gets travel sick			

	HYPOSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	HYPERSENSITIVITY Hypersensitivity in proprioception is less common	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
BODY AWARENESS (PROPRIOCEPTION)	Stands too close to people, lack of awareness of body position							
	Fidgets and moves about when seated							
	Touches walls as they walk along				Very conscious of personal space – wants to keep others at arms' length			
	Leans on or bumps into people, trips or crashes into objects				Movement of the whole body to look at something instead of just turning head and which cannot be explained by a visual impairment			
	Craves rough and tumble play to gain a feeling of their body in space				Does not like to be moved by others, particularly if the movement is unexpected – not to do with a need to control			
	Uses too much or too little pressure when writing							
	Like clothing to be tight and likes being wrapped in blankets							

	HYPOSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	HYPERSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
SMELL (OLFACTORY)	No sense of smell – failure to notice extreme odours; difficulty identifying things by their smell				Smells can be intensified and become overpowering; dislike of individuals who use distinctive perfume, washing powder, dislikes strong smells			
	Licking of objects				Toileting problems such as fear or reluctance to use the toilet or potty or distress after defecation – to do with smell specifically			
	Smells self, people, objects, food				Hits nose when distressed			
	Smears/plays with faeces				Sudden outbursts of self-abuse/tantrums or withdrawal in response to smells			
	Seeks strong odours							

	HYPOSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	HYPERSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
SIGHT(VISION)	Tendency to use peripheral vision – looks to the side not a visual impairment				Constantly looks at minute particles, picks up tiny bits off floor			
	Poor depth perception – problems with throwing and catching; difficulty stepping up or down kerbs or staircases not a visual impairment				Dislikes dark and/or bright lights			
	Is attracted to lights				Notices tiny changes in environment, e.g., if something has been moved in child's bedroom/classroom			
	Repetitive blinking and head bobbing				Is frightened by flashes of light, e.g., photographer flash			
	Looks intensely at objects and people				Looks down most of time			
	Moves fingers or objects in front of eyes				Squints or closes eyes in bright light not a visual impairment			
	Is fascinated with reflections, bright coloured or shining objects, patterns (describe which)				Is bothered by bright lights after others have adapted, e.g., coming out of the cinema into daylight not a visual impairment			
	Focuses on shadows, reflections, spinning objects				Gets easily frustrated/ tired under fluorescent lighting			
	Appears startled when approached suddenly				Sudden outbursts of self-abuse or tantrums in response to a visual stimulus			
	Runs a hand around the edge of the objects				Appears sensitive to changes in lighting			
	Perimeter hugging				Turns away from television or computer screens due to the flickering			
					Watches everyone when they move around the room			
	Selects minor aspects of objects for attention instead of whole thing (e.g., a wheel rather than a whole toy car etc)				Does not recognise people in unfamiliar clothes, e.g., when dressed up			
	Becomes frustrated when trying to find objects in competing backgrounds, e.g., trying to find a certain toy in a pile not a visual impairment				Does not recognise a familiar environment if approaches it from a different direction, e.g. using a different entrance at school			

	HYPOSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	HYPERSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
HEARING (AUDITORY)	Does not acknowledge particular sounds or respond to name being called; unable to distinguish between some sounds not a hearing impairment				Inability to cut out or filter particular sounds, leading to difficulties concentrating			
	Enjoys crowded noisy places, e.g., the kitchens - bangs doors and objects				Appears very sensitive to sound; able to hear even very quiet sounds, for example, hearing conversations in the distance			
	Likes vibration because of the noise				Dislikes haircut due to the noise of the clippers or dryer			
	Is fascinated with certain sounds				Makes repetitive noises (hums or sings) to block out other sounds			
	Tears paper, crumples paper				Tries to destroy/break objects producing sounds (musical toy)			
	Pronunciation problems connected to hearing difficulties				Dislikes unexpected or loud noises			
	Appears deaf or seems to have problems in hearing				Sudden outbursts of self-abuse/tantrums or withdrawal in response to auditory stimuli			
	Enjoys making loud rhythmic noises				Covers or hits ears to many sounds			

TASTE (GUSTATORY)	Likes strong tastes and/or spicy foods				Some foods taste appear too strong in flavour and are over-powering			
	Avoids bland tasting food				Sudden outbursts of self-abuse/tantrums or withdrawal in response to strong taste			
	Pica; eats everything – soil, grass. materials				Poor eater – restricted diet			
	Mouths and licks objects				Uses the tip of tongue for tasting			
	Regurgitates				Gags/vomits easily			
	Is fascinated with certain tastes				Likes certain (plain) foods such as potato, white bread, bland cheese, pasta etc			
	Lack of awareness of flavour				Heightened awareness of flavour			
	Enjoys spicy foods or foods with strong flavours				Avoids certain spicy foods, strong tastes			
	Enjoys foods with a variety of temperatures				Limits self to particular food textures/temperatures – will not eat very hot or very cold foods			

TOUCH (TACTILE)	HYPOSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	HYPERSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
	Touches people and objects frequently				Touch painful and uncomfortable; will often withdraw from aspects of touch			
	Holds others tightly – seeks deep hugs				Reacts emotionally/aggressively to touch			
	Mouths or chews objects or clothing				Moves away from people, insists on large personal space			
	Doesn't seem to notice when face or hands are messy				Withdraws or hits when people reach out or are nearby and get in personal space			
	Leaves clothing twisted on body; layers clothing, wraps self in clothing or bedding				Likes touch ONLY when it is on their terms due to sensitivity to touch			
	Seeks deep pressure by squeezing between furniture ⁷				Avoids touch or contact with objects or people			
	Likes pressure and tight clothing				Rubs the spot that was touched			
	Enjoys heavy objects on top of them				Dislike of having anything on hands or feet			
	Is fascinated with certain textures				Expresses distress when grooming, teeth brushing, nail clipping			
	Prone to self injuries – scratching, pinching, rubbing, hitting, hair pulling hand biting				Takes off clothing or shoes because they feel restrictive			
	Insists on being barefoot to get more feedback from contact with floor				Complains about how certain clothing feels, doesn't like tags, fussy about socks, seams in clothes, belts etc.			
	Low reaction to pain or extreme temperatures				Dislikes the feeling of tight-fitting clothing			
	Pushes or rubs body against objects/walls/people				Sensitive to texture and make of material			
	Relaxes when given firm massage				Insists on wearing the same clothes			
	Seems unaware of being touched or bumped				Overreacts to heat/cold/pain			
	Touches things constantly; "learns" through their fingers				Dislikes food of certain texture			
	Has trouble keeping hands to self, will poke or push other children				Difficulty tolerating temperature change			
	Really enjoys shower, rough towelling or firm hair brushing ⁷				Dislike and avoids messy play			

INTEROCEPTION (Internal systems)	HYPOSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	HYPERSENSITIVITY	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
	Not feeling hungry or thirsty – not aware of body needing food or drink				Feeling hungry all the time – overeating or eating frequently and does not know when full. Frequently thirsty.			
	Does not know when bladder is full – lots of accidents due to waiting until the last minute				Sensitive bladder – frequent toilet visits but hardly any urine passed. Fearful of feeling of bowel movement – withholds.			
	Not aware of heartbeat at all				Mentions heart pounding or feeling worried about heart-beat			
	Not noticing if hot or cold – wearing too many or too few clothes				Gets too hot or too cold very easily – temperature sensitive			
	Does not notice how body is working – not receiving internal signals clearly				Distracted and agitated by internal workings of body			

Adapted from Toni Hovey's 'Sensory Problems Questionnaire' (May 2007) with support from South Gloucestershire's Sensory Integration Occupational Therapists, Educational Psychology Service and Inclusion Support Service.

Next Steps: - severity of need indicated by 'Often' boxes. CYP can be Hypo and Hyper in the same sense. Use sensory resources/websites and books to create a sensory plan. See 'South Gloucestershire Autism Toolkit' for the appendix on 'Sensory Integration' for more advice and signposting to information and further help.

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