

# The Sensory System

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Issue 6



Are you looking for more information or support? Call us!  
**506-862-3783**

## Self-Care

Stress is a normal part of life but too much stress can impact physical and mental health. Here is a great tool for adults to evaluate their stress and come up with a plan to manage it:

[www.StressStrategies.ca](http://www.StressStrategies.ca)

## Resources

**Sensory Issues, Lutherwood.**

<https://www.fasdwaterlooregion.ca/strategies-tools/sub-page-test-2/sensory-issues>

[Book] Biel, L. and Peske, N. (2009).

***Raising a Sensory Smart Child.*** London: Penguin Books.

Many children with FASD have challenges with **Sensory Dysregulation**. This means that their sensory systems can be either **OVER**-sensitive (hypersensitive) or **UNDER**-sensitive (hyposensitive) to sensory input.

When children are **HYPER-sensitive** to certain things, you may see **avoiding** behaviours.

- e.g. Covering ears for loud noises; being picky about certain clothing; preferring bland flavours.

When children are **HYPO-sensitive**, they may **seek out** sensory input.

- e.g. Fidgeting in their seat; preferring rough, active play.
- ❖ An **Occupational Therapist** can be a great support in finding the right strategies for your child. Contact your Community Coordinator if you would like to connect with an OT in your community.
- ❖ Learn more about Sensory Processing:
  - **Sensory Processing, POPFASD:**  
<https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/elearning/supporting-brain-differences/sensory-processing>

## Strategies

There are many strategies for helping your child's sensory system to feel "just right," meaning they are not overwhelmed and are getting all the sensory input that they need. Consider all of the senses:

<b>Touch</b> -Allow your child to wear clothing that feels good to them (even if it means buying multiple versions of the same item!) -Deep pressure (e.g. a big hug or a massage) can be calming for many children.	<b>Visual</b> -Reduce clutter as much as possible. Store toys and other items in bins. -It may be helpful to reduce the amount of items in a child's bedroom to make it easier for them to calm down for sleep.
<b>Taste/Smell</b> -Some smells may be really overwhelming; try essential oils in preferred scents in overwhelming situations. -Children may prefer very bland flavours or seek out intense flavours.	<b>Auditory (hearing)</b> -Noise cancelling headphones or an iPod with preferred music or "white noise" can help cut down on distractions.
<b>Movement</b> -Build "movement breaks" into your day, e.g. extra time on the playground before school, or walking the dog together. -Use wobble seats, elastic bands on chair legs, or fidget items to allow children to move while sitting.	