


Sensory Processing Strategies

for Creating an Inclusive Child Care Environment

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 United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Dane County
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UCP at a glance...



- ▶ United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Dane County is a non-profit agency in south-central Wisconsin serving individuals with developmental disabilities and their families
- ▶ UCP Programs:
 - ▶ Birth-3 Connections
 - ▶ Youth Resources & Respite
 - ▶ Compass Wisconsin: Threshold
- ▶ Our mission:
 - ▶ Understanding disabilities, Creating opportunities, Promoting community



Youth Resources & Respite

Our focus...

- ▶ Respite Program
- ▶ Teen Afterschool and Summer Services
- ▶ Inclusive Child Care Services

Let's get started...



What is a Sensory Processing Disorder?

- ▶ The brain has trouble receiving and/or responding to information that comes from the senses
- ▶ May be overstimulated or under-responsive to things in the environment
- ▶ Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) is not currently a medical diagnosis on its own, but may be a symptom or sign of a larger disorder or issue:
 - ▶ Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - ▶ Anxiety
 - ▶ Cerebral Palsy
 - ▶ ADHD

Symptoms & Effects

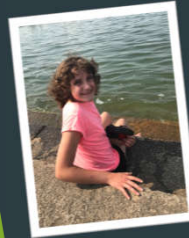


- ▶ Process senses differently
- ▶ May seek sensory input or experience 'sensory overload'
- ▶ Gravitate towards specific behaviors, activities, toys
- ▶ Difficulty dealing with the environment
- ▶ Communication differences
- ▶ Physical effects

Experiencing a sensory processing disorder...



Supporting Children with SPD



- ▶ Occupational Therapy referral
- ▶ Proactive Techniques
- ▶ Classroom Basics
- ▶ Engaging Peers
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Managing Behaviors

Proactive Techniques

Foreshadowing

First/then statements

Helping children with waiting

Planful positioning

Focus on what is ok

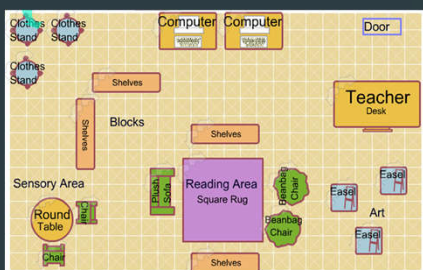


Classroom Basics

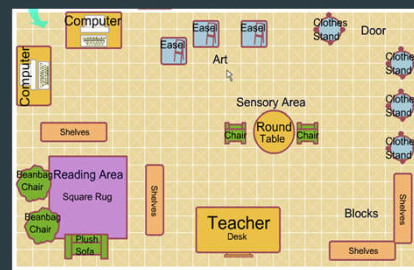
- ▶ Children's needs
- ▶ Adaptations/Modifications
- ▶ Rules/Expectations
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Routines & Schedules



The Physical Environment...



The Physical Environment Continued...



Further Considerations

- ▶ Space for personal items
- ▶ Labeling
- ▶ Accessibility
- ▶ Identified quiet/safe space



Routines & Schedules

- ▶ Typical day
- ▶ Visible to all children
- ▶ Consistent but flexible
- ▶ Type & length of activities
- ▶ Transitions



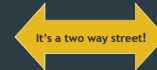
Engaging Peers

- ▶ Teach peers about differences
- ▶ Brainstorm inclusive activities
- ▶ Natural supports
- ▶ Small groups



Communication

Just because someone doesn't speak, doesn't mean they don't have something to say....



Some children use assistive technology or communication devices to express their thoughts and feelings....

Find ways to help children express themselves... through art, writing, drama and play!



Are you listening?
What does your body language say?

Managing Behaviors



- ▶ Tension
 - ▶ Redirect
 - ▶ What does the child need?
- ▶ Physical/Emotional Distress
 - ▶ Remain calm
 - ▶ Safety is first priority
 - ▶ Help the child in the moment
- ▶ Recovery
 - ▶ Process or debrief the situation
 - ▶ Seek support
 - ▶ Self care

Resources

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Managing Threatening Confrontations
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