

# SENSORY ISSUES

## Definition:

Sensitivity to touch, taste, sound, sight and smell so that it is unbearable or uncomfortable for the child; or showing too little reaction to one or more of the senses to where it can be harmful.

## Behavior:

### Why could this be happening?

A sensory disorder causes a child to be sensitive (either over or under) to touch, sights, sounds, smells and sensations of movement in space.

## Typical Development:

Children:

- Play with a variety of toys and textures.
- Explore tasting a variety of foods.
- Allow their hair to be washed and teeth brushed without severe reactions.
- Have typical sleeping patterns.

## When to be Concerned:

- A child is irritated by some types of clothes and shoes.
- Bright, florescent lights may cause irritability or a meltdown.
- A child has a very limited diet and strongly resists foods because of the texture.
- Routine tasks, such as brushing teeth or combing and/or cutting hair, are nearly impossible to accomplish.
- A toddler loves or hates rough-and-tumble play.
- A child appears annoyed when touched too gently. For infants, this may mean they don't want to be cuddled or may prefer firm swaddling.
- A child has difficulty sleeping if a room isn't completely dark.
- A child has an unusual response to temperature (over/under dressing for weather).
- A child has an under-reaction to pain.

## Possible Resources:

Help Me Grow, early childhood screening, pediatrician, occupational therapist, mental health professional