

BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH SENSORY INTEGRATION

Identifying Difficulties in Self-Care Skills

General Self-Care Checklist

TOUCH

Hyper-responsive

- has difficulty tolerating the touch of a facecloth/towel
- rubs spots that were touched
- seems to accept touch within a predictable routine
- dislikes the feel of the toothbrush
- complains that the toothbrush/hairbrush hurts him/her
- reacts aggressively to touch
- often strips clothing/takes off shoes and socks
- has difficulty tolerating temperature changes
- has difficulty with nail care

Hypo-responsive

- seeks out touch; loves to feel textures on body
- feels textures with his/her mouth

PROPRIOCEPTION

Hypo-responsive

- constantly drops objects
- applies too much/not enough pressure with objects of self care (squeezes toothpaste so that too much comes out or lacks enough pressure to remove the cap)
- really enjoys the shower, rough toweling or firm hair brushing
- seems unable to change body position to accommodate the task (e.g., expresses difficulty getting into the tub)

VESTIBULAR

Hyper-responsive

- demonstrates resistance to a change in head position (difficulty leaning back to have hair rinsed)

CHAPTER 4: IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS WITH SENSORY INTEGRATION

- prefers to hold head upright
- gets disoriented following a change in head position
- has difficulty weight shifting to balance for a change in position (bending down to dry his/her feet)
- has difficulty bending over the sink to spit out toothpaste
- seems fearful of sitting on the toilet, especially when feet are off the ground

VISUAL

Hyper-responsive

- has difficulty tolerating the reflection of light off the water or shiny sink
- prefers to keep the light off
- over focuses on a visual event in the room, like a closing door
- has difficulty guiding movement in front of a mirror (get distracted by the mirror)

Hypo-responsive

- has difficulty finding visual items on busy backgrounds
- seems fascinated with changing visuals (bubbles, dripping water)

AUDITORY

Hyper-responsive

- gets upset by loud noises (toilets flushing, water running, hairdryer)
- hums or sings to screen out incoming auditory input
- gets easily distracted by sound
- covers ears with hands to screen the louder, more hollow sounds of the bathroom
- struggles with the sound in the bathroom, so that self care skills have to be completed outside the bathroom

Hypo-responsive

- enjoys loud sounds and repeat them often (flushing toilet)
- likes the echo of the bathroom

SMELL/TASTE

Hyper-responsive

- has poor tolerance of fragrance in soap and shampoo

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- has difficulty tolerating toothpaste
- smears feces
- holds nose/gag during toileting

Hypo-responsive

- seems not to notice smells
- smears feces
- craves strong tastes; eats soap/toothpaste

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- is sedentary; prefers sitting tasks
- has difficulty staying still
- has difficulty staying in one place long enough to complete a task
- fidgets
- has strong desire for movement, even during a task
- constantly shifts in position during seated activities

EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL

- demonstrates poor confidence
- has difficulty planning the action even though the task is understood
- exhibits poor self-esteem
- requires more preparation and support through an activity
- seems immature
- can be overly sensitive to criticism
- acts fearful/anxious
- has difficulty with transitions
- requires predictability in effort to compensate for poor planning skills and sensory defensiveness
- gets easily frustrated
- has difficulty with rhythms of the body - sleeping, hunger, elimination
- has difficulty with self-regulation
- has difficulty interacting with and making friends