



Sensory Integration Disorders

What is a sensory processing or sensory integration disorder?

Each day, we process sensory information from our environment and learn from or react to this information. Sensory information may come in the form of touch, movement, taste, sight, sound, gravity and body awareness. Our ability to recognize, interpret and organize this sensory information to participate in the world around us is called sensory integration. Sensory integration is crucial to our ability to learn about ourselves and our environment, succeed in school and interact socially with others.

Some children may have difficulty interpreting and filtering the sensory information they receive through their sense. It might be easier to image what it would be like for a child to have an inability to hear, versus an inability of their brain to interpret what sounds they are hearing. They may be unable to filter important sounds from unimportant sounds in their environment. For example, they may hear the sound of the refrigerator motor, the television in the other room, and their parent giving them directions all at the same volume. They are unable to attend to what their parent is saying because the refrigerator and television are “too loud” for them to hear and interpret the words.

Some signs of sensory integrative dysfunction might include:

- under- or over-sensitivity to touch, tastes, textures, movement, sounds and sights
- easy distraction
- physical clumsiness
- delay in achieving developmental milestones
- social, behavioral and emotional difficulties
- impulsive or poor self-control
- unusually high or low activity levels
- difficulty in academics

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Kenny Kids™ Pediatric Rehabilitation Program Locations

Kenny Kids – Buffalo

*Across the street from
Buffalo Hospital*
300 Catlin St., Suite 101
Buffalo, MN 55313
763-684-3888

Kenny Kids – Coon Rapids

3111 124th Ave. NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55433
763-236-7337

Kenny Kids – Owatonna

Owatonna Hospital
2250 NW 26th St.
Owatonna, MN 55060
507-977-2150



Sensory integration disorders (cont'd)

Why is my child being referred for occupational therapy?

Our pediatric occupational therapists specializing in sensory integration can evaluate your child's ability to process and interpret sensory information as it is related to his or her expected developmental level. Our therapists will ask you to provide information about your child's reactions to dressing, eating, grooming, sleeping, touch, movement and social interactions. This important information will help your therapist decide the evaluation and treatment appropriate for your child. Our therapists will also use standardized evaluations, patient history and clinical observations to evaluate your child. If the therapist determines that your child is having difficulty with sensory integration, he/she may recommend direct occupational therapy services.

What can I do at home?

You can learn more about sensory integration and follow through the evaluation recommended by your doctor. Observe how your child is reacting to different sensations. This important information can be shared with your therapist and will help determine your child's treatment plan. The occupational therapist will recommend other activities you can do at home to help your child as needed after the evaluation is completed.

LEARN MORE ABOUT SENSORY INTEGRATION

THE KID FOUNDATION

1901 West Littleton Blvd.
Littleton, CO 80120
www.sinetwork.org

SENSORY INTEGRATION INTERNATIONAL

PO Box 5339
Torrance, CA 90510-5339
310-787-8805
310-787-8130 fax
home.earthlink.net/~sensoryint/
www.out-of-sync-child.com

Kranowitz, C. (1998) *The out-of-sync child: Recognizing and coping with sensory integration dysfunction*. New York, NY: Skylight Press