

Sensory Check Lists Ages 3 and above

Name: **DOB:**

Address:

School:

Date:

Person/s Completing Checklist

The following check list is not a diagnostic tool. Rather, it is an indicator of sensory over or under-responsiveness. The purpose of the tool is to gather information related to a child's or young person's sensory profile. This will assist professionals to provide appropriate advice to children and families related to the sensory difficulties identified.

TERMS

Over Responsive

This check list will use the term "Over Responsive" which can also be known as hypersensitive with a presenting behaviour of sensory avoider.

In general, the brain adjusts and sometimes ignores the tremendous amount of sensory input it received.

People who are "Over Responsive" register too much information from one or more of their senses. This can be very overwhelming, distracting and distressing. This can result in that person avoiding stimuli which are painful or overwhelming.

Being over responsive in any of your senses can impact on social integration, communication, behaviour, social/emotional flexibility and learning.

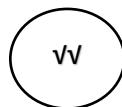
Under Responsive

This check list uses the term "Under Responsive" which can also be known as hyposensitive with a presenting behaviour of being a sensory seeker.

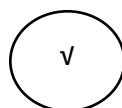
When a person fails to respond or has a very slow response to stimuli they are said to be "Under Responsive". People can seek intense sensory experiences in the areas they are under responsive to. Their seeking behaviour is aimed at stimulating their senses that are under responsive from a very low level of responsiveness or arousal.

Vestibular

Our sense of balance is called our vestibular sense. It helps us with keeping upright, balanced and optimal position for sitting, movement and keeping our eyes in the best position for good vision. You only really notice your vestibular sense when you have a problem with it. For example, if you have ever made yourself dizzy by spinning or if you have vertigo or an ear infection.



Two ticks = A behaviour response which impacts significantly on daily functioning in a child's life.



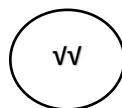
One tick = Behaviours may be observed but daily functioning is not impacted by it when compared to other reactions.

Vestibular Under Responsiveness	✓	VV
Find it difficult to sit still. In constant motion		
Craves intense movement or spinning (does not get dizzy)		
Stumbles when moving from one position to another		
Spins, climbs, likes being upside down		
Rocks body, shakes legs or moves whilst sitting		
Prefers running, jumping and hopping to walking		
Falls out of a chair		
Has difficulty coordinating both hands together e.g. scissors, opening packets		
Vestibular Over Responsiveness	✓	VV
Seems fearful of movement		
W sits on the floor, wraps legs around chair		
Dislikes escalators/stepping off a kerb		
Scared of or uncomfortable with heights, even ones which are not particularly high e.g. small wall, standing on a chair		
Avoids or has difficulty riding a bike, hopping or standing on one leg		
Has difficulty climbing. Fearful of feet leaving the ground		
Has difficulty walking on uneven or unstable surfaces		
Dislikes head being upside down e.g. avoids bending down to put shoes on/picking objects up from the floor		

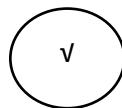
Describe in brief how difficulties in this area affect this child's day to day functioning at home and at school.

Proprioceptive Sense

This sense lets our bodies know where they are in relation to the environment around us and where your head, trunk, arms, legs, head etc. are in relation to each other. This helps us plan our movements, avoid bumping into objects, work out how much pressure or force we need to use when carrying out an activity due to the feedback our body receives through this sense.



Two ticks = A behaviour response which impacts significantly on daily functioning in a child's life.



One tick = Behaviours may be observed but daily functioning is not impacted by it when compared to other reactions.

Proprioceptive Under Responsiveness	✓	VV
Likes bumping, crashing and jumping		
Enjoys being tightly wrapped in a blanket/towel		
Loves tight small spaces		
Likes wrestling and squashing others		
Falls on the floor or crashes up the walls on purpose		
Chews on many non-edible objects		
Finds it difficult to apply the correct amount of pressure for tasks e.g. writing too light or too dark, gauging how to pour at the correct flow and amount.		
Seems to apply too much force for everyday tasks, may slam doors		
Appears floppy and often leans against people and furniture		
Stumbles and falls quite a lot		
Walks on tip toes at times		
Stomps feet when walking		
"W" sits on the floor or sits on knees in a chair or wraps legs around chair legs		

Describe in brief how difficulties in this area affect this child's day to day functioning at home and at school.

Sense of Touch

Sometimes referred to as the tactile sense.

vv

Two ticks = A behaviour response which impacts significantly on daily functioning in a child's life.

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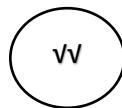
One tick = Behaviours may be observed but daily functioning is not impacted by it when compared to other reactions.

Tactile Under Responsive/ Tactile Seeking	√	vv
Has a need to touch everything and everyone		
Has no reaction or delayed reaction to being touched or bumped unless it is really heavy		
Fails to notice or not too worried by cuts and bumps		
Seeks out messy play		
Likes highly spiced, sweet and sour or salty foods		
Does not notice messy face		
Likes pressure and tight clothes or hugs tightly		
Explores objects with their mouths like much younger children would		
Has little or delayed reaction to pain or temperature		
Tactile Over Responsiveness / Tactile Avoiding	√	vv
Does not like being to like being touched unexpectedly		
Avoids or is fearful of standing close to other people		
Complains about having hair, teeth, nails brushed, or only like a certain brush		
Dislikes kisses, wipes them away		
Doesn't like affectionate touch, hair ruffles etc.		
Avoids messy play or distressed by messy hands		
Over reacts to pain, hot and cold (e.g. minor scratches and bumps)		
Upset by clothing in some way. Seams in socks, new clothes, stiff, itchy etc.		
As a young child preferred to be naked or prefers to wear shorts and short sleeved tops. Rolls sleeves up		
Washing bathing and most aspects of personal care are difficult. Check whether this is a behavioural response to the child's view of who should do the job e.g. mum always washes so why would I need to do it?		
Narrow diet restricted to certain tastes and textures		
Finds it difficult to walk in bare feet over textured surfaces such as sand or grass.		
Dislikes the feel of some fabrics but enjoys the feel of others		
Walks on tip toes at times, such as, new surfaces.		

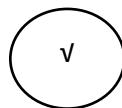
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Sense of Sight

Sometimes called our visual sense



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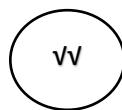
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Vision Under Responsive	✓	vv
Moves fingers in front of face or pokes eyes		
Seeks out bright light		
Looks intently at people or objects		
Fascinated by reflections and brightly coloured objects		
Runs hands around the edge of objects		
Perimeter hugging (closely following the perimeter of an object or space e.g. walking around a table, following the line of a fence around a garden)		
Likes to watch items flow or fall such as liquids, sand, toys		
Vision Over Responsive	✓	vv
Prefers a dim or dark room		
Looks down most of the time, especially outdoors / busy places		
Squints, rubs eyes regularly		
Finds reading difficult – words “move”		
Cover eyes in bright light prefers and or to wear sunglasses / peaked cap		
Easily distracted by other visual movements in the room		
Seems not to see objects on a busy background		

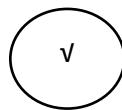
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Sense of Sound

Sometimes known as our auditory sense



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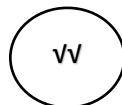
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Hearing Under Responsive	√	vv
Bangs objects and doors		
Likes vibration		
Enjoys and is attracted to listening to sounds e.g. traffic, crumpling of paper, echoes		
Makes loud rhythmic noises to self		
Can often appear not to hear you although hearing is fine		
Hearing Over Responsive	√	vv
Covers ears or runs away from certain noises		
Can hear sounds other cannot hear		
Distracted by sounds that others do not notice		
Asks people to be quiet, stop talking, singing etc.		
Can cope with their own noise. Makes repetitive sounds to block out other sounds		
Often a light sleeper		
Startles easily		
Avoids situations where there is a lot of noise		
Can perceive normal talking as shouting		
Can cope with their own noise. Makes repetitive sounds to block out other sounds.		
Frightened or startled by sudden noises e.g. babies crying, animal sounds, vacuum cleaners, hair dryers, hand dryers, noisy toys, talking toys, fireworks, sirens etc		

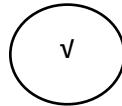
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Sense of Smell

Also known as olfactory.



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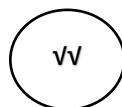
One tick = Behaviours may be observed but daily functioning is not impacted by it when compared to other reactions.

Smell Under Responsive	✓	VV
Seek out smells (not always appropriate)		
Does not notice odours that other would complain about (may impact upon personal hygiene)		
May like the smell of clothes worn day after day, comforter etc. and complain excessively if washed		
Smell Over Responsive	✓	VV
Reacts to smells that do not bother others		
Tells people how bad or funny they smell		
Offended or nauseated by bathroom odours or personal hygiene smells		
Upset by or avoids perfumes and colognes		
Upset by or avoids household smells		
May gag or vomit at a smell		
Dislikes certain foods		

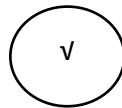
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Sense of Taste

Also known as gustatory



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Taste Under Responsive	√	√√
Mouthing objects past age of two years		
Licks objects past the age of two years		
Eats inedible objects		
Prefers intense flavours, spice, salts, sweet and sour		
Prefers very hot or very cold food		
Has difficulty with controlled sucking chewing and swallowing		
Excessive drooling		
Overfills mouth (to "taste" food)		
Frequently chews on hair, fingers, clothes		
Prefers crunchy food (melts easily)		
Taste Over Responsive	√	√√
Picky eater, extreme food preferences		
Only eats soft or pureed foods beyond 24 months of age		
Gags at textured food		
Overly fearful of the dentist		
Prefers bland foods – limited diet		
Dislikes toothpaste and teeth brushing		
Resists trying new foods		
Sensitive to too hot or too cold foods, only eats certain textures of food		

Describe in brief how difficulties in this area affect this child's day to day functioning at home and at school.

TO BE COMPLETED BY PROFESSIONAL ONLY

Checklist Interpretation

The purpose of this sensory checklist is to help parents and professionals who interact with children become educated about particular signs of sensory processing difficulties.

It is **not** to be used as the absolute diagnostic criteria for labelling children with a sensory processing disorder, but rather as an educational tool and checklist for knowledge and guidance.

- What symptoms does the child present with?
- Which sensory systems are they having difficulty with?
- How much does it interfere with their (or others) daily life?
- What impact is it having on their level of functioning?

When looking at the checklist consider the “Five Caveats” that Carol Stock Kranowitz points out in her book *“The out of sync child”*

1. “Everyone has some sensory integration problems now and then, because no one is regulated all the time. All kinds of stimuli can temporarily disrupt normal functioning of the brain, either by overloading it with, or by depriving it, of sensory stimulation.” (C. Kranowitz, *The Out of Sync Child*)
2. “The child with sensory dysfunction does not necessarily exhibit every characteristic. For example, a child with vestibular dysfunction may have poor balance but good muscle tone.”
3. “Sometimes a child will show characteristics of a dysfunction one day but not the next. For example, a child may fall over every bump in the pavement on a Friday but then score every goal at football on the Saturday.”
4. “A child may be both hypersensitive and hyposensitive to stimuli. For example, a child may be extremely sensitive to light touch, but may be indifferent to the deep pain of an injection.”
5. “A child may exhibit characteristics of a particular sensory dysfunction, yet have no dysfunction. For example, a child who typically withdraws from touch, may have an emotional difficulty rather than a tactile sensitivity.”

Quick glance at what the check list shows.

Be mindful that some areas have more questions in them than others, therefore the degree of difficulty will be proportional to how many questions are asked in that section and the level to which sensory difficulties impact upon daily life.

In the table below record how many ticks you got in each section. A higher number of ticks can indicate a difficulty with specific sensory experiences in any of the areas being considered.

If you have recorded more difficulties in the \checkmark column this may need less intervention than if a greater number of difficulties are highlighted in the $\checkmark\checkmark$ column.

Sense	Under Responsive		Over responsive	
	\checkmark	$\checkmark\checkmark$	\checkmark	$\checkmark\checkmark$
Vestibular System (Balance and coordination)				
Proprioception (Body awareness, motor planning)				
Tactile				
Sight				
Hearing				
Smell				
Taste				

The profile may show ticks in both under responsive and over responsive for the same sense, this can be common. For example, your child may crave deep hugs/pressure but dislike light touch (clothing, tickles etc).

If this is the case, consider what behaviour you have observed and what this behaviour might be trying to achieve (avoiding, seeking, not registering, overload).

SUMMARY

What is indicated as an area of difficulty?
What advice are you going to give to home? 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
What advice are you going to provide for school? 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Date of review? Who will review? How will a review be carried out? E.G. Telephone

Adapted from Autism West Midlands UK Sensory Profile 2014