



FACT SHEET: SENSORY PROCESSING – IDEAS FOR SCHOOL

PROPRIOCEPTION – The sense of body awareness

Proprioception is one of your child's senses. Messages from the proprioceptors in muscles let her know what position his body is in, as well as the force of the movement her body makes. In addition, proprioception helps her body organise itself for useful activity and enhances the therapeutic nature of our sensory activities. It makes meaning of the environment and our actions within it.

Proprioceptive input also has a calming effect and helps to organise the nervous system in order to concentrate better. It has been reported in research that even 5 to 10 minutes of an activity that involves the whole body in heavy muscle and joint movement can have an effect lasting up to 2 hours.

Purposes of the activities:

- Calm herself, and reduce fidgeting
- Do large and small motor skills
- Attend to tasks (focus and concentrate)
- Increase eye contact
- Assist with organising his movements and perceptions

Things to try at school:

- Any heavy work or play activity which provides resistance e.g. climbing, crawling, pushing heavy toys
- The child can be "helper" by pushing carts of books or putting books away, pushing barrels of balls or boxes or toys to tidy-up or moving chairs for activities.
- Bouncing on a trampoline
- Playing football
- Jumping as high as possible
- When the child fidgets or becomes agitated and frustrated, gently place both hands on her shoulders and press downwards, while talking calmly to her for a few seconds.
- Use a water bottle with a sturdy straw to encourage sucking action. This is organising and helps to calm her