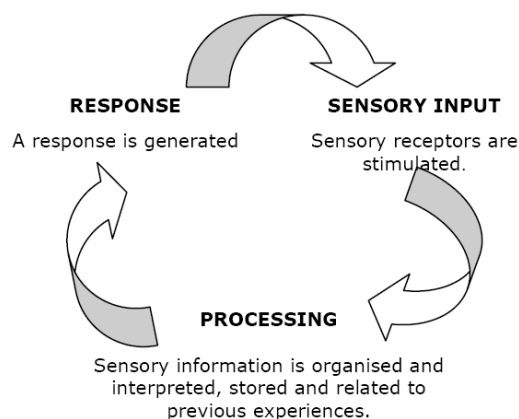


Sensory Processing

What is sensory processing?

Sensory processing refers to the way the brain responds to messages (input) from the environment (external) or from the body (internal). Input is received through the sensory systems. In addition to the five familiar sensory systems of hearing (auditory), sight (vision), touch (tactile), taste (gustatory) and smell (olfactory) there are two further sensory systems, movement/balance (vestibular) and body awareness (proprioception). Messages are sent to the brain where the information is processed. This usually causes a response or change in behaviour. The way in which the brain processes sensory information can impact on behaviour – some experiences can be calming, whilst others can be exciting or upsetting. Research has shown that some children e.g. children with autism, process sensory information differently. They may be over- (hyper-) sensitive or under- (hypo-) sensitive to sensory input. Understanding how a child processes sensory information will inform plans to support their learning.



See related SEND Useful Tips:

- Using a [sensory audit](#) or checklist to identify environmental factors which may be impacting on a child's behaviour.
- Consider adjustments to the environment to minimise any behaviour triggers.
- Create a sensory profile of an individual child to identify sensory preferences.
- Create a sensory area, such as a calm down space.
- Providing opportunities for sensory play.

Useful reading:

[Making Sense of Sensory Behaviour](#)