

CLASSROOM IMPLICATIONS

Oculomotor

- When eyes do not work together (*eye teaming or binocularity*), you may see an increase in fatigue, squinting, or rubbing eyes.
- When eyes do not *track* together, a child may miss words, skip lines, or lose his/her place.
- A child who has difficulty with *smooth eye function* may have real difficulty copying work from the board or from a book to paper.

Visual Perception

- When a child has *visual-spatial* problems, he/she may lose his/her place when copying from the board.
- A child with *visual-spatial* problems may have difficulty with size, shape, and spacing.
- A child with *visual-spatial* problems may have trouble locating things in desk, classroom, equipment, supplies, jacket, or lunchbox.
- A child with *visual-spatial* defects may be unable to do worksheets that have too much on a page.
- A child with *figure ground* perception difficulties will have a hard time seeing the important information from the unimportant background; may have difficulty with too many problems on a work sheet, too much information on a book page, or a cluttered blackboard.
- A child (after age 8-9) who continues to reverse letters may have a problem with *position in space*.

Low Muscle Tone

- When general body muscle tone is low, a child may display poor posture, slump in chair, or rest head on arm or desk -- reducing alertness and ability to complete class work.
- A child with poor muscle tone may appear lazy since he/she has to use so much energy to try to complete activities and so much effort to keep his/her body together.
- It is important to remember a child with poor sensory integration has to use 9 times the amount of energy to complete what others can do so easily ~1 hour of work for us can be like 9 hours for this child. 1 minute to us is 9 minutes for him/her.

Decreased Trunk and Neck Stability

- A child who lacks trunk and neck stability will be less successful with written work since hand function depends upon shoulder-trunk stability.

Crossing Midline/Laterality/Sequencing/Bilateral Coordination

- When a child lacks spontaneous midline crossing, you may see incomplete work, an increase in body shifting, or switching hands during a task.
- A child who has not developed hand preference may use his/her left hand sometimes and his/her right hand at other times.
- A child who lacks the internal sense of L-R (laterality) will have difficulty with learning L-R in objects in the environment and will lack necessary L-R progression for reading and writing.
- When a child has directionality problems (L-R problems), he may start in the middle of a page, or work in a random manner.
- A child with sequencing problems may hear only the last direction given, or only the first, and may appear not to listen.
- A child with problems in bilateral coordination may have trouble with skipping, jumping jacks, clapping, or stringing beads.
- A child with bilateral integration problems may not use one hand as helper in tasks; e.g., holding paper with non-dominant hand while writing or holding paper while cutting.

Hand Grasp and Hand Control

- A child with poorly developed hand grasp will have extreme difficulty with paper/pencil tasks.
- A child who has poor hand control may tire quickly during written work, may get sloppier as he works on a task.
- A child with poor fine motor development may have difficulty using classroom tools: scissors, rulers, pencils, crayons, and hole punch.

Reflex Development

- A child who lacks integration of early reflex patterns may appear clumsy.
- A child who lacks good integration of early reflex patterns may appear clumsy on the playground, in P.E., or when riding toys.
- A child with poorly developed protective responses may have difficulty catching himself/herself when falling.

Sensory Processing

- A child with *motor planning* problems may appear to be very clumsy or inept -- unable to do what you perceive as very simple motor activities; e.g., difficulty using tools, opening different types of fasteners, or managing new movement activities.
- When muscle and joint receptors don't give proper *feedback* so child knows how hard to press pencil, you may see extreme pressure, very light pressure, or fluctuating pressure.
- A child with "*gravitational insecurity*" (grounded to the earth) may appear to have silly or unreasonable fears that might be evident when the child steps on or off the bus, or plays on playground equipment.
- A child who is *fearful of movement* or is "earth bound" may stay with adult instead of playing on playground.
- A child with *hyper responsiveness* or *sensory defensiveness* may have startle reflex or fear a toilet flushing, school bell, sirens, fire drill, intercom, buzz of fluorescent fan, or air conditioners.
- A child with *sensory defensiveness* may appear as if he/she does not listen.
- A child with problems with his/her *tactile (touch) system* may always seem to chew on his/her clothes, or put things in his/her mouth.
- A child with tactile problems may seem to touch everything.
- A child with *tactile defensiveness* may have a very hard time in close contact situations; e.g., in a line, sitting in a group on the floor, desk too close, people coming up unexpectedly - especially from behind.

Sensory Processing (cont'd.)

- A child with *tactile defensiveness* may have trouble with certain textures -- clothing, foods, even temperatures -- may be very fidgety, or may want to have a jacket on all day (even when it is hot).
- A child with *tactile defensiveness* may avoid any "dirty or messy" activities: finger paints, clay, sand play, or glue.
- A child with *tactile defensiveness* may have difficulty standing in a line or sitting near others in a group.
- A child who is *hyper responsive visually* may react aversely to fluorescent lighting or bright colors.
- A child whose *vestibular system over reacts* may become "carsick" from the bus ride.
- A child whose *vestibular system* (inner ear mechanism reacting to movement, gravity, speed, direction) is *under-active* may seek out extra input by head rocking, head shaking, body rocking.
- A child with an *under-active vestibular system* may appear weak, lethargic, floppy tone, with low endurance.
- A child whose *internal arousal/alerting system* is not working well may seem very lethargic or overly fidgety - unable to focus in on what is relevant in class.
- A child who is *disorganized internally* (poor sense of control over his/her own body) will have extreme difficulty organizing externals in the environment (his desk, papers, school tools, or time).