

Signs of Sensory Under-Responsivity (Hyposensitivity)

Auditory

- Little or no vocalizing/babbling as an infant.
- Often speaks in a loud voice and/or excessively.
- Likes excessively loud music, games, TV.
- Difficulty with verbal cues or to name being called.
- Difficulty understanding or remembering what was said.
- Needs instructions repeated often, or will say, "What?" frequently.
- Talks self through a task, often out loud.
- Appears oblivious to certain sounds.
- Often disoriented/confused about where a sound is coming from.

Olfactory

- Fails to notice or ignores noxious odors.
- Excessively smells new objects, toys, people.
- Has difficulty discriminating unpleasant odors.
- May drink or eat things that are harmful/poisonous because they do not notice the noxious smell.
- Unable to identify smells from scratch 'n sniff stickers.

Tactile

- May crave touch, needs to touch everything and everyone.
- May be self-abusive; pinching, biting, cutting, or head-banging.
- Has a high pain tolerance.
- Likes to put objects in their mouth.
- Seeks out surfaces and textures that provide strong tactile feedback.
- Often is not aware of being touched/ bumped unless done with extreme force or intensity.
- Often injures self; burns, cuts, bruises because harmful act does not register.
- May not be aware that hands or face are dirty or feel his/her nose running.
- Frequently and unknowingly hurts other children or pets while playing.
- Repeatedly touches surfaces or objects that are soothing.
- Seeks out messy play.

Taste

- May eat inedible objects such as dirt, chalk, crayons (Pica).
- Prefers foods with intense flavor – excessively spicy, sweet, sour, or salty.
- Frequently chews hair, shirt, fingers.
- Constantly puts objects in mouth, even past the toddler years.
- Likes brushing teeth/vibrating toothbrushes and even trips to the dentist.



Visual

- Complains about “seeing double.”
- Writes at a slant (up or down hill) on a page.
- Difficulty copying.
- Fatigues easily with reading, writing, drawing, video games, etc.
- Often loses their place while reading or doing math problems.
- Difficulty finding differences in pictures, words, symbols, or objects.
- Difficulty seeing the “big picture”; focuses on the details or patterns within the picture.
- Difficulty with following and tracking objects with eyes.
- Difficulty judging spatial relationships in the environment; bumps into objects/people or missteps on curbs and stairs.
- Has difficulty telling the difference between similar printed letters or figures (p & q, b & d, + and x, or square and rectangle).
- Makes reversals in words or letters when copying, or reads words backwards (“was” for “saw” and “no” for “on”) after first grade.

Vestibular

- Appears to be in constant motion, can't seem to sit still.
- Loves to swing or spin; can do for long periods.
- Craves fast movement; always running, jumping, hopping instead of walking.
- Loves fast moving and spinning rides at amusement parks.
- Must rock, shakes legs, or move head when sitting.
- Likes jumping on furniture, trampolines, spinning in a swivel chair, or getting into upside down positions.
- Tends to be a “thrill-seeker”; dangerous at times.

Proprioception

- Seeks out jumping, bumping, and crashing activities; loves roughhousing, tackling, wrestling.
- Kicks feet on floor or chair while sitting at desk/table.
- Prefers tight clothing; likes heavy blankets.
- Likes to be squeezed/hugged tightly.
- Clenches or grinds teeth.
- Likes to push, pinch, bump, hit others.
- Likes to chew on things such as lip, straws, pencils, shirt collar/sleeve, etc.
- Loves jumping off high structures/furniture.
- Frequently falls on floor intentionally.