

The background features a soft, light purple-to-white gradient. Scattered across the surface are numerous realistic water droplets of various sizes, some with highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. In the center of the image, there is a bright, circular light flare with a soft, ethereal glow.

SENSORY PROCESSING

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD IN MEETING THEIR SENSORY NEEDS

WHAT IS SENSORY PROCESSING?

- HOW INFORMATION WE RECEIVE FROM OUR EIGHT SENSES IS NOTICED, SORTED, AND USED BY OUR BRAIN.
- THE **8 SENSES** ARE:
 1. **VISUAL (SIGHT):** THE ABILITY TO SEE AND PERCEIVE LIGHT.
 2. **AUDITORY (SOUND):** THE ABILITY TO HEAR AND PROCESS SOUNDS.
 3. **OLFACTORY (SMELL):** THE ABILITY TO DETECT AND IDENTIFY ODOURS.
 4. **TACTILE (TOUCH):** THE ABILITY TO FEEL PRESSURE, TEMPERATURE, AND PAIN THROUGH THE SKIN.
 5. **GUSTATORY (TASTE):** THE ABILITY TO PERCEIVE FLAVOURS THROUGH TASTE BUDS.
 6. **PROPRIOCEPTION:** THE SENSE OF BODY POSITION AND MOVEMENT IN SPACE.
 7. **VESTIBULAR:** THE SENSE OF BALANCE AND SPATIAL ORIENTATION.
 8. **INTEROCEPTION:** THE ABILITY TO SENSE INTERNAL BODY STATES, SUCH AS HUNGER AND THIRST.
- FOR SOME CHILDREN THEIR SENSORY DEVELOPMENT IS DIFFERENT, THIS MAY MEAN THAT THEY STRUGGLE TO TAKE PART IN EVERYDAY CHILDHOOD ACTIVITIES.

WHAT ARE SENSORY PROCESSING DIFFERENCES?

- VARIATIONS IN HOW THE BRAIN INTERPRETS AND RESPONDS TO SENSORY INFORMATION FROM THE WORLD AROUND THEM
- HYPERSENSITIVE (OVER RESPONSIVE TO SENSORY STIMULUS)
- HYPOSENSITIVE (UNDER RESPONSIVE TO SENSORY STIMULUS)

SOMERSET'S STANCE ON SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER

- **SOMERSET COUNCIL DO NOT RECOGNISE USE THE TERM SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER?**
- SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE DIAGNOSTIC MANUAL AS A STANDALONE DISORDER. AS A DIAGNOSIS CANNOT BE GIVEN, WE THEREFORE CANNOT ASSESS FOR IT. OUR POSITION IS SUPPORTED BY THE [RCOT](#) – THE GOVERNING BODY FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS IN THE UK.
- THE SENSORY DIFFICULTIES THAT SOME CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCE ARE OFTEN PART OF A WIDER PICTURE OF NEURODIVERSITY AND ARE PARTICULARLY ASSOCIATED WITH CONDITIONS SUCH AS AUTISM OR **ADHD**.

HOW ARE SENSORY PROCESSING DIFFERENCES MANIFESTED?

- FOOD
- MOVEMENT AND BALANCE
- SOCIAL SITUATIONS AND DAILY LIFE
- STRESS AND ANXIETY

HOW TO SUPPORT A CHILD WHO HAS SENSORY PROCESSING DIFFERENCES

- **SUPPORT THE PERSON AND THOSE AROUND THEM TO UNDERSTAND THEIR NEEDS**

- BECOME A SENSORY DETECTIVE
- ESTABLISH ROUTINES
- CREATE A SENSORY DIET
- OFFER HEAVY WORK ACTIVITIES & WEIGHTED ITEMS
- ADDRESS CLOTHING SENSITIVITY
- PROVIDE ORAL FEEDBACK

- **MAKE ADAPTATIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

- CREATE A CALMING SENSORY SPACE
- USE VISUAL SUPPORTS
- PROVIDE MOVEMENT EQUIPMENT
- SENSORY BINS
- EXPOSURE TO TRICKY TEXTURES
- REDUCE NOISE / INCORPORATE WHITE NOISE
- MANAGE SMELLS IN THE ENVIRONMENT
- MINIMISE VISUAL CLUTTER

UNIVERSAL PROVISION IN SCHOOL

WRITING SLOPES

RANGE OF PENCIL GRIPS/PENCILS

FINGER EXERCISES/THERAPUTTY

DIFFERENTIATED HANDWRITING PRACTICE

HEARING/VISUAL AIDS AND EQUIPMENT

PROPRIOCEPTIVE SUPPORT RESOURCES (RANGE)

PLANNED CLASS MOVEMENT BREAKS

DISCO DOUGH

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES E.G. IPADS AND VISUALISERS

MODIFIED MATERIALS E.G. FONT SIZE

CLEAR COMMUNICATION FOR HEARING IMPAIRMENT

CALM CLASSROOM WITH REDUCED VISUAL AND AUDITORY CLUTTER

PROMOTING SELF CARE – PROMPTING WATER, FUEL, TOILETING

ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENT, SLOPES, POWER DOORS ETC.

SEN SUPPORT PROVISION IN SCHOOL

THERAPUTTY

PROPRIOCEPTIVE RESOURCES: CUSHION, WEDGES ETC

OT SUPPORT/CARE PLAN

SENSORY RESOURCES: SLOPING BOARD ETC

PLANNED INDIVIDUAL MOVEMENT BREAKS

SENSORY ART THERAPY

HEALTH CARE PLAN

EXTRA SPACE IN THE CLASSROOM

MOBILITY AIDS WHERE NECESSARY

HIGH NEEDS PROVISION IN SCHOOL

1:1 COORDINATION PROGRAMME
TOILETING SUPPORT
SCHOOL NURSE
OT CARE PLAN
CONTINENCE NURSE REFERRAL
LEARN TO MOVE GROUP
INDIVIDUAL TARGETS
ITS FACT FILE TARGETS
PEEP/RISK ASSESSMENT
NDP REFERRAL

WHAT ABOUT SENSORY INTEGRATION THERAPY?

- COMMON APPROACHES ARE AYRES SENSORY INTEGRATION OR SENSORY INTEGRATION THERAPY
- INTENSIVE AND DIRECT WORK WITH A CHILD
- AIMS TO CHANGE HOW THE BRAIN NOTICES AND PROCESSES SENSORY INFORMATION

- LITTLE EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THIS THERAPY
- REMAINS HEAVILY DEBATED AND POORLY EVIDENCED
- **SOMERSET DO NOT ROUTINELY PROVIDE THIS THERAPY**

WHERE CAN PARENTS SEEK SUPPORT?

- **SOMERSET PARENT CARER FORUM LIBRARY**
- **WISE UP WORKSHOPS**
- **SOMERSET SENSORY PROCESSING HANDBOOK**

WHEN TO SEEK PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

- SCHOOL CAN COMPLETE A REFERRAL TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S THERAPY SERVICE FOLLOWING A ROBUST GRADUATED RESPONSE
- ALTERNATIVELY PARENTS CAN CONTACT THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S THERAPY SERVICE ADVICE LINE

0303 033 3002

(BETWEEN 9AM AND MIDDAY (EXCEPT BANK HOLIDAYS) MONDAYS, TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND THURSDAYS. THE ADVICE LINE IS FOR BOTH PROFESSIONALS AND PARENT CARERS)