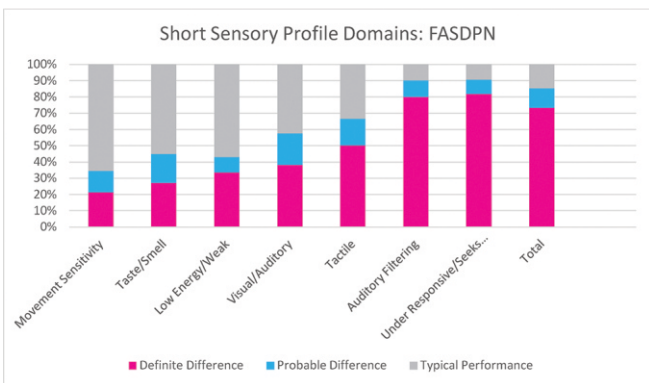


## Prevalence of Sensory Processing Behaviours in Children Living with FASD.



(Source: Jirikowic 2020)

Growing evidence suggests that children living with FASD may benefit from a sensory-based intervention guided with clinical assessments to assist with improving self-regulatory behaviours

(Hansen & Jirikowic, 2013).

For school aged children, be involved in their IEP (Individualised Education Program) meetings and advocate for the needs of the client and their family

(O'Malley & Savage, 2013).

Give immediate feedback (whether it's positive or negative) regarding their emotional regulation. They will often not understand consequences for an action that happened earlier in the day, so consequences and feedback need to be immediate.

Pregnant, planning or could be - alcohol exposure is a risk to the healthy development of a baby.

**There is no safe time. There is no safe amount.**

For the latest information regarding NHMRC guidelines regarding alcohol and pregnancy please visit;

[www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

## FASD Toolkit for Australian Parents, Caregivers and Families



A comprehensive guide with links to many resources to help families navigate FASD in Australia.

Available for free download at

[www.nofasd.org.au/parents-carers-and-families/resources](http://www.nofasd.org.au/parents-carers-and-families/resources)

Further Information

A full reference list is available at [www.nofasd.org.au](http://www.nofasd.org.au)

Produced by the National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (NOFASD) Australia.

Contact us to book your Information Session or Train it Forward workshop.

# FASD

## Sensory Processing Strategies



Email us: [admin@nofasd.org.au](mailto:admin@nofasd.org.au)  
or call us on: **1800 860 613**

NOFASD Australia is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Health.

For more information, visit [www.nofasd.org.au](http://www.nofasd.org.au)  
or call **1800 860 613**

# Supporting the Sensory System

## What is sensory integration?

Sensory integration is a neurological process that organises the sensations both from within the body, and from the outside environment. It is this process that enables a person to function effectively in their surrounding environment.

## What is sensory processing?

Every moment of every day we are absorbing information through our senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste.

Our senses also help with movement and body awareness. Nerves throughout our body take in sensory information, and our brain processes the information, and tells us to respond, or ignore, stimulations.

People with FASD who experience sensory processing issues, may experience sensory overload. This can manifest as tantrums or emotional outbursts (Carr et al., 2010).

## Sensory Processing Strategies

### Smell



- Avoid using items with a strong aroma, such as perfumes, shampoo, soap, household detergents, and cleaning products
- Using natural essential oils, blended to suit individual requirements, can create a calming effect
- Ensure the environment has an efficient airflow to prevent stagnant air

### Sight



- Use sunglasses when outdoors
- Use low wattage light globes
- Use dark window furnishings
- Choose calming colours for furnishing and decoration
- Change the settings on electronic devices to reduce blue light

### Sound



- Use noise-cancelling headphones to help reduce background noises
- If using transition techniques, such as visual aids or verbal notification, let the person know in advance of any expected auditory changes in their environment

### Taste



- Avoid using spices, herbs, excess sugar, salt or bitter flavours in recipes
- Offer neutral - tasting foods such as bread, pasta, rice, and plain crackers
- If recipes include several ingredients, identify which flavours, smells and textures are unpalatable, e.g., onion, dairy products, grains, proteins etc.

### Touch



- Remove tags on clothing
- Identify comfortable fabrics for clothing, bedding and towels
- Have a variety of different textured items and tactile activities available for keeping hands busy, e.g., playdough, clay, Lego, slime, various fabrics, fidget spinners, etc

### Proprioception / Movement



- Engage in gross motor activities such as running, climbing, jumping, skipping, or any games that require physical movement
- Using a weighted blanket or vest can help with grounding and can reduce fidgeting
- Visit a park with a variety of equipment on which to climb, swing or slide on.
- Engage in exercises or games that cross the midline

### Vestibular / Balance



- Engage in balancing activities, such as hopping, bike and scooter riding, and skating
- Engage in exercises or games that cross the midline.

## What is hypersensitivity?

People who are hypersensitive may feel, hear, taste and smell everything intensely. For example, the sensation of tags on clothing. Rubbing against skin, activates neural receptors in the skin, leaving the person feeling irritated frustrated, upset and with a loss of focus. Hypersensitive people can also experience light sensitivity.

## What is hyposensitivity?

Hyposensitivity is a description for under-sensitivity and difficulty processing physical sensations from inside and outside of the body. For example, hyposensitive sensory processing inhibits the feeling of pain, and sensations of hot or cold, which can be a concern of safety. Hyposensitive people may need to seek tactile sensory stimulation through touching objects and other people.