

A Sensory Life

Consideration of Sensory Processing Deficits Pain and Temperature Precautions and Safety Guidelines

Children with sensory processing challenges and difficulties tend to over or under-register sensation. This includes the sensations of pain and temperature, which are part of the tactile system. It is not uncommon for a child with sensory challenges to lack the feeling of pain or the ability to detect extreme temperature differences.

Important Points to Consider:

- If a parent informs you of this deficit (under-registration of pain or temperature) be sure to use a watchful eye when the child is playing outdoors on playground equipment.
- Monitor closely in extreme weather, hot or cold
- The child may not be able to identify when they are on the brink of overheating or frostbite. Be sure the child is dressed accordingly.
- A child can quite possibly break a bone and not feel the pain.
- If a child has a serious fall or accident it is important to watch for physical signs of injury, such as redness, swelling, or bleeding.
- A head injury (such as a concussion) is particularly of concern for these children. Watch for physical signs: change in pupil dilation or one eye being more dilated than the other, dizziness, drowsiness, nausea, etc
- Keep this safety concern in mind when the child is in the kitchen. The child may touch a burner and not detect that it is hot, therefore lacking the instinct and reaction to quickly pull the hand or arm away, resulting in a serious burn.
- Supervise closely during any water play where the child has access to the hot and cold faucets.
- Most importantly, respect this sensory deficit as real and a serious matter. Please share this handout with others.

