

WHAT IS SENSORY OVERLOAD?

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WHEN A CHILD'S BRAIN GETS MORE SENSORY INPUT THAN IT CAN HANDLE, IT CAN FEEL OVERWHELMING.



TOO MUCH IN, TOO FAST

Everyday sights, sounds, touches, smells, or movement can build up quickly. When there's too much, the brain struggles to process it all at once.

Examples of sensory input:

- Loud noises or background chatter
- Bright lights or busy environments
- Strong smells or certain textures
- Crowded spaces or nonstop movement
- Unexpected changes or too many things happening at once

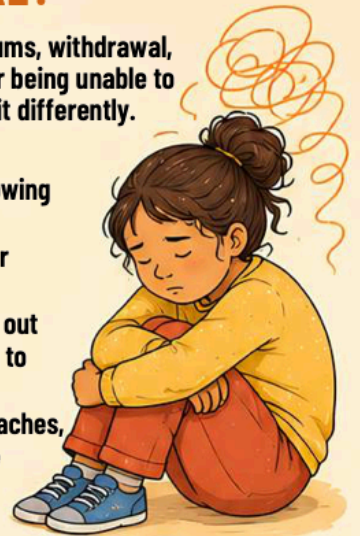


WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

It can look like crying, tantrums, withdrawal, covering ears, meltdowns, or being unable to focus. Each child shows it differently.

You might notice:

- Trouble listening or following directions
- Irritability, frustration, or sudden outbursts
- Shutting down or zoning out
- Restlessness or needing to escape
- Physical signs like headaches, tummy aches, or fatigue



THEY ARE NOT MISBEHAVING

Sensory overload is not attention-seeking or defiance. It's their nervous system saying: **"I need help managing this."**



WHY DOES IT HAPPEN?

Some children are more sensitive to sensory information. It can be linked to:

AUTISM

ADHD

ANXIETY

TRAUMA

SENSORY PROCESSING DIFFERENCES

Their brain and nervous system take in more information, or have a harder time filtering what isn't important. This makes them more likely to feel overwhelmed in everyday situations.



WHAT HELPS?

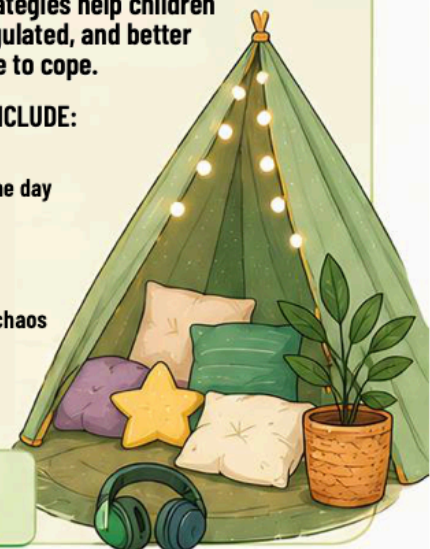
Supportive environments and consistent strategies help children feel safe, regulated, and better able to cope.

HELPFUL STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

- Calm, predictable routines
- Sensory breaks throughout the day
- Movement and heavy-work activities
- Deep pressure or quiet time
- Limiting noise, crowds, and chaos
- Choices and preparation for transitions
- Understanding and patience



Small supports can make a big difference.



KINDNESS + UNDERSTANDING = CONNECTION

When we understand sensory overload, we can support children with compassion, patience, and the right tools to feel safe and in control again.



Every child deserves to feel safe in their world.

LET'S CREATE IT TOGETHER.