



SENSORY ISSUES

FASD BEHAVIOURS

- Children with FASD often have problems with the way they interpret sensory information.
- They may be so focused on what they hear, see or feel on their skin that they can't focus on other things. Or they may shut down or act out/act badly as they try to stop the thing that is bothering them.
- Often as the environmental stimulus increases or decreases, so does your child's behaviour.
- Therefore, changing the environment can help to change your child's behaviour.

STRATEGIES

- **Try to find out what your child is reacting to:** So that you can help them avoid what's causing them trouble.
- **Be proactive:** If your child is hyper-sensitive to light or noise, keep sunglasses or headphones on hand.
- **Make adaptations in the environment:** Depending on the sensitivity, for example: use dim lighting, go to the mall at quiet times of the day, turn down the radio volume, wash new clothing before wearing, use soft bedding, remove clothing tags.
- **Use "fidget items":** When a child is expected to sit and pay attention, give them an object or toy to hold (such as a stress ball, bean bag, anything bendable or twistable). By moving fingers, a child can stay calmer and focus more readily.

Children with FASD may show signs of being hyper-sensitive (feeling things too much) or hypo-sensitive (not feeling things enough) to the senses of touch, taste, smell, sight, and sound.

Hyper-sensitive: Children easily feel everything, e.g., clothing tags scratch, bright sunlight blinds, spicy food burns, loud noises scare.

Hypo-sensitive: Children have a difficult time feeling anything, e.g., not feeling hot or cold, high pain thresholds.

QUICK TIPS

- TEACH YOUR CHILD TO RECOGNIZE HIS SENSORY ISSUES AND ENCOURAGE HIM TO ASK FOR THINGS THAT WILL HELP DECREASE THE EFFECT OF THE THINGS THAT BOTHER HIM.
- AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST MAY BE ABLE TO SUGGEST MORE SPECIFIC METHODS TO REDUCE YOUR CHILD'S SENSITIVITIES.

