

Emerge



A Child's Place

Oct. 18, 2006

Occupational Therapy
Speech Therapy

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Serving children from birth
to 14 years old

Using therapy to improve
conditions such as:

Delayed Speech
Dyspraxia
Speech Impairments
Non-communicative Speech
Oral/Verbal Apraxia
Language Disorders
Feeding Difficulties
Autism/Asperger's/PDD
Developmental Delay
Cerebral Palsy
Sensory Integration
Disorders
Sensory Modulation
Disorders
Handwriting Impairments
Fine & Gross Motor Delays

A Private, Independent
Provider

www.EmergeAChildsPlace.com

Addressing Parental Concerns Over Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)



Bonnie Hacker, OT
Founder / Director

- A young child repeatedly spins around violently, literally bouncing off walls and other children. The child's age peers avoid him in all social settings.
- A 3-year-old hates hugs from her own parents and screams wildly when her mother brushes her hair.
- A four-year-old moves awkwardly, appears to fear the swing set, and refuses to eat all but the blandest of foods.

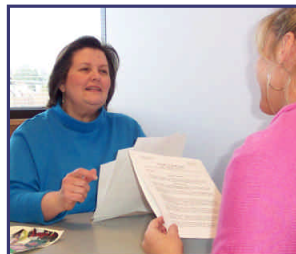
Parents will want answers about these types of behavior and similar but less severe presentations. Doctors frequently diagnose these behaviors as sensory processing disorder, also known as sensory integration dysfunction. Parents appreciate discussion of this condition, because it gives them a logical model for understanding problem behavior, and it opens an avenue for proactive, corrective therapies.

The prevailing theory holds that dysfunctional neurological pathways in the brain's cortex prevent SP disordered individuals from processing sensory input normally, especially sensory input that is tactile, proprioceptive, or vestibular. One physiologic study suggests a deficit in the central nervous system arousal regulation. Electrodermal responses to stimulation were absent or exaggerated in children with sensory modulation disorder, and electrodermal responses habituated to repeated stimulation more slowly than with normal children (Dev. Med. Child Neurol. 41{9}: 608-15, 1999.). Abnormal processing can result in functional deficits such as inefficient motor planning and/or inefficient language output. The sensory dysfunction can also trigger inappropriate emotional reactions such as tantrums or withdrawal.

As with many developmental disorders, the exact neurological components are not known, comorbidities are common, and debate exists as to whether the condition should be considered primary or secondary. Common comorbidities include autism, asperger's syndrome, anxiety disorders, fetal alcohol syndrome, fragile x syndrome, communication disorders, developmental disorders, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. However, physicians often diagnose SPD without these comorbidities. While medical journals commonly list SPD as a possible difficulty for children, neither the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) nor the International Classification of Disease (ICD) currently list an insurance code for SPD. At Emerge, SPD services are billed as occupational therapy, where in the concepts of sensory processing/integration are integrated into the therapy sessions. As a result, some parents will find that they are able to file and receive at least partial coverage for therapy services. Families will find Emerge - A Child's Place well suited to address difficulties, whether or not medical insurance covers the services.

Signs of Sensory Processing Disorder

- Tactile hyperactivity
- Intolerance of groups
- Strong reaction to loud noises
- Only eats bland foods
- Discomfort with activities requiring balance: bicycling, climbing
- Reacts aggressively to touch
- Runs and crashes into objects and people
- Fails to maintain eye contact
- Withdrawals from social situations



Bonnie Hacker, OT brings nearly three decades of experience in pediatric therapy.

The occupational therapists of **Emerge** specialize in pediatrics and have extensive training and experience in the evaluation and treatment of SPD. **Emerge** provides pediatric occupational therapy creatively tailored for each child's unique needs. Therapists address the sensory processing foundations, functional skill development, emotional regulation, and social skills that will equip children to be successful in community, home and school environments. **At Emerge, parents typically begin to see very positive outcomes from occupational therapy in as little as one to two months.**

**Please tell parents about Emerge - A Child's Place
Believing in a Child's Potential to Flourish**