Book Study

Understanding Sensory Processing Disorders in Children by Matt Mielnick

OCALI Autism Center

Chapter 1

1. The author describes how our sensory system works and the messages that each of our senses send out. What happens when our sensory system does not process these messages efficiently? What impact does this have on our ability to learn and function on a daily basis?

2. Explain how the vestibular and proprioceptive systems work. Describe the relationship between these systems and your brain.

3. Sensory processing is the series of actions by which the brain takes in information, interprets the information and then develops a response. The responses and ability to self-regulate in young children can vary. What sensory challenges have you noticed exist in some of your students who struggle with self-regulation?

Chapter 2

1. Describe the differences between a child with a low sensory threshold and a child with a high sensory threshold.

2. What types of sensory-based behaviors might a child with a high sensory threshold engage in?

3. Think of a student in your preschool classroom who is a sensory seeker (needs frequent movement, fidgety, crashes into furniture, etc.) and choose an activity or routine that happens daily in your classroom. What are some strategies that you can provide during this activity or routine so the student may have better focus, engagement and participation?

4. Choose one of the three case studies reflecting a high sensory threshold from pp. 35-68 (Carl, Ilya, and Alex). With the support of an occupational therapist, what are some possible sensory interventions that could be included in a sensory diet for this particular child, and explain why you chose those strategies?

5. What are some of the behavioral manifestations you might see in a child with a low sensory threshold?

6. If you have students with sensory sensitivities, which includes being easily distracted and unable to filter out unimportant information in their immediate environment, what might be some strategies to help support their sensory registration and self-regulation difficulties? Provide 2- 3 examples.

7. What are some of the noticeable behavioral consequences resulting from a sensory aversive child? Give one example for each of the senses.

Chapter 3

1. What should you do and what should you not do if you suspect a child in your program has sensory processing disorder?

Chapter 4

1. What can we do to support families in the home environment when it comes to understanding their child with sensory processing disorder?

2. The author provided many suggestions for the preschool classroom to support students with fine motor difficulties and sensory needs. Provide 2-3 examples of accommodations you might try with some of your students for each of the following: Circle Time; Movement; and Play.