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MOSAIC MINDS

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MIDWEST

Autism & Therapy Center

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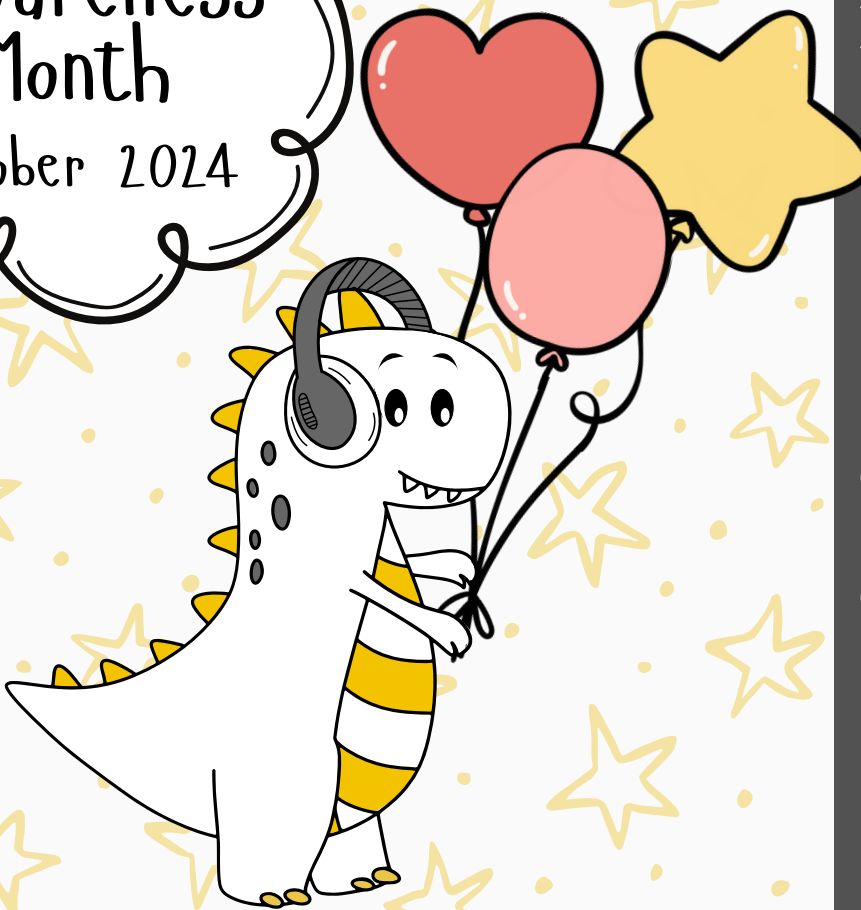
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Read this issue
and more online!



Sensory
Awareness
Month
October 2024





CELEBRATING SENSORY PROCESSING AWARENESS MONTH

October is Sensory Processing Awareness Month which means it's a great time for us to share the basics of sensory processing (i.e. how our bodies interpret stimuli)! It's common for kiddos on the Spectrum to face challenges with sensory processing in one way or another so, we're here to help you identify signs of sensory processing challenges and offer some strategies to support your child.

LET'S START WITH THE BASICS - WHAT IS SENSORY PROCESSING?

Sensory processing is a fancy term to describe how our bodies and brains make sense of the world around us. It's an essential part of our development, learning, and psychological well-being that helps us understand our environments and develop cognitive and social intelligence.

So how does this affect your child? Sensory processing helps children with some pretty important skills including:

- Identifying and managing their emotions
- Developing their sense of self
- Process challenging experiences
- Adapting and transitioning through activities
- And more!

When sensory processing is delayed, it can affect your child's ability to grow in these key developmental areas.

NOW, HOW ARE SENSORY PROCESSING AND AUTISM TIED TOGETHER?

Individuals on the Autism Spectrum tend to experience both hypersensitivity (over-responsiveness) and hyposensitivity (under-responsiveness) to a wide range of stimuli. Some have a combination of both because everyone's brain develops differently. For example, one child on the Spectrum might love the texture of foods like pudding or yogurt, whereas another child might struggle with that particular sensation. As Einstein might say, it's all relative.

Some examples of examples of sensory processing challenges can include:

- Sensitivity to noise levels (often indicated by covering ears in loud environments).
- Strong aversion to certain foods because of the texture, taste or smell.
- Discomfort from clothing tags or with certain fabrics.

Understanding sensory processing is critical for supporting your kiddo - whether they are on the Spectrum or not! Keep reading to find more helpful tips and tricks with this article. We hope to help you notice issues early and take action and help your child navigate sensory challenges.





SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S SENSORY PROCESSING NEEDS

As parents, our goal is to create a safe and supportive environment to help our children grow. Here are a few strategies to work with your child's sensory processing needs.



1. CREATE AN AT-HOME SENSORY ROOM

This is a safe space for your child to escape from the sometimes overwhelming stimuli they might encounter at home (think a crying sibling or unfamiliar visitors). To create a sensory room, dedicate a small space, like a play tent or home-office, to be the "sensory-friendly zone". Based on your child's preferences, you can fill the space with items like soft blankets, noise cancelling headphones, fidget toys, sensory vests, etc. Empower them to use this space when they need a break from whatever is triggering sensory overload. (P.S. Stay tuned for additional recommendations in our upcoming post "Creating a Sensory Room at Home".)

2. ESTABLISH COPING SKILLS

Work with your child to establish coping skills (pro-tip, your ABA therapy team can help with this too!). We can't always avoid the things that trigger sensory processing challenges, but with coping skills and communication, we can help reduce their affects. For example, if your family is attending a birthday party, bring noise cancelling headphones for your child incase other guests get too loud for their liking. This can help avoid or reduce both physical discomfort and emotional stress for your child.

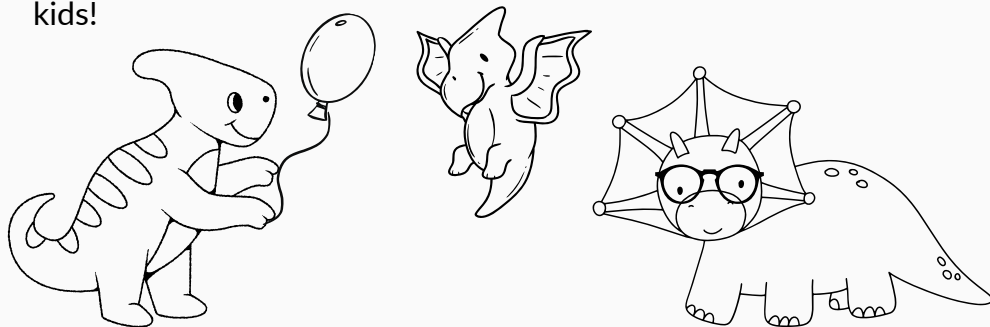


3. INCORPORATE SENSORY ACTIVITIES INTO DAILY ROUTINES

Not all sensory input is bad. There are many sensory experiences that are hugely beneficial for your child. Fidget toys, water tables, slime and music makers are all examples of items that stimulate sensory processing in a positive way!

4. ATTEND SENSORY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

As awareness for Autism and other sensory-processing disorders increases, so do the number of sensory-friendly events. Many venues like libraries, fairs and community centers have dedicated sensory friendly hours for those on the Spectrum. Here, your child can practice their coping skills in a regulated environment and you can connect with other parents working on the same skills with their kids!





PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR SENSORY PROCESSING

[Applied Behavior Analysis \(ABA\) therapy](#) (aka the “gold-standard” in Autism therapy) is a flexible treatment that can be adapted to meet the needs of each person. ABA therapy can help people with sensory challenges in many ways, including:

SENSORY INTEGRATION

ABA therapy can help people process sensory information more effectively. This can lead to improved attention, self-regulation, and participation in daily activities.

SENSORY STRATEGIES

ABA therapists can identify a person's sensory sensitivities and preferences, and then incorporate sensory strategies into their interventions. This can include providing sensory-friendly materials, introducing sensory breaks, or modifying the environment.

COPING MECHANISMS

ABA therapy can help people develop coping mechanisms for dealing with difficult sensory situations.

SELF-AWARENESS

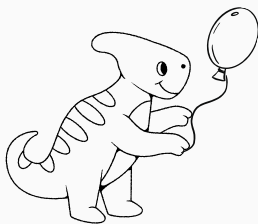
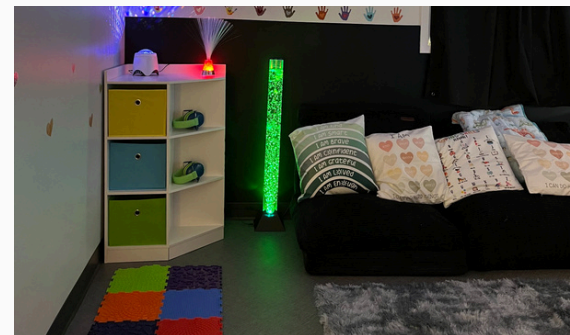
ABA therapy can help people become more aware of their bodies and how they respond to different stimuli.

IMPULSE CONTROL

Kids on the Spectrum often have challenges managing impulses. In some cases, this can lead to unsafe behavior. ABA can help children learn to pause before doing.

QUALITY OF LIFE

According to a survey conducted by Autism Parent Magazine, around 93% of parents surveyed believed ABA therapy had improved their child's skill sets leading to a better overall quality of life.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Jordan E. - Altoona Campus
Jestina S. - Altoona Campus



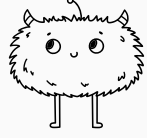
Congratulations to these Behavior Technicians on recently passing their RBT exams! Thank you for your dedication to our clients and our team!



Halloween Word Find



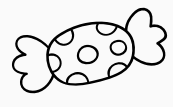
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 J A C K O L A N T E R N R A R
 O N U I N T N C E D E N T V T
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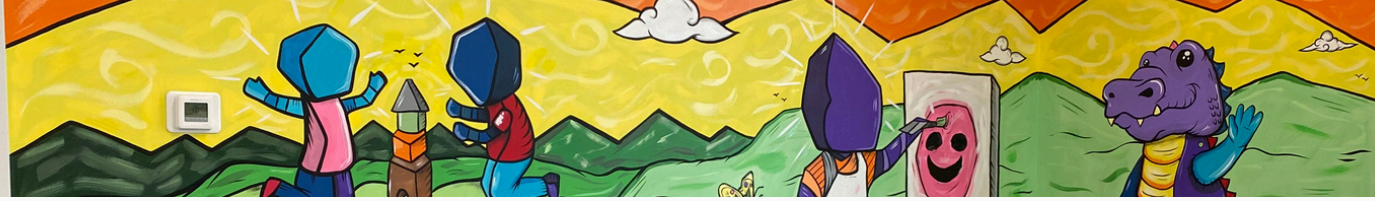


APPLES
 BAT
 CANDY
 COSTUME
 DRACULA

HAYRIDE
 JACK-O-LANTERN
 LEAVES
 NOCTURNAL
 ORANGE

PUMPKIN
 SCARECROW
 SKELETON
 TRICK-OR-TREAT
 WITCH





CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

GLOWSTICKS & GRADUATIONS IN WAUKEE



congrats
grad



Ain't no party like a graduation party. Congrats to the latest graduate from our Waukee campus 🎉🎊 This sweet kiddo is headed for a bright future! 😊

What makes your family special?

Everyone in my family likes hamburgers.

What do you want to do when you grow up?

I want to be a lifeguard.

If you could have any animal for a pet, what would it be?

I'd want a pet hippo. because then I could ride it.

What superpower would you choose?

I'd want colorful power, so that way I can make the world brighter.





CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

FEELIN' FALL IN WOODBURY





Sign up to receive email updates from Midwest Autism & Therapy Centers! Email updates include monthly newsletters, new blog posts, center updates, activities for the kiddos, announcements and more.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- BRIAN S., PRESIDENT - ALL CAMPUSES
- ANGELA F., RBT - WAUKEE CAMPUS
- BRITTNEY O., SR RBT - ALTOONA CAMPUS
- LEE A S., BT - ANKENY CAMPUS
- MAKAYLA I., SR RBT - WDM CAMPUS
- JERRICA S., BT - WDM CAMPUS
- KILEY D., BCBA - ANKENY CAMPUS
- TIERI C., PROGRAM MANAGER - EDINA CAMPUS
- ERIN B., BT - WOODBURY CAMPUS
- HANNAH P., BT - ANKENY CAMPUS

OCTOBER

Get Connected

ALTOONA CAMPUS:
950 28TH AVE SW, STE 2 ALTOONA, IA 50009 | 515-446-2075

ANKENY CAMPUS:
2405 N ANKENY RD ANKENY, IA 50023 | 515-446-2080

EDINA CAMPUS:
7550 FRANCE AVE S, STE 200 EDINA, MN 55435 | 952-955-4057

SOUTHFIELD CAMPUS:
27211 LAHSER RD, STE 101 SOUTHFIELD, MI 48034 | 515-513-9649

WAUKEE CAMPUS:
287 SE WESTOWN PKWY WAUKEE, IA 50263 | 515-446-3420

WEST DES MOINES CAMPUS:
1280 OFFICE PLAZA DR WEST DES MOINES, IA 50266 | 515-446-3420

WOODBURY CAMPUS:
748 BIELENBERG DR WOODBURY, MN 55125 | 651-796-2306

INFO@MIDWESTAUTISMSERVICES.COM | MIDWESTAUTISMSERVICES.COM
ENROLLMENT LINE: 515-513-9649

