

## Additional Sensory Checklist by John Sharry [www.solutiontalk.ie](http://www.solutiontalk.ie)

### HEARING

<p><b>Hypersensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reacts negatively to sounds that others like</li> <li>• covers their ears to shield themselves from sound</li> <li>• avoids places with a lot of noise -shops, restaurants</li> <li>• anxiety with certain sounds</li> <li>• Irritated/ agitated when exposed to specific noises</li> <li>• trouble focusing when there is background noise</li> <li>• discomfort with everyday sounds- hoovers, chewing</li> <li>• hard to sleep due to even faint noises</li> <li>• certain sounds could lead to ear discomfort</li> <li>• might pull back from lively social activities or outings</li> <li>• certain sounds could trigger a panic attack</li> <li>• bothered by background noises -lawnmowers</li> <li>• often asks people to be quiet</li> <li>• refuses to go to parades, concerts, sport events</li> <li>• distracted by faint sounds – machine humming/ clocks</li> <li>• fears certain sounds - hairdryer, dog barking</li> <li>• startled by loud or unexpected noises</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hyposensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may not respond to name being called, phone ringing</li> <li>• hard to follow directions with background noise</li> <li>• might zone out in noisy environments</li> <li>• not bothered by loud sounds -sirens/loud music</li> <li>• heightened interest in sounds/ enjoys making noise</li> <li>• asks others to repeat what they've said, even if quiet</li> <li>• may have impaired speech/language development</li> <li>• may struggle to identify where a sound is coming from</li> <li>• enjoys excessively loud music or TV</li> <li>• not startled by surprise, loud noises</li> <li>• talks to themself through a task, often out loud</li> <li>• doesn't respond to verbal cues or name being called</li> <li>• difficulty understanding or remembering what is said</li> </ul>
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### SIGHT

<p><b>Hypersensitivity</b></p> <p>difficulty with bright lights/ sunlight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• distress in visually stimulating places - busy wallpapers, cluttered rooms</li> <li>• uncomfortable maintaining eye contact</li> <li>• disturbed by fast-moving/flashing images on TV</li> <li>• may be strongly attracted to or distressed by certain colours or patterns.</li> <li>• words on a page may seem to move or blend together</li> <li>• avoids tasks that require a lot of visual focus -puzzles</li> <li>• squints/covers eyes – to block out too much input</li> <li>• struggles to distinguish between similar-looking objects</li> <li>• bothered by direct light -sunlight, desk lights</li> <li>• headaches - eye strain or overexposure to stimuli.</li> <li>• Intolerant of specific lighting, often fluorescent lights</li> <li>• struggles with puzzles and gets frustrated at the movies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hyposensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not reacting to visual stimuli that others usually notice</li> <li>• difficulty copying from a board or following a map</li> <li>• trouble recognising people</li> <li>• problems distinguish between similar-looking objects</li> <li>• little reaction to bright lights</li> <li>• limited eye-contact</li> <li>• difficulty reading and writing</li> <li>• have trouble seeing in low-light conditions</li> <li>• bumping into things</li> <li>• waves hands or objects in front of eyes</li> <li>• likes light-up spinning objects</li> <li>• struggles to understand what they see</li> <li>• struggles with eye-hand coordination</li> <li>• struggles to watch movies without discomfort</li> </ul>
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### TOUCH

<p><b>Hypersensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoids touch</li> <li>• discomfort with certain textures</li> <li>• distress during grooming activities</li> <li>• prefers certain clothing</li> <li>• dislikes messy play</li> <li>• avoids certain foods</li> <li>• very ticklish</li> <li>• reacts to minor cuts or scrapes, insect bites</li> <li>• discomfort with clothing tags/ seams</li> <li>• discomfort wearing shoes or socks</li> <li>• distressed by accidental brushes or touches</li> <li>• dislikes hair brushing, face washing, teeth brushing</li> <li>• distressed by raindrops, shower water, wind on skin</li> <li>• refuses to walk barefoot on grass or sand</li> <li>• avoids touching certain materials in blankets/ rugs</li> <li>• resists friendly or affectionate touch</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hyposensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• might not notice when they're being touched</li> <li>• doesn't notice injuries</li> <li>• fine motor skills difficulties</li> <li>• might not notice dirty hands, runny nose</li> <li>• might not notice temperature</li> <li>• seeks physical contact -wrestling, under blanket piles</li> <li>• too much/ little pressure when writing -breaking toys</li> <li>• may unintentionally hurt others when playing</li> <li>• mouthing objects</li> <li>• touches everything and everyone</li> <li>• seeks soothing surfaces or objects</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prefers hugs over other types of touch</li> <li>• washes hands due to upset with dirt</li> </ul>	
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## SMELL

<p><b>Hypersensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sensitive to even faint smells</li> <li>• bothered by strong cooking or household smells</li> <li>• headaches -after being exposed to certain smells</li> <li>• nausea/vomiting – triggered by strong/particular smells</li> <li>• difficulty eating –smell of food feels overpowering</li> <li>• may avoid places where there is strong smells</li> <li>• difficulty identifying specific smells</li> <li>• certain smells could lead to dizziness/lightheadedness</li> <li>• may induce respiratory symptoms -coughing, sneezing</li> <li>• parosmia -normal smells are distorted or unpleasant</li> <li>• cacosmia -all smells are perceived as foul</li> <li>• phantosmia - senses smells that aren't present</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hyposensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may have difficulty noticing smells</li> <li>• often ask others to verify or identify smells for them.</li> <li>• ignores or doesn't register unpleasant smells</li> <li>• diminished sense of taste-closely linked with smell</li> <li>• neglect of personal hygiene -body odour</li> <li>• cooking and eating can lose much of their appeal</li> <li>• miss out on the joy of certain scents -flowers, baking</li> <li>• smells as a way to interact with objects</li> </ul>
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## TASTE

<p><b>Hypersensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• picky eating</li> <li>• distress brushing teeth</li> <li>• gags on different food textures</li> <li>• dislikes dental visits issues</li> <li>• overreacts to oral discomfort - loose tooth etc</li> <li>• avoids certain utensils -how they feel in their mouth</li> <li>• dislikes orthodontics</li> <li>• dislikes mixed textured foods -chunky soup</li> <li>• Resists trying new foods and avoids certain textures</li> <li>• Food or drink temperature preferences</li> <li>• anxious when presented with new foods</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hyposensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mouthing, chewing, licking non-food items</li> <li>• overstuffing mouth with food</li> <li>• likes spicy foods</li> <li>• difficulty chewing or swallowing</li> <li>• drooling</li> <li>• less/no reaction to oral injuries</li> <li>• difficulty with speech</li> <li>• prefers crunchy or chewy foods</li> <li>• insensitive to temperature</li> <li>• chews clothing or body parts - fingers</li> <li>• hums</li> <li>• prefers a vibrating toothbrush</li> <li>• bites others</li> </ul>
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## VESTIBULAR (movement)

<p><b>Hypersensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• afraid of movement activities -swinging, drives in car.</li> <li>• feels sick/ dizzy during or after movement.</li> <li>• disoriented if head position changes -bending /lying</li> <li>• avoids quick movements or spinning</li> <li>• fear of heights or places where the ground is uneven</li> <li>• clings to people or objects, as afraid of falling.</li> <li>• balance difficulties - riding a bike.</li> <li>• resists lying flat without a pillow</li> <li>• co-ordination difficulties</li> <li>• avoids activities or sports with a lot of movement</li> <li>• fear of falling, moves cautiously, avoids taking risks</li> <li>• fears feet leaving the ground</li> <li>• dislikes lifts and escalators - motion sickness</li> <li>• avoids stairs and uneven surfaces</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hyposensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high energy levels</li> <li>• seeks movement -spinning, swinging, or bouncing</li> <li>• struggles to sit still -fidgets or squirms</li> <li>• craves intense and fast movements, spinning</li> <li>• prefers fast-paced or high-risk activities</li> <li>• difficulty with balance</li> <li>• co-ordination difficulties</li> <li>• likes to rock and sway</li> <li>• hard to keep focused, especially if not to moving</li> <li>• bumps into things</li> <li>• may have low muscle tone</li> <li>• runs, jumps, hops instead of walking</li> <li>• likes sudden or quick movements -going over bumps</li> <li>• rocks, shakes leg, nods when sitting</li> </ul>
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## PROPRIOCEPTION

<p><b>Hypersensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• constantly seek rough play -wrestling, slamming</li><li>• craves physical contact</li><li>• doesn't understand personal space boundaries</li><li>• doesn't notice injuries, higher pain tolerance</li><li>• finds it hard to stay still/ constantly fidgets, moves</li><li>• often breaks objects, not knowing their own strength</li><li>• Walks/runs heavily, making a lot of noise with their feet</li><li>• bumps into things, difficulty coordinating their body</li><li>• throw things, slam doors, makes other loud noises</li><li>• leans against walls, doors, or other people</li><li>• seeks jumping, bumping, crashing activities</li><li>• kicks feet on the floor/chair while sitting at table</li><li>• bites or sucks fingers and objects</li><li>• prefers tight clothes, belts, hoods, and shoelaces</li><li>• loves to receive bear hugs</li><li>• grinds teeth throughout the day</li><li>• loves pushing, pulling, and dragging objects</li><li>• frequently hits, bumps, or pushes peers</li><li>• chews on pens, straws, shirt sleeves, etc.</li></ul>	<p><b>Hyposensitivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• prefers low key activities, reluctant to play</li><li>• prefers to stand by and watch others play</li><li>• frequently bumping into things or falling</li><li>• too much or too little force picking up objects, writing,</li><li>• difficulty with fine motor skills</li><li>• difficulty with gross motor skills</li><li>• problems with balance</li><li>• struggle to move through crowded/narrow spaces</li><li>• has a hard time learning new motor tasks</li><li>• difficulty with sequencing movements -dance, dressing</li><li>• slouches or leans on things for support.</li><li>• struggles to judge distances accurately</li><li>• struggles knowing right from left</li><li>• struggles to perceive depth accurately</li><li>• struggles with controlling writing/drawing pressure</li><li>• misjudges weight of objects</li></ul>
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## INTEROCEPTION

<p><b>Hypersensitivity</b></p> <p>May get overwhelmed by feelings that are part of the body's day-to-day functioning, causing anxiety, stress and distraction as well as discomfort and pain.</p> <p>May be overly-tuned in and aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a small touch causes great pain</li><li>• feeling they have to go to the toilet all the time</li><li>• feeling full even with little food</li><li>• get distracted by their heartbeat being loud</li><li>• feeling great emotions at small things</li><li>• rejection sensitivity</li></ul>	<p><b>Hyposensitivity</b></p> <p>May have difficulty tuning in to their own bodies internal needs like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• becoming dehydrated because they didn't drink</li><li>• forgetting to go to the toilet- constipation</li><li>• not noticing they are hungry</li><li>• sluggish and unable to move</li><li>• not noticing pain after an injury</li></ul>
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