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FASD

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FASD & Sensory Integration

Sensory integration refers to the way the **body responds to external stimuli** to the senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste).

For individuals with FASD, challenges with sensory integration can mean being over or under sensitive to stimuli:

- Being upset by bright lights or loud noises
- Annoyed by tags in shirts or seams in socks
- Bothered by certain textures of food
- Flinching at the slightest touch or perceiving it as an attack and lashing out
- Hurting themselves because they do not feel pain, such as when touching a hot stove, or dressing inappropriately for the weather because they do not feel/sense cold
- Clumsiness because they have problems sensing where they are in space; bumping into other people or into other objects

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Sensory Integration

How can we **navigate** sensory challenges for individuals with **FASD**?

- Learn to **recognize triggers** – **read body language** – nip outbursts in the bud.
- Provide **regular breaks** from activity in a quiet place; include sensory implements if possible
- Provide items to be manipulated by hand (**fidgets**)
- Make use of **snug/weighted vests** or lap blankets for pressure therapy
    - Explore **cocooning**, wraparound bean bag chairs or a study carrell
- Be mindful of **lighting** (fluorescent and sun)
- Make use of **noise cancelling headphones**
- Explore **TIPP** strategies used in DBT (temperature, intense exercise, paced breathing, progressive muscle relaxation)

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