

S.I. Focus

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO IMPROVING SENSORY INTEGRATION

Hello Previous Volunteers and we Welcome New NSAM Volunteers for 2010!

S.I. Focus magazine is about to begin our 6th annual National Sensory Awareness Month (NSAM) campaign, known as “Come To Your Senses,” in October. We launched this campaign in 2005 as an effort to raising awareness of sensory integration/sensory processing disorders (DSI/SPD). It is our way of giving you an opportunity to educate the public, as well as education and healthcare professionals who touch your children’s lives. Not everyone has the time or interest to read a book or even one of our magazine articles regarding a neurological deficit that may be shaping your world, but it is unknown to them. But in this packet we hope to give you tools to reach them.

NSAM, “Come To Your Senses,” is a grassroots campaign that relies on the effort and support of volunteers like you. We greatly appreciate all that you do to help spread the word about sensory issues in your immediate community. Imagine... even if your efforts result in the identification of only one at-risk child, you have made a major difference.

October is an ideal month for this awareness effort. First, this is a highly family-oriented month with many activities for parents and their children. From trick-or-treating to fall festivals, October presents numerous opportunities to reach out to other parents, educators and healthcare professionals. Additionally, Halloween can be challenging for children with sensory struggles. It is a great time to focus on these issues through “alternative” activities while enjoying the season and honoring our children’s sensory needs.

The following pages include several marketing tools to help your local efforts, including ideas for events and activities. These range from the very simple to larger-scale, as we realize that time and resources vary from volunteer to volunteer. These materials include:

- Ideas for events/activities
- Fact sheet & informational handout
- Customizable press materials & how-to guide on contacting media
- Written public service announcement
- Poster image to attach to emails or have printed in poster size
- DVD/Video (available for purchase)
- New Resource section to help your family

Speaking engagements are also a great way to build awareness, and, as in years past, I am available for presentations in your local community. We have had much success with our local engagements and consider them a very valuable tool for educating parents and other professionals on sensory issues.

Thank you, again, for your hard work on building awareness of sensory issues.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Morris, founder/publisher
S.I. Focus Magazine

**SENSORY INTEGRATION DYSFUNCTION/
SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER
(DSI/SPD)
FACT SHEET**

- DSI/SPD are complex disorders of the brain that affect how a you receive, interpret and respond to sensory information, such as sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, body awareness and movement. People with DSI/SPD disorders do not experience sensory information the same way as others, resulting in difficulty with motor planning and daily living skills, self-regulation and developmental delays.
- Sensory integration develops through normal childhood activities for most children. For those who struggle, there are therapies that are successful in addressing sensory challenges. Early intervention is critical for significant and long-term success and to avoid further developmental issues and problems in school.
- Sensory challenges manifest themselves in a variety of ways due to the multitude of ways our minds and bodies process sensory input. Each individual affected by sensory issues demonstrates different signs. Common signs in infancy and early childhood are:
 - ❖ Difficulty with skills for daily living, such as eating, sleeping, toileting
 - ❖ Under- or over-responsiveness to sensory input (touch, light, sounds, textures, smells, movement)
 - ❖ Delayed speech and language, gross motor and/or fine motor skills
 - ❖ Unusually high or low activity levels, sometimes in combination
 - ❖ Difficulty transitioning from one activity or environment to another
 - ❖ Extreme meltdowns for no apparent reason, often inconsolable
 - ❖ Difficulty with haircuts, bathing, brushing teeth, certain clothing
- Sensory information comes through more than just the five senses we learned about as children. In addition to sight, sound, touch, smell and taste, our bodies also process vestibular and proprioceptive input.
 - ❖ The vestibular sense processes where your body is in space and its gravitational orientation.
 - ❖ The proprioceptive sense processes movement and the position of parts of your body in relationship to other parts (imagine the test where you close your eyes and touch your nose alternately with your left and right forefinger).
- Signs and symptoms of DSI/SPD can appear to represent other disorders, such as ADD/ADHD, Autism, Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) and others. Sensory processing issues often are at the root of a child's developmental and/or behavioral struggles.
- Sensory-based occupational therapy is the primary therapy used to address DSI/SPD in children. The first step is an evaluation to determine the severity of the issues and the type of therapy needed. Once goals are set, the specially trained therapist will execute a variety of activities that incrementally expose the child to a variety of sensory experiences to help regulate the child's interpretations of and responses to sensory input. Early studies and anecdotal evidence show a high level of success with this type of therapy.

LET'S ALL BEGIN ON THE SAME PAGE

Whether you have dealt with sensory issues for years or you're new to the sensory community, let's be sure we are all starting with the same basic information.

TERMINOLOGY:

The concept of sensory integration comes from a body of work by A. Jean Ayres, PhD, OTR. As an occupational therapist, Dr. Ayres was interested in the way in which sensory processing and motor planning disorders interfere with daily life function and learning. This theory has been developed and refined by the research of Dr. Ayres, as well as other occupational and physical therapists. Ayres is best known for her discovery of a type of developmental disorder first known as *Sensory Integrative Dysfunction (SID)*. The acronym was often confused with *SIDS* or *Sudden Infant Death Syndrome*. A change in reference became *Dysfunction of Sensory Integration (DSI)* to distinguish between the two. Most recently there has been another term that health care professionals are using to describe sensory deficits. That term is *Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)*.

There is not one term recognized by everyone. This is another reason for a national campaign for sensory awareness. *S.I. Focus Magazine* has adopted the position of using both DSI /SPD when promoting information in an effort to blend education using the more familiar term with the most recent terminology. This position may change in the next few years.

It should be noted that referring to "Sensory Integration" alone is not accurate representation of the dysfunction. In other words, a parent should not say, "My child has S.I." Such wording does not explain the disorder accurately and confuses the terminology since sensory integration is part of *normal development*, not dysfunction.

IDEAS FOR AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

It's all about simplicity and ease. We just want to get the word out! As we move into NSAM 2010 "Come To Your Senses," there will be plenty of time for planning events and activities. These activities range from very simple to more complex. Please focus on what you can accomplish based on your time and resources!

There is a color pdf image of our poster available for you to use by attaching to emails. You can also take to your local printer and have a poster made.

Ideas for Schools:

- ❖ Provide handouts to local school and/or school system. Send home in backpacks.
- ❖ Ask to include information going home with children, include info at PTA meeting, include in any communication during fall activities.
- ❖ Contact your State PTA organization and see how to mass distribute to all local PTA chapters. Speak at your local PTA and show the educational video offered at the end of this packet in the "Resources" section.
- ❖ Offer to set up a table at the entrance of any school activities: sports events, book fair, carnival, health seminars, etc. Provide handout and/or fact sheet. If you want back issues of S.I. Focus Magazine to have on display notify us ASAP. Any event will be given a discount on the magazine, and we can send you discount subscription forms.
- ❖ Ask your school art teacher if students could create artwork related to sensory awareness, such as a mural in the school hallway or gallery in the lunchroom. Whatever the idea, be sure it will be available for adult viewing!
- ❖ Contact local boy/girl scout troops to see if they will let you join in an effort they are doing during October. Distribute copies of the announcement or ask to speak at a meeting to adults.
- ❖ Help an Eagle Scout candidate by suggesting a project for a school related to sensory enrichment.
- ❖ Beyond your local school or clinic, contact preschools in your area and ask to provide information that can go home with the children. Because early intervention is so effective, this will be very valuable to the parents of small children.

Community Event Ideas:

- ❖ Establish a "Come To Your Senses" Parents' Night Out with a sensory-rich playroom for children at your church or other organizations as a community service.
- ❖ Contact a local S.I. trained therapist to conduct a screening as a community service through a clinic, school or organization.
- ❖ An OT in New York organized a sensory-friendly carnival atmosphere for children who could not attend ordinary Halloween/fall activities that were too noisy and stimulating.

Ideas for Media Coverage:

- ❖ Ask to write a short article or use the announcement in any local school/parent organization newsletter, clinic/hospital newsletter, or any family-related or professional newsletter. Especially any e-newsletters where you can add the NSAM poster image.
- ❖ Submit press release to every local newspaper, small and large. See the enclosed media guidelines for tips on contacting media.
- ❖ Contact local radio and/or TV outlets to attend any events you organize and/or to place a public service announcement. See the media guidelines for approaching broadcast outlets.

Other Ways to Spread the Word:

- If you have a website or access to someone with a business website (clinic, organization, etc.), place the jpeg announcement image on the site.
- Last year one mom and her kids stood outside their local grocery store and gave out a free cookie with the one-page information sheet. With the help of friends, they were able to do this every weekend.
- Ask to decorate a bulletin board in your school, church, library or organization's building focusing on NSAM using our eye-catching "Come To Your Senses" poster. Focus on a few key signs of DSI/SPD and make copies of handout available.
- Ask to do a window display in a local bank or store.
- Ask to set up a table outside a grocery store, hand out information for research and encourage donations to the SPD Foundation, a 501(c) non-profit (contact info provided in this packet.) Donations will be tax-deductible as long as their identifying information is on their check. If money is collected, be sure to identify that donations are the result of your efforts for NSAM. Forward funds to: The SPD Foundation, 5655 S. Yosemite St., Suite 305, Greenwood Village, CO 80111. (This was formerly known as the KID Foundation.) Visit their site at www.SPDFoundation.net.
- Establish an e-mail awareness campaign through your own address book or ask to acquire e-mail addresses for this one purpose. Always attach the awareness jpeg of our poster. See the attached sample email for details and inspiration.
- Many churches have MOPS organizations (Mothers of Preschoolers) who would love to have this information about their developing little ones. Offer to show the video and provide hand-outs.
- Establish an SPD-Parent Connections or SPD Parent S.H.A.R.E. support group in your community. See further specifics in this packet.
- Set up a weekend or evening meeting with parents to show the video available at the end of this packet, *A Sensory World*, to help parents understand how to work with their children who are struggling with sensory issues.

Share your ideas with us for next year's volunteers' packet.

MEDIA OUTREACH GUIDELINES

Generating media coverage for your NSAM “Come To Your Senses” activities and/or events is a great way to build further awareness. We have included in this kit a press release, sample media alert that you can tailor for your event and a 30-second public service announcement. Below are some guidelines for contacting media with any or all of these tools.

Media coverage is not guaranteed, even if you send your materials to the right people at the right time. There is much more news happening each day than can be covered by media. Even if you don’t secure coverage, each positive interaction you have with a media contact will build familiarity and could bring returns in the future.

Building a Media List

- Use your local knowledge, the internet or a media directory, like Bacon’s (available at most public libraries) to create your list
- Try to identify a specific reporter or assignment editor who covers local events, health issues, children’s/parenting issues or any other topic related to sensory awareness.
- Include mailing address, fax, phone and email
- Call to verify name, deadlines and preferred form of contact
- o Most media contacts prefer email, but some busy newsrooms still rely on faxes and other journalists like to receive hard copies of materials
- Utilize any personal contacts you may have, and don’t be shy about asking them if they could direct materials to the right individual. At the same time, most journalists resent being asked to do stories as “favors,” so limit your request to just getting the information in the right hands
- We have included a 30-second PSA in this kit which can be distributed to public service directors at broadcast outlets. Not all accept “readers” – the term for a written PSA that is read by an on-air personality – but a number of radio stations do

Distributing Materials

- Cover notes should be very brief and limited to a quick intro at the beginning of an email. For faxes and snail mail, they are unnecessary, unless you want to reference a personal contact
- Make sure to distribute via the preferred option for each journalist, if a preference was indicated in your initial research
- If you can’t get through by fax or email, snail mail is an acceptable way to receive information for almost every journalist, but it is not as timely
- Consider the lead time necessary for your event. If you plan to distribute a media alert for an event, send it a week in advance and then again the day before

Conducting Follow-up, Coordinating Interviews and Event Attendance

- Be aware of and sensitive to journalists’ deadlines and respond promptly to phone calls, emails, requests for information, updates, etc.
- Provide as much information as possible about events in advance, such as significant attendees, experts for interviews, etc.
- If a journalist asks to do an interview, ask them what specifics they would like to cover in order to prepare the interviewee in advance
- Follow up after the event/interview to make sure they have everything they need

[PRESS RELEASE]

CONTACT: Kathleen Morris
214-341-9999
editor@SIfocus.com

**FOR PARENTS OF CHALLENGING CHILDREN,
THE SOLUTION MAY BE SENSORY**

National Sensory Awareness Month Draws Attention to Emerging Health Concern

FOR RELEASE -- Imagine wearing a piece of sandpaper down the back of your shirt... or trying to eat your lunch next to a hot garbage can... or trying to walk across a room during an earthquake.

No – you are not a contestant on a television show, you are experiencing a slice of life as a child with sensory integration dysfunction, also known as sensory processing disorder.

For the estimated 1 in 20 children affected by sensory integration dysfunction, life can be much like what was described above... and sometimes worse. Inundated by sensory information all day, most children develop motor planning abilities that enable them to appropriately adapt and respond to the sights, sounds, smells, movement and other sensations around them. Children with sensory integration dysfunction (DSI/SPD) react differently to sensory information and are often overwhelmed by this information, experience developmental delays and have difficulty with daily living skills.

“Unfortunately, some children with sensory integration dysfunction are misdiagnosed with other disorders,” explained Kathleen Morris, pediatric therapist and publisher of *S.I. Focus Magazine*. “The good news is that many children with sensory issues are helped immensely with the right treatment.”

- more -

The solution that many have found success with is sensory-based occupational therapy. With this type of therapy, the child is incrementally exposed to a variety of sensory experiences to help regulate the child's interpretations of and responses to sensory input. Because DSI/SPD is an emerging health concern, there has not been widespread research conducted on treatments, but studies and anecdotal evidence strongly suggest that sensory-based therapy can have significant and long-term success.

Parents, educators and healthcare professionals who suspect a child is affected by DSI/SPD should contact an occupational therapist who specializes in sensory-based therapy for an evaluation.

S.I. Focus magazine sponsors National Sensory Awareness Month "Come To Your Senses" each October to raise awareness of sensory integration dysfunction/sensory processing disorder among parents, educators and other professionals who work with children. Visit www.SIfocus.com for more information and articles regarding sensory deficits.

###

MEDIA ALERT

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION] HOSTS [NAME OF EVENT] TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR SENORY INTEGRATION DYSFUNCTION October is National Sensory Awareness Month

- WHAT:** [Briefly describe what your event is... such as a Halloween party/fall celebration, screening event, informational seminar, etc.]
- WHO:** [Include sponsoring organizations, businesses, etc. who are conducting the event.]
- WHEN:** [Time, day of week and date of the event.]
- WHERE:** [Location, including cross-streets or landmarks and phone number.]
- WHY:** To raise awareness of sensory integration dysfunction/sensory processing disorder (DSI/SPD) during National Sensory Awareness Month “Come To Your Senses” in October, sponsored by S.I. Focus Magazine. DSI/SPD is an emerging health concern that affects an estimated 1 in 20 children. [Name of organization/business] is [briefly describe why your organization/business supports this effort].
- PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES:** [If applicable, describe any good photos that could be taken, such as therapists interacting with children, children playing, etc.]
- INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES:** [If applicable, include the names and credentials of any spokespeople who will be available to talk to media.]
- CONTACT:** [Provide the name, phone number – office and cell, and email address of your media contact(s)]

###

Public Service Announcement Script

:30

Imagine wearing a shirt made of sandpaper, walking across a room during an earthquake or eating lunch next to a hot garbage can. For an estimated 1 in 20 children affected by a sensory integration dysfunction, also known as sensory processing disorder, life can be very much like this. Children with sensory issues spend their days and nights bombarded by sensory challenges that make daily life, learning and typical childhood pleasures difficult. If you know of a child who might be affected by sensory processing disorder, log on to www.SIfocus.com for more information.

SAMPLE EMAIL COPY FOR MASS PERSONAL DISTRIBUTION

Dear Friends,

As some of you know, I recently have been active in raising awareness for sensory integration dysfunction (DSI) or sensory processing disorder (SPD). [You can also lead with a more personal opener, such as... “my son/daughter has DSI/SPD,” or “I work with many children who are affected by DSI/SPD”] October is National Sensory Awareness Month, and I am joining volunteers from around the country to get the word out about this growing health concern.

Initial studies estimate that nearly 1 in 20 children are affected by DSI/SPD, which means that these children do not process sensory information in the same way that most of us do. This affects their interpretation of and reaction to what we all know as the five senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. But it also affects their body awareness, balance, coordination and other aspects of movement. As you might imagine, this makes daily life, learning and the typical joys of childhood very difficult for them.

Our primary goal for National Sensory Awareness Month is to simply make more people familiar with DSI/SPD, because, right now, not enough people know about it. This leads to misdiagnosis and misunderstanding – and, worst of all, incorrect or lack of treatment. At the very least, if you can forward this email to your personal contacts, that would be a great help. If you would like more information about DSI/SPD visit www.SIfocus.com.

Establish a Support Group in Your Area

(here are two international groups)

SPD Parent Connections

or

SPD Parent S.H.A.R.E.

1. About SPD Parent Connections

SPD Parent Connections (SPD PC) is a grassroots network that provides support, information, and understanding to anyone who lives with a child who has a Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) or wants to learn more about these developmental disorders.

SPD PC is sponsored by the SPD Foundation and run by parents. The members support each other through regular meetings that feature group discussions, education, and guest speakers. They give each other hope and encouragement, helping everyone to understand that Sensory Processing Disorder is a physical condition, not something that was caused by a parent, and that treatment options are available.

There are now SPD PC groups in more than 35 communities across the United States and in other countries. Each group is hosted by a parent of a child with SPD. Most meet once a month. The meetings are free, but special events may have a small fee associated with them. Meetings are for adults only. Go to the SPD website & click on SPD Parent Connections at www.SPDFoundation.net.

Get Involved!

If you'd like to meet with other parents or help us reach out to parents, there are many ways to get involved.

- Find a local SPD PC group. Look at SPD Parent Connections Resources for the lists of current groups. If you find one near you, contact the host to confirm the meeting time and place. All parents are welcome!
- Become a host and start a local group. If there is no group in your area yet, you might want to start one.

BENEFITS OF BEING A HOST

- ❖ • You have the support of all the other hosts around the world.
- ❖ • Your group will be under the umbrella of the SPD Foundation
- ❖ • You will receive regular packets from the SPD Foundation
- ❖ • You will receive advanced notice of SPD Foundation events and seminars and receive a reduced rate to attend these events.
- ❖ • You will be informed about the newest research being done by The SPD Foundation
- ❖ • You will have personal contact with The SPD Foundation.
- ❖ • They have a listserv in place for all hosts to share ideas, stories and ask questions. If you decide to become a host, they will provide instructions so you can join. For more information, email the SPD Foundation.

Establish a Support Group in Your Area – cont'd.

2. About SPD Parent S.H.A.R.E.

“It is not enough to prepare our children for the world ... we must prepare the world for our children”

Are you a parent or professional with a child who has SPD/DSI? Would you like to help spread awareness or help other families, professionals, or schools?

We can help you!

SPD Parent S.H.A.R.E. is an International volunteer group run by parents and professionals that provide support, information and resources to someone living with SPD, or anyone who wants to learn more about SPD. The mission of SPD Parent S.H.A.R.E. is to bring comfort and support to all children and families who suffer with Sensory Processing Disorder. To accomplish this goal we must help families world wide.

Support is provided to our Hosts through group and individual discussions, our online interactive Host group site, and access to the many resources available to Hosts.

Our Hosts help families in many ways:

- Establish a local support group
- Help families of special interest to the Host
- Meet individually with families, or conduct group field trips
- Provide flyers and contact information to professionals
- Create a local online group to provide support and information

SPD Parent S.H.A.R.E. invites you to our web site to learn more about becoming a Host:

www.spdparentshare.com

Join us! Join the Hosts of SPD Parent S.H.A.R.E. and give hope and light to families around our world. The sacrifice is small, but the rewards are great.

We will never regret that we helped a child; we will only regret ... that we didn't.

Dedicated. Loving. Giving. Teaching. Making A Difference.

We are hopeful
that the contents of this packet will enable
you to raise awareness in your immediate community.

Anything you can do will be helpful.
Good luck in your efforts with spreading the word.

Last summer, S.I. Focus Magazine started
a free monthly **E-newsletter**,
available to everyone regardless of whether they subscribe to
the magazine or not.

Ask someone if you can share
their e-mail address to receive it

or

tell them to ask for it by e-mailing me at:

editor@SIfocus.com

Kind regards and the highest of hopes,

Kathleen

NEW THIS YEAR:

**Continue to the following pages to find several
valuable resources available to you and the sensory
community!**

soft*

clothing for all children

unisex denim



* clothing for children
with tactile defensiveness

*no zips, buttons, pockets, tags, or itchy seams.
feel like sweatpants, look like jeans*

shop more sensory sensitive styles at softclothing.net {10% off code: SIFocus}

Integrating the Senses

THE LISTENING PROGRAM®



The Listening Program® (TLP) is a neuromusic method which improves the ability to process auditory and vestibular information; supporting listening, communication, attention, balance, body awareness, cognition, mood, and self regulation.

The Listening Program is comprised of high quality classical music which is recorded and modified to engage brain plasticity, the natural ability of the brain to change itself.

The music is played through an easy to operate portable system consisting of a digital audio player or cd's, with headphones. The system is available with or without the ABT Bone Conduction Audio System™.

Completely portable and easy to use, The Listening Program fits easily into anyone's schedule and only requires 15 to 30 minutes of daily listening over the full course of 10-20 weeks.

Numerous studies worldwide, provide empirical evidence that substantiates The Listening Program's efficacy. Please visit our website to review studies.



TLP Provider Online Certification Course

Professionals, become an ABT Certified Provider of The Listening Program. This online training course is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Completing the course will prepare you to immediately apply The Listening Program method and to individualize listening plans to meet specific client needs and goals.

For more information about The Listening Program and other ABT products, please visit www.advancedbrain.com.

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"No heel" design allows children to put on socks with confidence and keeps little feet from outgrowing their socks so quickly.

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Stretchy Core-Spun and Lycra yarns result in a form-fitting design that "hug" little feet and help eliminate wrinkling and bunching. No more bothersome "lumps and bumps"!

NON-BINDING

Non-binding Halo Top™ fits comfortably without slipping down the leg. Regular socks often have elastic bands at the tops of the sock that can often pinch, bind or be a source of irritation.

KEEPS FEET DRY

Wicks moisture away to keep feet dry and control odor.



Connect with us on the Web

SmartKnitKIDS is now on Facebook and Twitter. For contests, product promotions, special discounts, and the most up to date information, join the conversation. We'd love to hear from you!



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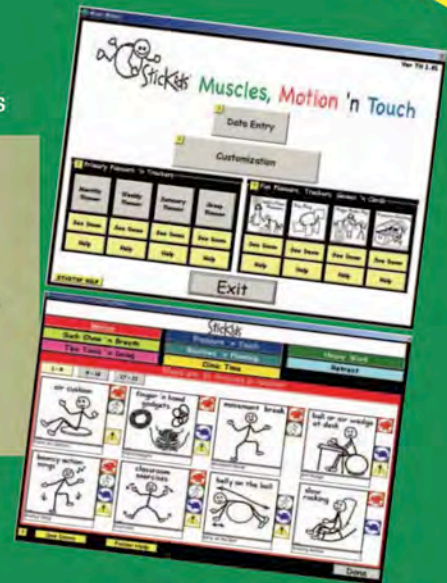
Supporting children with sensory processing and sensory motor challenges



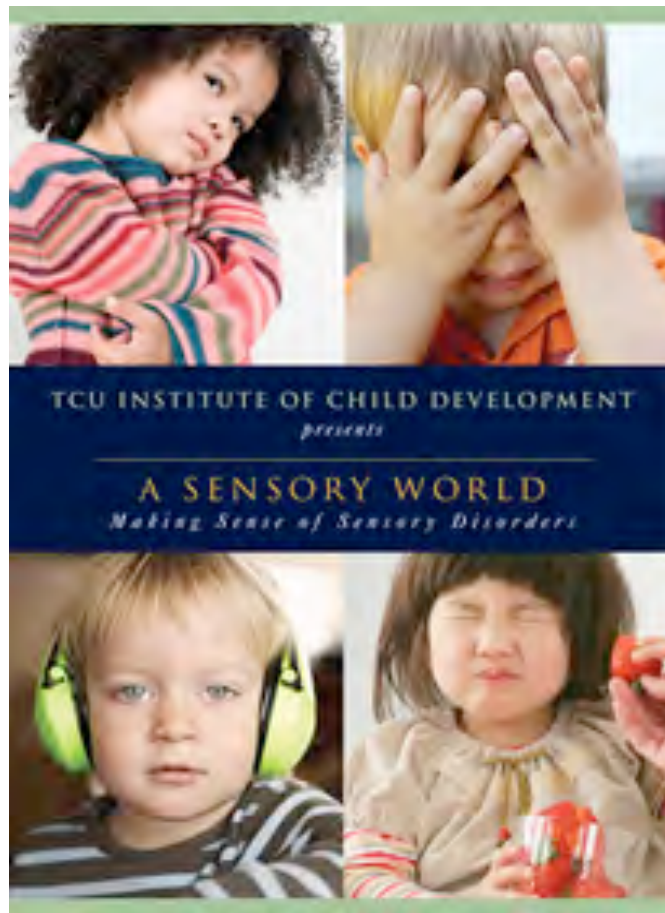
- Sensory strategies for everyone from toddlers to teens.
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- Customize for therapy perspective and your child's needs

For product sales and workshop info go to www.stickids.com ~ For discounts on volume orders ph 403-932-6517 or orders@stickids.com

for
Therapists
or
Home 'n School



**Two more fantastic resources follow
on the next pages.**



This is the best educational video on dealing with sensory deficits I've seen. TCU's Institute of Child Development has produced a high quality, informative DVD lasting over 90 minutes chocked full of useful insight and techniques. Drs Purvis and Cross share their personal and professional experience in working with children in their program which will serve to mentor others who want to establish their own programs. Incorporating the wisdom and experience of Carol Kranowitz in this project is the delicious icing on the cake! Ms. Kranowitz, author of "The Out-of-Sync Child" and multiple sensory books, lends her expertise and demonstrations to round out this wonderful production. I will highly recommend this resource to my readers and audiences every time I speak!

-Kathleen Morris, MS, CCC/SLP/publisher S.I. Focus magazine

**You can buy this video at: www.child.tcu.edu/DVD_Sales.asp
You can also preview it at the above site and through September,
it is on sale.**

come
to your
senses

National Sensory Awareness Month

*Join us during the month of October
which is dedicated to raising awareness of
Sensory Integration/Sensory Processing issues.*

October

*for more information
or to sign up as a volunteer, visit*

www.sensoryintegration.com

sponsored by

S.I. FOCUS

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