

The background is a complex, abstract composition of overlapping, irregular shapes in various colors including shades of blue, green, brown, and grey. Some shapes contain small white dots or patterns, creating a textured, layered effect.

Screen times impact on Sensory processing

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Financial/Non-Financial
disclosures

I own and am a treating
Occupational Therapist at
Children's Therapy Works

I am being compensated
today for my time by Special
Care Services

Objectives

Define sensory processing systems and examples.

What sensory experiences that are developed during play

Describe how increased screen time impacts sensory experiences gained during non screen play time.

Ways to engage kids and model non electronic play.

Sensory systems

Touch/tactile



Auditory



Sensory systems

Proprioceptive



Vestibular



Sensory systems

Visual



Olfactory



Sensory systems

Taste



Interoception



Screen free play versus Screen

Screen free

- You are engaged with actual objects or people
- The body is moving and experiencing the play.
- Increases serotonin that regulates mood and happiness

Screen

- Image of objects and sometimes real people
- Character or avatar moving and manipulating game
- Can increase serotonin but also Increases dopamine which impacts impulse control

Continued

Screen Free

- You can see what is going on in a space and can explore things that are close and further away
- All sensory systems can be stimulated

Screen

- Images move quickly and can be disorganizing for the developing brain
- Input is usually visual and auditory

Screen usage changes

- Past- one television in home, shows on one time per day, went off air after midnight, family watched together, or parents can hear/see what is being watched. VCR's allowed repeat watching but most rented videos. Videos became affordable and repeat watching increased. Watching television would rot our brains.
- Current: Kids have own devices and headphones, unlimited streaming, increased image cuts on screen, isolated viewing, parents need to look at view or search history to see what is watched. Available 24 hours per day and can be done any where.

Social pressures

- Families are dealing with disruptive behaviors that are quieted for the short term with the use of a device.
- Using video games is normalize as the way kids today play with each other.
- Parents are encouraged to introduce technology early.
- The use of devices as motivation as it is the only thing that the child wants.
- Devices are changing how we interact with each other.

What can we do:

- Model decreased screen time for your self. Kids will copy what you do. This can be as simple as playing a game with your child or going outside to play. If you have a smart watch this will let you know if a call or text is coming.
- Family goes on a screen free vacation. Video calls with friends and family or telehealth with a real person is the exception
- Spend time interacting and including kids in household tasks with you.

continued

- Be present and play the way your child needs you to play.
- Plan to read books to child and allow them to also tell you a story about what they see
- Remember all the senses and find things to do that involve them. Sing, dance, jump, cook, tactile play, hide and seek, hide items in the house and have hunts to find them.
- Make any screen time involve direct person interaction.
- Have fun!

Sensory processing can impact all aspects of life

- If you feel your child has sensory processing issues and would benefit from an assessment.
- Reach out to your doctor and tell them how this is impacting your child's life in a functional way. They can then send a prescription to an OTR/L. Most insurance does not pay for sensory processing disorder.

Questions



Sources

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