A Newsletter of WV Birth To Three Regional Administrative Unit 7

BRIDGES

Early Intervention….Building Bridges for a Bright Future

Fall 2024

Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)

Last Updated January 2024 | This article was created by familydoctor.org editorial staff and reviewed by Kyle Bradford Jones, MD, FAAFP

Sensory processing disorder (SPD) is a condition that affects how your brain processes sensory information (stimuli). Sensory information includes things you see, hear, smell, taste, or touch. SPD can affect all of your senses, or just one. SPD usually means you're overly sensitive to stimuli that other people are not. But the disorder can cause the opposite effect, too. In these cases, it takes more stimuli to impact you. On the other hand, lack of sensory input can impact your social and emotional health. SPD can affect one sense or multiple senses.

Children may be oversensitive if they:

- Think clothing feels too scratchy or itchy
- Think lights seem too bright
- Think sounds seem too loud
- Think soft touches feel too hard
- Experience food textures that make them gag
- Have poor balance or seem clumsy
- Are afraid to play on the swings
- React poorly to sudden movements, touches, loud noises, or bright lights
- Have behavior problems

Children may be under-sensitive (sensory-seeking) if they:

- Can't sit still
- Seek thrills (loves jumping, heights, and spinning)
- Can spin without getting dizzy
- Don't pick up on social cues
- Don't recognize personal space
- Chew on things (including their hands and clothing)
- Seek visual stimulation (like electronics)
- Have problems sleeping
- Don't recognize when their face is dirty or nose is running

Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) - familydoctor.org

Celebrate Autumn with Your Family

Let's Sit by the fire and roast s'mores!

Try different types of pumpkin recipes: Pumpkin Bread, Pumpkin Soup, Roasted Pumpkin Seeds, etc.

Pick apples

Visit the pumpkin patch

Go for a hike, see the colors!

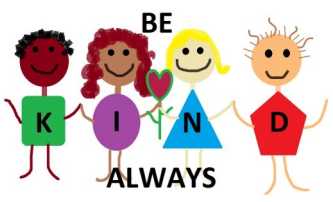
Raising Your Child to Have Good Manners

One of the most important jobs we have as parents is to help our children develop social skills, show them how to interact in a polite manner with people, and teach them to treat others with respect.

Here are some guidelines that you can use at home:

- **Be kind to others.** Telling kids, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," doesn't really mean anything to them. Instead, stress the importance of treating others the same way they'd like to be treated, especially when you see them doing something that you know they themselves don't like. For example, if your son hates to be interrupted and yet he interrupts people, then remind him, "Jonah, you really don't like it when people interrupt you, so please don't do that to Jeremiah."
- **Understand their actions.** Help your children understand the harm they can cause by doing or saying thoughtless and unkind things. Ask them, "How would you feel if someone pointed at you, and started to laugh?" In the beginning, you may simply be doing damage control, but eventually you'll be helping them to avoid harmful words or actions.
- **Show them the way.** Children do whatever they have to do to express themselves. Sometimes that comes off looking and sounding pretty bad. Playing a role reversal game with your child can help show them how to handle situations. Let them ask the question or behave a certain way, and you respond by showing them how their behavior should appear.
- **Be a good role model.** "Do as I say, but not as I do" is a joke. When you want your child to show good manners and respect, you must also practice good manners and respect. Say please and thank you, admit your mistakes, apologize, and treat people, in general, with kindness and respect. The reward of this behavior is that your children will grow up having many friends and a family that loves being around her.
- **Share.** Share with your children so they understand the importance of sharing with others. Compliment them when you see them sharing with others.
- **Keep kids healthy.** Children tend to behave badly when they're tired or hungry. Kids need sleep and nutritious foods to survive. It's that simple.
- **Practice family politeness.** Everyone in the family must practice "please" and "thank-you" policy in which, for example, no request is considered unless the person asking says "please." When one of your children forgets, just give him or her a look that says, "I'm waiting." They soon catch on. Use the same approach for saying "thank you."
- **Thank-you notes.** Teach your children the importance of thanking people for gifts. Show them how to write notes and make sure that they are sent promptly after receiving gifts.
- **Praise good behavior.** Praise is a wonderful teacher. Tell your children how proud you are when you notice them being polite and following the "please" and "thank-you" guidelines that you've set.

Excerpts taken from: http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/raising-your-child-to-have-good-manners.html



How to Help Your Toddler Adjust When the Big Kids Go Back to School

All summer long, your toddler has had all their favorite people around. Big siblings have been available for playtime nearly 24/7. Maybe you've gone away to a vacation home as a family or spent time at an amusement park. Bedtimes have been a little less strict and snuggles have been plentiful, and then fall arrives.

Suddenly, there's the hustle and bustle of a whole new routine. Everyone's a little stressed racing to get out the door in the morning. And those big siblings who have been giving your littlest one all that round the clock attention? They're off somewhere big, new and mysterious that your toddler can't go, leaving them confused, lonely, and definitely feeling the stress of transition.

As we head into this season of joy, change, and new routines, here are a few easy ways to reassure your toddler that they are an essential part of the family - even when the day-to-day of family life is changing. Let's look at what you can do!

Getting Ready

Before the bell rings on the first day of school, you can help toddlers feel like part of the party by letting them help with prep by:

- Taking them school shopping along with older siblings and letting them pick out a few "school supplies" of their own (new outfit, toddler size backpack, art supplies).
- Filling them in on the plan. Toddlers may be little, but they still like to know what to expect. Show them the school building where their siblings will be attending. Talk about what school is, what siblings will do all day, and how they'll get to go to school, too, when they get older.

Explore if the school offers family events you can attend together.

The First Week

The first week of school is ALWAYS hectic. Your toddler knows what's coming, but that doesn't mean they (or older kids, for that matter) are going to cheerfully participate in the routine from day one. Try:

- Making sure everyone gets to sleep a little earlier than usual and waking everyone up a little earlier than necessary to keep the morning from tumbling into running late mayhem. For example, lay out clothes ahead of time, prep breakfasts as much as possible.
- Letting toddlers be part of the action. Help little siblings make a special card or drawing to put in sibling lunch boxes and let them help pack the lunches for the big siblings. You can even make a back-to-school lunch for your toddler to eat later in the day.

Doing something extra special with just your littlest. If your schedule allows, make a special stop on the way home from school drop off with your toddler to do something they really love. A short trip to the library, park, or play space can distract them from the feeling that they're missing out on something new their siblings are doing.

Ease the Sad Thoughts

It's normal for your younger child to feel sad and lonely when their older sibling goes off to school. When your child feels down about missing their big brother or sister, help them to think positively about how soon they'll be reunited and how fun it will be to tell them about the new craft they made, the new dance move they learned, or the puzzle they put together. It can be exciting for both children to share their daily experiences and help them stay bonded throughout the school year.

Continued on next page ...

Establishing a Routine

Once you've got the first few weeks of school under your belt, take the time to start making a few new family routines or traditions that guarantee your youngest child gets some of the whole-family-together time they crave. Plans like:

- Setting aside a family day, or even a few family hours, over the weekend. Make sure as many members of your family are available as possible during family time, and play a game, go on an adventure, or have a meal together as a whole family.
- Planning occasional "field trips" with your toddler - just like the big kids - maybe even visit the same places! Check out the zoo, the museum, anywhere your kids in school might go. That way, your little one can say "me too!" when they talk about all the wonderful things they saw.
- Sign your child up for something - It is hard to watch the siblings all go and do fun things. The youngest can really feel left out and left behind. Find a dance class, tumbling class, music class, or free fun activities at local libraries and community centers. Just something to look forward to and something to help your child feel like she has a life, also.
- Establish a special tradition with your toddler. Just you and them, no big kids allowed!

Give them a job - kind of. Kids can gain confidence, independence, and learn responsibility by helping with chores around the house, even when they are as young as 18 months. Often, they love to be involved and feel like they are helping you.

A playgroup can be a really fun thing for your little one. Find something in the community or you can set up your playgroup for similar age kids playing together.

It's easy to get caught up in the long back to school lists for older kids. It's a LOT of work, on top of the already packed schedules of most parents. It might seem scary and you might worry that your child won't know what to do with himself. It is an adjustment for everyone, but it can also be a joy and will build sweet memories. Remember the sweet times when you had just one child? You may have worried over the change that would come to that bond and that sweet time when baby number two was on the way. When you are down to just the youngest at home, this is when you revisit that one-on-one time – this time with a different child.

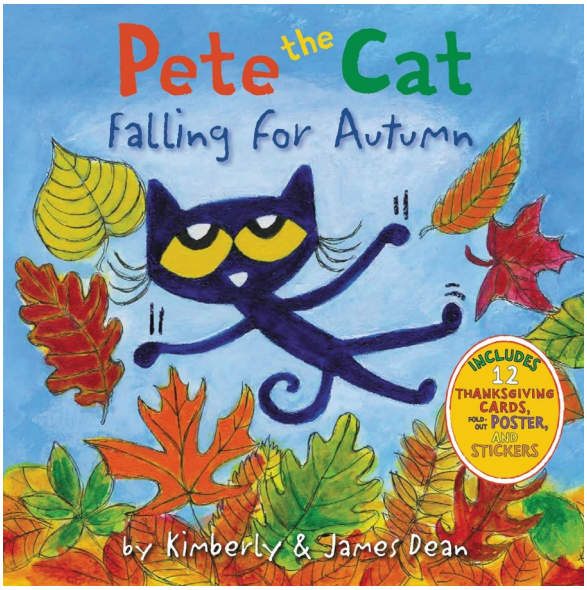
DaDada Baby (September 5, 2022). How to help your toddler adjust when the big kids go back to school. Retrieved from https://dadadababy.com/blogs/dadada-daily/how-to-help-your-toddler-adjust-when-the-big-kids-go-back-to-school?srsltid=AfmBOoqUb_01Szeemcr63xWbGilWWnRrA4rFuR-yCUllVxdHRMIS6wp7.

Kids R Kids (2022). Tips to help toddlers when older siblings go back to school. Retrieved from https://kidsrkids.com/avalon-park/2022/09/21/tips-toddlers-back-to-school/.

Plowman, V. (August 25, 2021). What to do with a young child while siblings are at school. Retrieved from https://www.babywisemom.com/what-to-do-with-youngest-child-while/.

Sisson, K, (August 18, 2023). How to ease sibling separation anxiety when your olders goes off to school. Retrieved from https://theeverymom.com/sibling-separation-anxiety-school/.

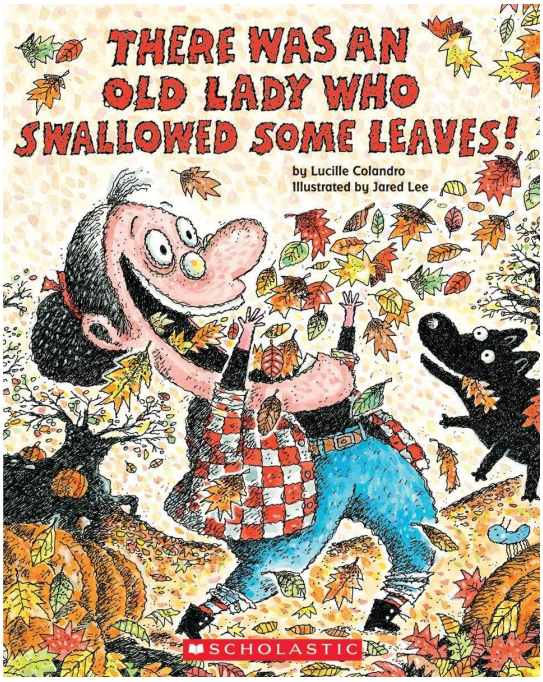
The Book Mommy (September 3, 2015). When big sis starts school. Retrieved from https://whattoreadtoyourkids.com/2015/09/03/sibling-relationships-by-lori-nichols/.



Pete the Cat Falling for Autumn

by James Dean and Kimberly Dean

Pete the Cat isn't sure about the changing of the seasons from summer to autumn. But when he discovers corn mazes, hay rides, and apple picking, Pete realizes there's so much to enjoy and be thankful for about autumn.

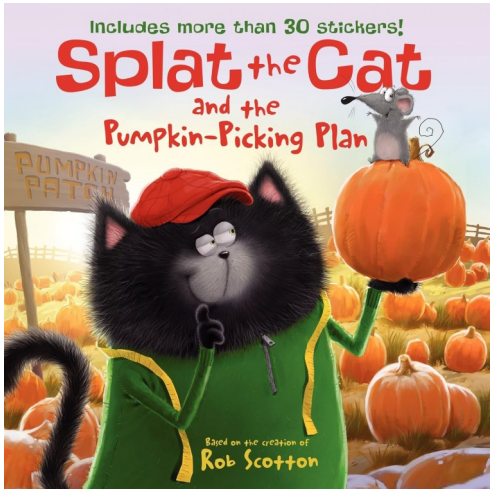


There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed Some Leaves!

by Lucille Colandro (Author), Jared Lee (Illustrator)

An autumnal twist on the classic song from the bestselling There Was an Old Lady series for kids! You'll never guess what she'll swallow next!

The Old Lady is back and this time she's swallowing some leaves, clothes, a pumpkin, and a rope! Welcome the Fall season with funny illustrations and a spin on a classic rhyme!



Splat the Cat and the Pumpkin-Picking Plan

by Catherine Hapka (Author), Loryn Brantz (Illustrator)

When Splat goes to the pumpkin patch with Seymour, he's determined to find the biggest pumpkin ever. But when he finally does, Splat finds out the real challenge isn't the pumpkin picking—it's how to get the pumpkin home!

FALL

BY WINIFRED C. MARSHALL

They're coming down in showers,

The leaves all gold and red;

They're covering the little flowers,

And tucking them in bed

They've spread a fairy carpet

All up and down the street;

And when we skip along to school,

they rustle 'neath our feet

West Virginia Birth to Three Growing Together

WV Birth to Three/RAU 7
1411 North Walker Street
Princeton, WV 24740
1-866-207-6198

MOUNTAINHEART
Community Services, Inc.
"Together We Can"

Dreama Padgett, Chief Executive Officer
Melissa Saddler, Program Director
Jason Gibson, Interim Service Coordinator
Vickie Hodges, Interim Service Coordinator
Katherine Dillow, Interim Service Coordinator
Stacy Anderson, ISC Assistant/Office Supervisor
Tammy Fleshman, Parent Partner/Editor
Laken Williams, Administrative Office Associate
Danielle Williams, Administrative Office Assistant