

The Forgotten Senses: The Importance of Proprioceptive and Vestibular Sensory Input on Self-Regulation

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Proprioception

Vestibular

Definitions	<p>External body awareness: The system is in our muscles, tendons, ligaments and joint receptors. It tells us where our body is in space and detects and controls force and pressure. It helps us to feel grounded and know where we are and what we are doing.</p>	<p>Balance and Spatial Orientation: The system in our inner ear responsible for changes in position, direction, or movement of the head. The system contributes to our body awareness, posture, muscle tone, balance, and gravitational security.</p>
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Proprioception

Vestibular

Seeking Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enjoys bumping, jumping, and crashing into both people and objects - Prefers rough play and always “wrestling” - Tends to stand too close to others - Craves pressure, squeezes, and bear hugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appears to be very hyperactive - Constantly in motion- running, jumping, spinning, climbing, leaning, etc. - Loves being upside down - Engages in fast, impulsive, or unintentionally rough movement, forceful - Unable to sit still for short periods
Seeking Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have students assist with classroom “chores” that puts pressure on their joints, such as carrying bags or moving chairs - Encourage safe and frequent climbing, jumping, and running - Use a weighted blanket, deep pressure squeezes, or bear hugs to provide pressure - Animal walks, wall push-ups, chair push-ups, and movement breaks - Encouraging crunchy snacks during lunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage playing on swings, bicycles, trampolines, and monkey bars - Provide a variety of seating options, such as wiggle seats, bean bags, or rocking chairs - Use footstools or resistance bands around chairs - Schedule regular times throughout the day to run in place, do push-ups, jumping jacks, or yoga

Proprioception

Vestibular

Avoiding Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoids hugs/other types of physical contact - Avoids physical play - Shows anxiety or extra caution around swings, slides, or other playground equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prefers sedentary activities and avoids playgrounds - Feels unsteady and needs support - Becomes nauseous with movement activities (cars, roller coasters, etc.)
Avoiding Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid hugs and other types of physical contact; offers high fives or fist bumps - Give verbal and/or visual cueing prior to activities with movement - Start with softer activities close to the ground and build up tolerance to larger body movements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold a child’s hand while walking or balancing to provide grounding and support to build confidence - Use a footstool if your child’s feet can’t comfortably touch the ground while sitting