

# ASD Family Help

**Pembrokeshire**

Registered Charity No. 1135718

## 5 Top Tips Autism and Sensory Difficulties

There are five main senses: **Visual**, **Auditory**, **Touch**, **Olfactory** (smell) and **Taste**. Along with three others: **Vestibular** (balance and eye-coordination), **Proprioception** (body position and self-movement) and **Interoception** (internal senses). Our senses work together to enable us to carry out daily activities and have good fine and gross motor skills.



Our Autistic young people often have sensory processing difficulties in the above areas and can be hypo-responsive (with low sensitivity, not enough sensory information) or hyper-responsive (with high sensitivity, too much sensory information). Or can be sensory seeking. When their sensitivity is not consistent, and this can lead them to feel overwhelmed and anxious. Leading to the '**Fight, Flight, Freeze**' response.

1. Try to get to know and understand when your young person is feeling sensory overload. What does this look like? are they masking, becoming overwhelmed and distressed. Which emotions are they responding to and why? Check the environment externally (lights, noise, touch etc.) and internally (emotions, feeling hot, ill, pain etc.)
2. Have a bag of tools / a plan / ideas to help your young person feel relaxed and safe again. Is there a quiet place for them to retreat to, a fiddle toy to play with, a blanket to hide under, a chew toy to chew on or allow them to safely self-stimulate (rock, hum, flap etc.)
3. Learn to modify the environment and your approach to help and support our young people to feel just right and safe.
4. Help your young person to learn what sensory difficulties they may have, how it makes them feel and encourage them to use their sensory bag of tools to feel ok
5. Look at introducing a daily sensory diet, make this fun and try and do this with them. If you need them to focus for an extended period of time or cope with an overwhelming situation, try and do your sensory diet before you start.

If you are unsure or worried, then look at trying to contact an Occupational Therapist who might be able to assess your young person.

**Do Look out for Sensory Workshop 6<sup>th</sup> Oct 9.45am to 12 noon – Booking Via Eventbrite  
Cost £4 (plus Eventbrite booking fee)**