

STRATEGIES TO HELP CHILDREN COPE WITH *Sensory Challenges*

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SENSORY CHALLENGE: VESTIBULAR

1. OVER-REACTS OR AVOIDS MOVEMENT

INSTRUCTIONS:

The Does Your Child? Section offers educational information about characteristics of children with the above mentioned sensory/behavior challenge. Your child may present with one or many of these characteristics.

The Try This! Section offers simple strategies for helping your child cooperate and develop skills. Not all suggestions are appropriate for every child and family. Only use strategies that apply to your child's age, developmental level, and situation. It is suggested to use this checklist while consulting with a professional who has explained and is monitoring these strategies.

>>> DOES YOUR CHILD?

- Get very upset when his feet leave the floor or when he/she is held in the air.
- Refuse or rarely climb, jump, or move over uneven surfaces.
- Seem anxious on the stairs.
- Avoid outdoor play or play ground equipment.
- Look "clumsy" when navigating his environment.

>>> TRY THIS!

- Verbally prepare your child for new movement. Tell him/her what you're doing.
- Let your child watch before expecting him/her to play.
- Go first! Show your child its fun and safe, but be sure to use a calm tone and measured facial expression.
- Verbalize how to use the playground equipment. For example say, "Go up the ladder and down the slide."
- Gently encourage your child to try new movements. Never scold, intimidate or coerce.
- At the playground, encourage him/her to sit on your lap while you sit in the swing or go down the slide. Your child may feel more secure.
- When walking through a cluttered area, go first and hold his/her hand.
- Reinforce his/her body awareness by frequently labeling body parts and playing a simple version of "Simon Says" to help your child imitate actions.
- Teach your child about spatial concepts such as "under", "next to", "on top", and "behind". This will help him/her follow directions when getting around his/her environment.