## **Sensory Differences**

People on the autism spectrum experience sensory processing differences or difficulties (sometimes called 'sensory processing dysfunction or disorder' or SPD) What does this mean for the person with autism?



- They may experience and respond differently to sensory experiences
- They may be hyper-sensitive (over) or hypo-sensitive (under) or a mixture of both
- They may experience sensory overload or sensory shutdown
- They may experience sensory distortion and sensory confusion

There are eight sensory channels:

- 1. Tactile touch and feeling
- 2. Auditory hearing and listening
- 3. Visual looking and seeing
- 4. Gustatory tasting and texturing
- 5. Olfactory smelling and sniffing
- 6. Vestibular balancing and moving
- 7. Proprioception positioning and coordinating
- 8. Interoception- Internal awareness, such as hunger, feeling hot or cold
- Some people are 'sensory seeking' and need to move in order to keep their brains active

Sensory tools or fidget toys can be very helpful for children, they can be stimulating, calming and help with self-regulation





