Sensory Processing and Integration

All of the information we receive about and make meaning of the world comes to us through our sensory systems: **Sight**, **Touch**, **Sound, Movement and Smell/Taste and Body Awareness**. Because many sensory processes take place within the nervous system at an unconscious level,we are not always aware of them. Just as our eyes detect visual information and relay it to the brain for interpretation, all of our sensory systems detect and relay information to be 'processed' and understood by the brain.

Some people can have very sensitive systems (**hyper-reactive)** that detect and process sensory input very quickly with great intensity. Others of us might be under reactive (**hypo-reactive)** to sensory input so we need and seek out more information to understand and gain the desired experience. (Think of someone who is very sensitive to smells versus someone who doesn't detect scent at all!)

When we talk about sensory input we are referring to:

Sight (Visual)
Sound (Auditory)
Smell (Olfactory)
Touch (Tactile)
Movement (Vestibular)
Body Awareness (Proprioception)

Touch/Movement/Body Awareness
Although the senses of touch, movement and body position are less familiar than vision, smell and hearing to most people, they are very important in helping us to function in daily life.
They are the foundation for the sense and orientation our body in space and awareness of body position, the amount of pressure or force needed to hold and manipulate items and contributes to overall motor planning and balance.

Sensory Integration
Children use their all of their sensory systems to help them learn, experience and make sense of their world. It can impact attention/focus, social/emotional reactions and interactions as well as adaptability to the physical environment.