**Sensory Integration: Understanding the World Around Us**

Sensory systems are gateways of information to and from the brain and body. Our senses make it possible to learn about the world around us. The brain must make sense of the varied sensory information from the body and the environment to respond to events, pay attention, learn, plan and organize. This process is called “sensory integration.”   For most people, sensory integration develops naturally through ordinary childhood activities. For some people, sensory integration does not develop as efficiently as it should, challenging how a child responds and interacts with the environment and others around them. For instance, some people cannot hear as well if they cannot see the source of sound clearly. In other situations, seeing something move, such as a train, can make people feel like they are moving, too. The brain must make sense of the varied sensory information from the body and the environment to respond to events, pay attention, learn, plan and organize.

**Children who have difficulty processing sensory information may:**

* Appear wiggly
* Be slow to learn new motor skills
* Be sensitive to clothes
* Described as “smart but lazy”

**Creating an Effective Intervention**

Pediatric occupational therapists use their knowledge of sensory integration during therapy to address the underlying sensory and motor foundation that help a child learn new skills more easily. Our approach is individualized to each child and family’s functional needs. We explain our observations of children’s strengths and challenges so family members see how their child’s difficulties processing sensory input can impact activities in daily life.