

“I am often very sensitive to smell. So new playground balls, PVC items, and other items with a strong aroma may bother me and cause me to get anxious or aggressive, but I may not be able to tell you why.”

“I am super sensitive to light touch! Light touch (like brushing away my hair or slightly bumping into me in line) also activates my flight or fight response. Think about how you react when you run head on into a large spider web for example. The natural tendency is to panic and thrash out.”

1.Solutions:

- Open up new equipment and remove plastic wrap a day or two ahead of time to let the new product “breathe” and help dissipate any aromas.
- Avoid perfumes/men’s cologne, aftershave, or other synthetic-based fragrance products.

2.Solutions:

- Make sure I am in the back of the line so I won’t have anyone behind me, and I can see who is ahead of me.
- For younger students, a rope line with touch rings to and from the playground/gym can help define an allotted distance between me and other students and help keep my spatial boundaries safe.
- Deep touch pressure is calming to me and does NOT activate my light touch flight or fight response. Deep touch pressure activates the proprioceptive sense (information from muscles and joints which give us our body awareness). This input helps release neurotransmitters for calming and helps me know where my body is in space. Ways to give deep touch pressure include:
 - Carrying, pushing, or pulling something heavy (medicine balls, the PE activity cart, Body Sox, or Co-Oper Band).
 - Wearing a pressure or weighted vest. Getting a deep pressure hug (if I ask for and/or agree to receive it).

“I like my body spatial boundaries well defined. This also helps keep me calm and organized.”

“I may have trouble getting through the whole class without a meltdown.”

“Visual schedules and timers can help keep me from having a meltdown.”

“You can give me signals when I need to activate my self-regulation sensory tools. These are quick exercises that will give me some much-needed deep touch pressure input to stay calm and focused.”

3.Solutions:

- Duct, painter’s, or gym tape or similar boundary lines.
- Bases or spot markers.
- Hoop ring to mark where I need to stay.
- Visual cues during activities.

4.Solutions:

- Backward chaining can help me stay in class and learn. Bring me into the full class participation only in the last 10-15 minutes of class and help me do something successful!
- Allow me to have at least 1 break during class to go use the restroom or water fountain (these are places where I can calm down and regroup) without it seeming so obvious.
- See #6 below for Self-Regulation.

5.Solutions:

- Using an app or kitchen timer is the perfect tool to help me understand how much time is left
- Use actual photos or picture icons of what activity I am currently doing and what activity/step, etc. is coming next.

6.Solutions:

- Stand with feet together and hands together at midline or “prayer pose”. Push hands together and hold to count of 3 and release. Repeat.
- If standing, do wall pushups leaning hard with upper body and pressing hands into a wall. Release and repeat.
- If sitting, do chair pushups by leaning forward in chair and putting hands under thighs. Lean forward and try to get feet a few inches off floor by pushing up on hands. Release and repeat.

“I may be awkward and not well coordinated because of motor planning and/or muscle tone issues”

“I do not always understand the subtleties of verbal and non-verbal communication (social/pragmatic skills).”

“I am super sensitive to noise! My auditory system is like a super Spidey sense to me. I may have trouble tuning out all the background sounds in a noisy gym, like the acoustic echo from a bouncing ball, the shouts of other kids, or the loud HVAC system. These loud sounds can activate my flight or fight response making me want to run, kick, scream, or hide. I can't participate very well when everything is so LOUD!”

7.Solutions:

- Be sure to include me in simple 1-2 step tasks so I can build on my success.
- Video Modeling is a great way to teach me to learn a new skill if I can watch it first before trying (such as the SPARK dance videos).

8.Solutions:

- Teach me about idioms such as the one found in “We can't have PE outside today because it is raining like cats and dogs.” Help me understand that this is not literal but a way to describe that it is raining very hard.
- I often don't know how far away to stand from someone when I am talking/engaging with them, so again using gym tape, spot markers, and/or hoops may be helpful.

9.Solutions:

- A set of noise canceling headphones is usually the best portable solution. Ear buds may look more inclusive but are less effective.
- Acoustic panels, such as those found in restaurants or music halls, may also be helpful.

“Group activities may just be too overwhelming for me.”

10.Solutions:

- Pair me with a peer tutor or another classmate I already know who can model the skills and behaviors I need to learn.
- Let me know ahead of time when we will be working in groups or teams.
- Pre-selecting groups will ensure I am not left out.