**Red Flags for Infant Sensory Processing**

To figure out if the baby's sensory processing abilities are typical or not, look at the reaction the infant has to various sensations. Although most infants do not enjoy their noses being wiped or clothing being changed, they should recover quickly from their fussiness. Babies who respond to sensations with more intensity and take a long time to recover may have a sensory processing problem known as over-responsiveness. In comparison, some babies who are described as being overly good may also have slow sensory processing as noted by being under-responsive to sensations. These babies are described as "laid-back" and may not cry much or be interested in interacting with toys and/or people. This can result in delays in development especially in the areas of language and motor skills.

**TOUCH**

* Dislikes hugs and may arch when not held "just right"
* Feeding problems
* Difficulties with self-soothing and calming down
* Dislikes "tummy time"
* Doesn't explore toys with his mouth as expected for a baby
* Sleep problems: takes longer to fall asleep and doesn't stay asleep for long
* Irritable during diaper changes, getting dressed, and/or bathing

**VISION**

* Does not give eye-contact when spoken to even when there aren't many distractions
* Does not want to look at toys
* Eyes are not aligned or able to track a moving object
* Sensitive to the sun and certain types of lighting

**HEARING**

* Fussy in loud environments
* Does not turn to person talking to him or act as if he hears the speaker, yet passed hearing tests and doesn't have an ear infection
* Doesn't babble or make baby noises or does so on a limited basis

**TASTE/SMELL**

* Picky eater- picky about formula or baby food and dislikes textures such as stage 3 baby food or certain finger snacks
* May "pocket" food and not feel it in the roof of the mouth or inside of cheek, especially with blander tasting foods
* Gags or vomits easily with foods and/or smells, in which the behavior is not related to infant reflux

**PROPRIOCEPTION**

* Skips motor milestones such as crawling or is late with motor milestones such as rolling, crawling, and walking
* May dislike maintaining a crawling or standing posture due to putting weight through extremities
* Dislikes playing with push or pull toys for assisted walking
* Falls over when turning his head to the side to look away
* Gets stuck in postures and unsure of how to move, such as when rolling one way, then can't roll back the other way
* Has low muscle tone and tires easily
* Decreased exploration of body parts such as sucking on fingers or playing with his toes
* "Locks" out extremities when in a crawling or standing position and has poor balance reactions
* Delayed with reaching and play skills

**VESTIBULAR**

* Delayed with motor skills such as rolling, sitting, crawling, or cruising along furniture and poor balance reactions
* Dislikes head tilted backwards such as for a diaper change or when being held by an adult who bends over
* Low muscle tone and seems to have low endurance for motor skills, may feel floppy
* Dislikes unexpected movements such as being tossed in air or bounced
* Overly active with excessive climbing, rolling, crawling, and/or walking
* Responds slowly when listening, moving, or looking at people or objects

Early detection and intervention is extremely important for the future learning and social success of children. Early identification focuses on enhancing development and minimizing potential developmental delays of infants and toddlers. Research has shown that children’s earliest experiences play a critical role in brain development. Neural circuits that create the foundation for learning, integration of the sensory systems, behavior, and health are the most flexible in the first three years of life. This time is crucial to address any concerns you may have about a child’s development to ensure future success especially in the school environment

Play activities are essential to healthy development and learning. Through play children develop the necessary motor skills, sensory processing abilities, language, socialization, emotional wellbeing, creativity, and problem solving required for life occupations. Children learn through their senses and by treating the lower levels of brain processing first such as sensory functions, developmental milestones, and social-emotional processing, it helps lay the foundation to promote success in higher-level cortical tasks such as reading, writing, mathematics, problem solving, and sensory processing. Play that links sensorimotor, cognitive, and social-emotional experiences provides an ideal setting for brain development. Therapeutic activities are chosen specifically for an individual child to help meet their goals of living to their fullest.

If you feel your child would benefit from Pediatric Village services, please do not hesitate to call. We provide free sensory processing screens.