

# S.E.N.S.E. ©

## **Making SENSE out of the situation! By Angie Voss**

Use this very simple strategy to help understand and address any and every challenging moment and when the question comes to your mind...is this sensory or behavior? How can I help my child?

**S.** Stop, assess the situation, do not assume it is "behavior"

**E.** Environment change

**N.** Note the child's response to the environment change

**S.** Sensory strategies and tools

**E.** Embrace the positive and learn from the moment\_\_\_\_\_.

**S.** - Try not to simply react, it is important to analyze the situation to determine if there is a sensory trigger. Do not force the child through the situation, this can create further negative reactions from the nervous system. Also maintain a calm and objective state of mind, this will only benefit the situation. A sensory kiddo co-regulates via the people around them...if you are stressed or angry or panicked...this will create further dysregulation.

**E.** - Change the environment, even if only briefly, this can help you determine if there is indeed a sensory trigger. It will also give yourself another minute to assess the situation. And when I refer to changing the environment...this can simply be turning the T.V. off in the room, as the auditory input may be too much for the child.

**N.** - Notice how the child responds to the change...watch closely for body language, pattern of breathing, tone of voice, etc...this will tell you so much about the state of the nervous system. If you see a positive change...then you are on the right track, if not, change something else.

**S.** - Implement sensory strategies right there on the spot...from deep pressure touch to a head compression or letting your child bury their head into your chest and you give them a bear hug...to offering a sensory retreat, a squish box, a weighted blanket or noise cancelling headphones. The sensory tool and strategy may also be something as simple as a Camelbak water bottle or encouraging deep breaths. It may also be leaving the group play date a little early if needed. The list goes on and on....

**E.** - Embrace the moment as a learning experience and developing more understanding and respect for your child's sensory needs and differences. Do not let frustration get in the way, or letting thoughts like "how do I fix this?" or writing it off as another bad experience. Learn from it...respond with respect....and embrace your child for who they are and will become, and remember that they simply want to be loved and understood.

Angie Voss, OTR

<http://asensorylife.com/sense.html>