Individuals with sensory processing disorders, or sensory integration dysfunction, often have a combination of responses to sensory input. Depending on the type of input, some are sensory seekers, some are sensory avoiders, some have difficulty with motor output, and some have difficulty with discriminating input.

Individuals that have difficulty with sensory-based motor disorders may have dyspraxia (or postural disorders). There are different types of dyspraxia. Some individuals have general dyspraxia, some have difficulty with processing vestibular or movement information and some have difficulty with processing touch and information from their body in a way that allows them to plan, execute, or respond effectively. This creates a need for sameness and predictability, often resulting in difficulties with balance, coordination, social skills, fine motor skills, play, and behavior.

Because there are different types of dyspraxia, there are a wide variety of strategies that should be used. It is helpful to work with your occupational therapist on strategies for specific types of dyspraxia.

The following are general indicators and characteristics of some individuals with dyspraxia:

- Difficulty with balance and coordination
- Like routines and predictability
- Rule-bound/want to do things their own way
- May seem controlling
- Difficulty with social skills and play, especially when novel
- Clumsy or awkward motor skills (sometimes affecting speech)
- Difficulty establishing a dominant hand
Difficulty with ADL’s, especially fasteners and tying shoes
Disorganized
Difficulty with handwriting, cutting, and coloring
Difficulty with imaginative and creative play routines
Always moving and on-the-go
Speech/Language difficulties

**Strategies for dyspraxia in the classroom**

- Use of visual supports to build routine
- Use structured tasks to teach skills
- Break down activities and tasks into visual or written steps
- Prime and prepare for changes
- Structure work and play and introduce changes strategically, providing opportunity for planning and problem-solving
- Consult with OT regarding movement-based and sensory needs, including use of playground and PE activities at school
- Consult with SLP for speech/oral motor strategies
- Use of visual reminders for directionality on desk or worksheets
- Provide near point copies or shortened-writing assignments
- Consider technology for written output
- Provide individualized amounts of extra time to complete challenging work
- Use strengths and interests to motivate
- Recognize that stubbornness may be an outward sign of dyspraxia versus disobedience.
- Adapt activities to allow success with a “just-right-challenge”