

HYPERSENSITIVITIES IN CHILDREN: IS IT SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER?

How to Tell if Your Highly Sensitive Child is Suffering from Sensory Integration Dysfunction.

Hypersensitive children often react to sounds, feelings, and other experiences that make them feel uncomfortable. Many parents worry that their hypersensitive children have [sensory processing disorders](#) that need professional intervention.

Highly Sensitive Child vs Sensory Processing Disorder

Having a highly sensitive child [does not necessarily mean](#) that you have a child with a sensory processing disorder, also known as sensory integration dysfunction. Many children are highly sensitive to specific types of stimuli such as loud noises, background noise and other people's emotions. A highly sensitive child may also want to avoid crowds, fear unexpected touches, or dislike playing games.

Having a few of these sensitivities may suggest that a child has a sensory processing disorder, but it could also mean that the child simply has a few noticeable quirks.

When Quirks Become Disorders

Those quirks and sensitivities do not become signs of a sensory processing disorder until they start having serious consequences in the child's normal, daily life.

A child who cringes at the sound of a flushing toilet is certainly hypersensitive, but he or she probably does not have a sensory processing disorder unless there is a drastic response, such as making loud noises to cover the sound or dropping to the floor with hands pressed tightly against the ears.

Distinguishing Sensitivity From Disorder

It isn't always easy to distinguish hypersensitivity from actual disorders, but knowing how to recognize some signs may help you see the difference. Highly sensitive children often [react to certain stimuli](#) such as:

- Information
- Sounds
- Smells
- Touch
- Emotions
- Sights

Encountering a trigger will make them uncomfortable. They may even act out in unhealthy ways that make hypersensitivity look similar to some disorders.

When the child's trigger is not present, though, he or she will seem typical. Disorders usually express themselves consistently. They are often daily barriers that make normal life extremely difficult.

Hypersensitivity, although a life-changing experience, is not as disruptive.

You may also distinguish hypersensitivity from an actual disorder by how the child responds to treatment.

Hypersensitive people can [often manage the condition](#) by:

- Choosing situations that don't include triggers
- Taking a pause to reflect on stressful situations
- Using headphones to block out troublesome sounds
- Knowing their limits
- Meditating or praying regularly
- Getting enough sleep, or even taking a nap before a stimulating situation

If these simple techniques work, the child almost certainly has a hypersensitivity instead of a disorder. In addition, Sensory Processing Disorders may also include issues balance, motor control, or body-spatial awareness.

Resource: <https://www.brainbalancecenters.com/blog/hypersensitivities-children-sensory-processing-disorder>