



Therakids

Addressing the Needs of Educators and Planting the Seeds of Classroom
Wellness.

Sensory Seeking Behavior

It seems as though some children are always putting objects in their mouth. It can be anything from crayons, pencils, toys, clothing, and paper; pretty much anything they can put in their mouths. An oral fixation is common in children at a young age, but when it extends to an older child it can be a signal of something more. Biting, sucking, and tongue movements all provide feedback to our sensory system. These children are trying to find the right balance to make themselves feel calm and alert. They often like rough activities – bumping into objects with their bikes, wrestling, high climbing on the playground, etc. For these children sitting quietly at their desk or taking a long car ride proves to be a very difficult task. This is when they can be seen chewing on their clothes, or other items to help provide their bodies with the sensory stimulation they need. The other type of sensory child is the sensory sensitive. These children become more overwhelmed in noisy situations. They tend to be more anxious and show signs of stress easily. It may appear as if these children are acting out. Their stress can present as aggression, distractibility, trying to escape the situation, separation anxiety, among others. When these children are feeling overwhelmed, they will chew or bite on a nearby item to help calm their bodies. These children bite or chew as a calming strategy because it provides their body with proprioceptive feedback. If you have concerns about a particular child, please contact your therapist!

Oral activities to help with sensory feedback

- Older kids can be given gum
- Other crunchy snacks-apple chunks, carrot sticks, celery, crunchy cereal
- Vibrating toothbrush
- Your therapist can also recommend chewelry, a chewy pencil topper, chewy tube, among other things.

Physical activities (heavy work)

- Jumping on a trampoline
- Swimming
- Running
- Jungle gyms
- Riding a bike, scooter
- Pogo stick
- Climbing a tree
- Moving desks in the classroom
- Stacking/unstacking chairs with supervision

Helpful Websites:

- Kidcompanions.com
- Chewytubes.com

Therakids p.c. provides specialized occupational, physical and speech therapy services to help children overcome developmental concerns. Services are provided in the school setting throughout southwestern Illinois by licensed occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, physical therapists, physical therapists assistants and speech-language pathologists.
Website: www.therakids.org