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Sensory Profile and Autism

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The sensory processing difficulties of children with ASD have been widely recognized. However, there are few studies focusing on the sensory processing characteristics of young children with autism. This presentation will focus on the sensory characteristics of children under three years of age with a diagnosis of autism, as reflected on the "Infant and Toddler Sensory Profile (ITSP)" (Spanish and English version) questionnaire by Dunn (2002). The ITSP is a parent questionnaire utilized to measure the impact of sensory processing on functional performance in the daily life of a child. It is designed to contribute to a comprehensive assessment that helps establish the child's strengths and weaknesses, and develop an intervention plan.

Objectives:

- Describe sensory processing characteristics of young children with autism as determined by the ITSP.
- Determine the need for additional information when assessing children under 3 years of age with a possible diagnosis of ASD

Methods:

A sample of convenience of 100 parents of children between the ages of 18 and 36 months attending an early intervention program completed the ITSP as part of their intake packet information. Data will be presented in frequency tables with a subsample of 3 case studies.

Results:

Children under 3 years of age diagnosed with ASD often exhibit sensory processing difficulties

The ITSP in Spanish and English can be utilized to grossly identify sensory processing issues in children with ASD

Conclusion:

The ITSP is a commonly used tool in clinical practice, however determining sensory processing issues in children with ASD also requires direct observation

Contributions:

Identification of the characteristics of the sensory needs and strengths of a child with autism can guide the intervention planning and contribute to the effectiveness of the treatment intervention and service provision to young children with a diagnosis of autism.

- Support and complement clinical observations and other standardized assessments, by providing supplemental information regarding the child's natural environment.
- Assist parents in providing specific information regarding how sensory information affects the child's daily routine.
- Valuable information to improve the quality of life of children and their families.