

# Fire Prevention for People with Sensory Processing Disorders

OSFM FIRE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION SERIES

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# Housekeeping

- **USE CHAT OPTION TO LET US KNOW WHERE YOU'RE JOINING FROM AND YOUR ROLE IN FIRE SERVICE**
- **USE CHAT OR HAND-RAISE TO ASK QUESTIONS**
- **WEBINAR IS BEING RECORDED**
- **WILL BE ADDED TO THE OSFM TRAINING LIBRARY**



# Training Objectives

- **DEFINE SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER VS AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER**
- **NEED FOR HOME FIRE SAFETY PLANNING**
- **TECHNIQUES AND CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**
- **STRATEGIES TO LESSEN MELTDOWNS AND SHUTDOWNS**



# What is Sensory Processing Disorder?

- **SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER IS A CONDITION IN WHICH THE BRAIN HAS TROUBLE RECEIVING AND RESPONDING TO INFORMATION THAT COMES IN THROUGH THE SENSES.**
- **SOME PEOPLE WITH SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER ARE OVERSENSITIVE TO THINGS IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT.**
- **SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER MAY:**
  - **BE UNCOORDINATED**
  - **BUMP INTO THINGS**
  - **BE UNABLE TO TELL WHERE THEIR LIMBS ARE IN SPACE**
  - **BE HARD TO ENGAGE IN CONVERSATION OR PLAY**



# What is Sensory Processing Disorder vs Autism Spectrum Disorder?

- **SENSORY PROCESSING PROBLEMS ARE USUALLY IDENTIFIED IN CHILDREN. BUT THEY CAN ALSO AFFECT ADULTS. SENSORY PROCESSING PROBLEMS ARE COMMONLY SEEN IN DEVELOPMENTAL CONDITIONS LIKE AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER.**
- **ABOUT 1 IN 54 PEOPLE**
- **CHILDREN WITH SPD TEND TO HAVE MORE PROBLEMS WITH TOUCH THAN DO THOSE WITH AUTISM, WHEREAS CHILDREN WITH AUTISM STRUGGLE MORE WITH SOUND PROCESSING**



# Possible Signals of Autism Spectrum Disorder

- **DIFFICULTY COMMUNICATING**
- **LACK OF REASONING OR COOPERATION**
- **SENSE OF DANGER CHALLENGE**
- **LOW COMPREHENSION**
- **HIGH PAIN THRESHOLD**
- **TOTAL SHUT DOWN OF THE INDIVIDUAL**
- **SELF-STIMULATORY OR REPETITIVE PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR**
- **MAY HAVE A POORLY DEVELOPED TRUNK POSTURE**



# Sensory Stimulus

- **MAY NOT LIKE THE FEEL OF CERTAIN MATERIALS**
- **MAY BE SENSITIVE TO SMELLS**
- **MAY SEEK OUT FIRE**
- **MAY HAVE STRONG REACTION TO SIRENS OR FLASHING LIGHTS**
- **MAY NOT FEEL PAIN**
- **MAY NOT ALLOW YOU TO TOUCH THEM**



# Higher Risk

- **PROPENSITY TO RETREAT TO FAVORITE HIDING PLACE WHEN FEELING THREATENED**
- **FEAR OF FIREFIGHTER WEARING A MASK**
- **RE-ENTRY ATTEMPTING TO FIND PRIZED POSSESSION**
- **RISK FOR FLIGHT WHEN OUTSIDE DUE TO LIGHTS, RADIOS, EMERGENCY VEHICLES**





# Sunflower Lanyard / Mask

- **HIDDEN DISABILITIES**
- **TO INDICATE NEEDING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT, HELP, OR A LITTLE MORE TIME**



# NFPA Guidelines


- **SMOKE ALARMS**
- **TEACH “GET LOW AND GO”**
- **PLAN A VISIT TO FIRE STATION**
  - Design and use Social Story cards/pictures
- **CREATE AND PRACTICE A HOME ESCAPE PLAN**
- **ASSIGN SOMEONE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL WITH SENSORY PROCESSING OR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS**
- **IF INDIVIDUAL IS NONVERBAL, CONSIDER TEACHING THE USE OF A WHISTLE TO ALERT**





# Smoke Alarms




**SMOKE ALARMS & PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENCES IN SENSORY PROCESSING**  
#KnowYourBeepingAlarm



**DESENSITIZE TO THE SOUND**   
During testing use headphones, earplugs, or a towel to muffle the sound. Gradually reduce the amount of muffling until the person can handle the full sound.

 **ALLOW SOME CONTROL**  
Allow some control over the testing if possible. Let them choose the day. They can tell you when to start and when to stop the sound.

**DEVELOP A "SAFE PLACE" MENTALITY**   
If there is already a "safe outdoor place," make that your meeting spot. Celebrate at the meeting point during home escape practice.

 **ENCOURAGE SELF-SOOTHING**  
Encourage deep breathing, finger drumming, or humming (if your health care providers approve) to calm them during a smoke alarm activation.

Remember: not all techniques work for every person. Consult with your healthcare provider to find what works best for you or your family.

# Fire Safety

- **IMPORTANT TO KEEP LIGHTERS AND MATCHES LOCKED**
- **PLACE SAFETY COVERS OVER GAS STOVE AND OVEN KNOBS**
- **SUPERVISE CLOSELY WHEN THERE'S AN ACTIVE FIRE SUCH AS FIREPLACE OR BARBECUE WITH OPEN FLAME**
- **FINDER WINDOW STICKERS TO SEEK INDIVIDUAL UPON SCENE ARRIVAL**
- **DEVELOP SOCIAL STORIES + PICTURE CARDS ABOUT SMOKE ALARMS, FIRE DRILLS, TOUCHING FIRE**



# Fire Safety Planning

- **A “MUST” FOR FAMILY MEMBER WITH SPD OR ASD**
- **DEPARTMENT HOME VISITATION:**
  - Schedule tour including location of bedroom
  - Social stories: either read or spoken which can help kids develop scenario and socially appropriate response before the event
  - Practice is key: sound of alarm and home evacuation prior to emergency
    - Family member to escort



# In Case of Fire

- **JUST AS LIKELY TO HIDE TO GET AWAY FROM THE NOISE AND UNEXPECTED SITUATION**
- **MAY RESIST MOVING DURING FIRE EMERGENCY**
- **STEP BY STEP APPROACH FOR EXPLANATION**
- **MAKE COLLEAGUES AWARE OF YOUR SUSPICION SO EVERYONE IS AWARE**
- **MAY WANDER OFF OR BOLT AFTER RESCUE**
- **NOISE OF SMOKE ALARM MAY CAUSE FLIGHT INTO OTHER DANGER**
- **CHECK CLOSETS, UNDER BED, BEHIND FURNITURE**



# Communicating with Person with SPD or ASD

- **ALWAYS USE THEIR NAME**
- **SAY LESS AND SAY IT SLOWLY**
- **PROVIDE ONE INSTRUCTION AT A TIME**
- **DON'T USE TOO MANY QUESTIONS, KEEP THEM SHORT**
- **USE VISUAL SUPPORTS SUCH AS PHOTOGRAPHS**
- **BE AWARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT**
- **AVOID USING IRONY, SARCASM, RHETORICAL QUESTIONS, SAYINGS, OR EXAGGERATION**



# Communicating with YOU

- **GESTURES**
- **LOOKING AT THE OBJECT THEY WANT, OR MOVING AWAY FROM THE OBJECT THEY FEAR**
- **USING PICTURES**
- **HIGH LEVELS OF ANXIETY, ESPECIALLY IN UNFAMILIAR SITUATIONS AND WHEN MEETING SOMEONE FOR THE FIRST TIME**
- **CONSIDER PREPARING THE FAMILY FOR YOUR VISIT BY SENDING INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF, PHOTO, IN ADVANCE**





# Meltdowns and Shutdowns

- **PROVIDE REASSURANCE ABOUT THE SITUATION**
- **ALWAYS ASK THE PARENT/ATTENDANT IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO HELP**
- **NOT ALL CALMING STRATEGIES WORK ALL THE TIME**
- **MAKE SPACE – QUIET, SAFE SPACE AS BEST YOU CAN AWAY FROM INFORMATION OVERLOAD**
  
- **RUMBLE STAGE: HEADPHONES OR REMOVING POTENTIAL TRIGGERS**



# Resources

- **AUTISMSPEAKS.ORG**
- **NATIONAL AUTISM SOCIETY**
- **[WWW.AUTISMPARENTINGMAGAZINE.COM](http://WWW.AUTISMPARENTINGMAGAZINE.COM)**
- **LOCAL SCHOOLS OR EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICTS**



# Fire Prevention and Education Webinar Series

**SMOKE AND CO ALARMS**

**APRIL 13, 2022**

**@1300**



# Thank you.

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