Parent Sensory Training Introduction Script

This script is for use by Interpreters and is planned to work alongside the slides in the power-point presentation. Please feel free to print this off if required, and then translate each slide in sequence and in time with the presentation. Each section of the training has a script available.

Slide 1:

Welcome to Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust's Community Paediatric Occupational Therapy team's Sensory Training for Parents and Carers. This training is designed to help you understand and develop sensory strategies to support your child.

During this training I will:

- **Explain sensory processing and sensory processing difficulties**
- **Help you to understand how you can support your child through every day by making life changes for all of the family.**
- **And explain some basic sensory techniques that you can use with your child**

The training is delivered in different sections: an Introduction, Information about The senses, Sensory strategies you can use with your child.

And finally there are two samples of a sensory timetable that you might find helpful in making a plan for your child and family. One is for Early Years and Primary school aged children and the other is for older secondary aged children.

> **When you have completed this training we hope that you will practice some of the skills with your child for at least 3 months. You can then contact our Administration team who will invite you to attend a one-off virtual group where you will meet with other parents and carers and one of our occupational therapists for further advice.**

Slide 2:

Sensory processing is a function of the brain and the spinal cord.

Sensory information comes to us from our environment and from our bodies all of the time, information is received by sensory receptors and transported to the brain.

Once information is received the brain needs to understand what information to attend and respond to and equally importantly what information to ignore because it does not require a response, this is information about such things as the feeling of clothing or of repetitive background sounds.

The next process is what response or action is needed; for example:

- to put a jumper on because of feeling cold.
- to use more muscle strength to push the door open.
- Or to run away or fight – if feeling in danger.

All of this is sensory processing.

Sometimes the brain is unable to identify information that requires a response from the less important information it can ignore; this is when the brain is paying attention to all incoming sensory information, such as constantly being alert to the sensation received from clothing, or of sounds. This level of sensory awareness can cause distress.

Slide 3:

Good processing happens when the brain receives information in a way that can be used to plan a meaningful or an adapted response such as putting on that jumper.

It is good processing when the response or action taken is at the 'just right' level.

For the most part, good processing is not noticed by others as the response is what is expected or typical.

Slide 4:

We notice when someone is experiencing poor processing because their responses or reactions are not typical.

Reactions can be extreme, such as being very distressed and crying because of a loud noise, OR not reacting after falling over and injuring themselves.

What we see is that there is a miss-match between the level of response and the sensory situation.

The child is not able to adapt to or function within their sensory environment.

Slide 5:

Poor sensory regulation is when a child is unable to respond to a sensory situation in the 'just right' way. What we see is the result of chemical changes within the body.

Some children will respond with a fight-flight-freeze reaction.

These are all self-protection responses, and are a reaction of the primitive part of the brain.

Some children will always respond to sensory situations in the same way, others will vary day to day and hour by hour.

Slide 6

These flight-fight-freeze responses will involve the release of adrenaline or cortisol into the body. This is not a choice, this response happens automatically and very quickly.

These hormones work by changing normal processes within the body, such as stopping digestion, supressing hunger, and they will increase the heart and breath rate preparing the body to act.

The release of these hormones effectively stops access to the thinking, planning part of the brain, which means that a child in this state cannot make a 'good choice' or listen to advice.

Slide 7

Throughout the following training you will be given information about techniques you can use to prepare your child for expected sensory challenges. These techniques include desensitisation, and 'heavy work' to help your child learn how to respond in more typical ways.

If your child is aware of their difficulties you can also use techniques to plan how to respond to new situations and learn through practice how to react differently. To do this use Social Stories, and 'how am I today?' tools such as thermometer gauges (these are demonstrated in the Sensory day section later in the training). You can also do an internet search for these tools.

Slide 8

The senses:

We all know the five main senses. Touch (tactile), taste (Gustatory which is taste and mouth touch), smell (Olfactory), sight or vision, and Hearing (Auditory).

In addition we are going to talk about three more senses which are important to understanding sensory experiences and to help you support sensory processing for your children. These are Proprioception, which is the muscle sense, and tell us what our body is doing. Vestibular this is the sense that tells us how our body is moving and where we are in space. And finally Interoception, which is the sense that tells us if we are hungry, full, hot or cold.

We will talk about the senses separately; this is in order to understand what each sense does. However in reality our senses work together and we are always processing experiences through several sensory systems at once.

This is the end of the Introduction. Please go to Sensory Training Part Two Touch/Tactile.

It is recommended that you view each of the different senses information in the following sections of this training. However you can just view the senses that you know are challenging for your child. Each part of the training has information to explain how that sensory system works and some general techniques that you can use to support your child. Thank you.