What is it?

Our interoception system is an internal sense that comes from receptors in our organs, muscles, and skin. This system helps us sense and feel being hungry versus full, thirsty, temperature changes, bathroom needs, changes in heart/ breath rate, muscle tension, tired, pain, itch, nausea, and emotions. Interoception is the basis for how we feel and experience emotions.

What are Signs of Proprioception Differences?

Your child may demonstrate difficulty with the following:

- Toileting (i.e. bedwetting and accidents)
- Recognizing hunger or thirst and feeling full
- Recognizing pain and having an appropriate reaction
- Knowing how loud their voice is
- Identifying emotions and managing them
- Becoming distracted by internal senses (i.e. listening to their heart beat)
- Knowing the difference between various sensations such as hungry vs angry

How Can I Help My Child?

- Use a visual scale to rate different sensations (i.e. how hungry are you on a scale of 1 to 5)
- Model when you feel different sensations and emotions (i.e. "I feel hungry in my tummy" or "My heart is beating fast, I feel excited")
- Read books about emotions and discussing them
- Social stories
- Child friendly mindfulness and yoga

Tips When Trying New Strategies:

- Pay attention to your child's response and discontinue if the strategy being used is causing more distress.
- Be patient, we all respond to differently to sensory strategies
- Give your child more time to process questions such as, "how are you feeling"

How Can an Occupational Therapist Help?

- Become comfortable and aware of different sensations
- Improve emotional recognition and management
- Increase independence and participation in daily activities such as toileting, eating, sleeping, etc.

Consult with your occupational therapist for an individualized plan to meet your child's needs