



# *The Tactile System (Touch)*

## *What is it?*

The tactile system helps us to feel different textures (rough, smooth, sticky, slimy etc.), pain, temperature, and pressure (light vs deep).

## *What are Signs of Tactile Sensitivity?*

Your child may become upset or avoid the following activities:

- Messy play (i.e. crafts using glue, finger paint, playing in the mud or sand)
- Self-care tasks (i.e. washing face or hair, brushing teeth brushing hair)
- Dirty or wet clothes
- Certain clothing items (i.e. tags, jeans, buttons, seams)
- Hugs or physical contact with others
- Tickling

Children can also demonstrate increased sensitivity for pain and temperature.



# *How Can I Help My Child?*

- Deep pressure activities prior to engaging in stressful tactile input (i.e. massage, hand squeezes)
- Sensory play with various media starting by introducing dry then wet/sticky textures (i.e. beans, play dough, shaving cream)
- Alternative clothing options (i.e. tag-less, soft cotton materials)
- Fidgets and stress balls

## *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

## *How Can an Occupational Therapist Help?*

- Help your child to become comfortable with different textures
- Increase your child's success during self-care tasks while decreasing distress
- Develop preparation activities for engaging in new tactile experiences

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

