

A Guide to Discussing Sensory Concerns

Whether you are a parent of a child with sensory needs or a teacher who has concerns about a child in your class, here are some ideas for how to start a constructive conversation about addressing kids' needs in a positive and respectful way.

If you are a teacher who has concerns about a child's sensory needs, ask the parent:

- 1 || Do you notice the same behaviors at home that I'm noticing in the classroom?
- 2 || What works at home (calming strategies, strategies to promote attention, strategies to help regulate behavior)?
- 3 || What are the biggest challenges at home?
- 4 || Are there any patterns surrounding the child's behavior (e.g. situations that typically cause a meltdown, ways to tell when a meltdown is coming, times when is the child most calm)?
- 5 || What are the child's likes/dislikes (rewarding/comforting objects, tasks, activities, and types of interactions)?
- 6 || What are the child's biggest worries or fears about school?
- 7 || What is the child most excited about when it comes to school?
- 8 || What does the morning routine and after school routine look like at home?
- 9 || How is the child sleeping and eating?
- 10 || How does the child interact with his or her siblings? Are siblings demonstrating similar behaviors?

Notes:

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If you are a parent who has concerns about your child's sensory needs, ask the teacher:

- 1 || Do you notice the same red flag sensory behaviors in the classroom that I am noticing at home?
- 2 || What are the biggest challenges the child faces at school? What seems to be the most challenging environment (classroom, cafeteria, hallways, special classes like gym/music)?
- 3 || Which strategies have worked in the classroom and which have not worked?
- 4 || What does the daily/weekly schedule look like? [Ask for a copy to keep at home].
- 5 || How is the child doing at lunch, recess, music/art/gym/library?
- 6 || How is the child interacting with his peers?
- 7 || Is the child able to follow along with classroom routines and schedules?
- 8 || When do you see that the child is happiest/most calm/most attentive during the day?
- 9 || What is the child's biggest strength in the classroom?
- 10 || Tell about any specific sensory behaviors you see at home and ask if they are also present at school (e.g. chewing on clothing, rough play, sensitivity to sounds, etc.)

Notes:
