

The brushing protocol can help children transition to daily activities and overcome their flight or fight responses.



WHAT IS THE BRUSHING PROTOCOL?

Wilbarger deep pressure and proprioceptive technique.

The Wilbarger deep pressure and proprioceptive technique (DPPT), which in the past was referred to as the Wilbarger Brushing Protocol, refers to the specific sensory modulation techniques developed by Patricia Wilbarger, MED, OTR, FAOTA.

WHAT IS DPPT USED FOR:

DPPT was created to help address sensory defensiveness. Sensory defensiveness is the over-responsiveness of the protective responses of the nervous system (flight or fight system). This technique uses a prescriptive method of providing deep touch stimulation to help the brain and body self-regulate. When done correctly, deep touch and proprioceptive input releases calming neurotransmitters that help the body overcome flight or fight responses on a neurological level. This program helps teach the brain to calm down.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS:

- An improved ability to transition between various daily activities.
- An improved ability to pay attention
- A decreased fear and discomfort of being touched (tactile defensiveness).
- Increased body awareness.
- Enhanced movement coordination.
- Ability to tolerate a variety of new textures in daily routines.

WHAT IS SENSORY DEFENSIVENESS:

Sensory defensiveness is a term used to describe people who are over-responsive to sensory input. Sensory defensiveness affects the daily functioning of children at home, school and in social circumstances. Those with this condition may avoid, withdraw, or even lash out at any stimulus they perceive as negative. These consistent patterns of behavior limit opportunities for exploring their environment, interacting with peers, or communicating their needs. There are different types of sensory defensiveness, such as; tactile (touch), gravitational (movement and balance), auditory (hearing), visual (sight), and oral defensiveness (taste, smell, texture). The following are examples of sensory defensiveness:

- Tactile-aversion to tags in clothing, light touch, brushing hair and/or avoidance of play activities that involve bodily contact.
- Gravitational-aversion to swinging or other types of movement, nausea or vertigo, fearful reactions to movement.
- Auditory-fearful reactions to noise, covering ears, consistent humming.
- Visual hypersensitivity to light or avoidance of eye gaze.
- Oral defensiveness pertains to certain odors, tastes, and smells that others do not seem to mind.



WHAT DOES DPPT INVOLVE:

The DPPT uses a specific pattern of proprioceptive stimulation delivered using a special type of brush (Therapressure Brush) followed by gentle joint compressions is applied every 2 hours for at least two weeks. The DPPT protocol may be used between these scheduled two-hour sessions when a person becomes overwhelmed, triggered, when waking up after having a nightmare, and before and/or after difficult transitions.

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