

# Autism & Aspergers Consulting, LLC.



## An Integrated Solutions Approach

www.aactnow.com

### CORPORATE PROFILE

#### Type of Business

Health Care Consulting

#### Number of Locations

Two Office locations, with clients in Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Mexico.

#### Number of Employees

Nine

#### Size

60+ Clients

## Dysfunction in Sensory Integration

By James J. Deehr

Our senses help us interpret the world. They provide us with billions of bits of information each second to help us create our own perception of the world so that we can react and survive. Remove one of our senses and the world suddenly makes less sense. Have you ever tried standing on one leg with your eyes closed? If you try it, you'll notice it is considerably more difficult than doing it with your eyes open.

Our body utilizes seven senses to help us interpret the world: visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory (taste), olfactory (smell), vestibular (our sense of balance) and proprioceptive (our awareness of ourselves in space). For most people these senses have been devel-

Have you every wondered why children are consistently jumping and moving but you hardly ever see adults doing the same activities?



oped through play during their childhood. Children intuitively are developing their sensory system as they mature and play. One of the many results are that they can self-regulate in increasingly advanced ways.

But for some children, particularly children with Autism, their sensory systems do not develop properly. As a result they begin to interpret and respond to sensory messages in unusual ways.

They receive the same messages as the rest of us, but may be unable to filter, interpret or control the messages. Similarly to a large traffic jam, the system shuts down, becomes overwhelmed and stressed and seeks ways to restore balance.

Children with sensory issues show many different reactions but some of the most common are: oversensitivity to touch, movement, sight or sound, unusually high or low activity levels, acting impulsively, inattentiveness or fidgeting, a poor sense of body awareness, poor or uncoordinated motor skills, becoming easily fatigued, poor oral motor skills and difficulty with transitions.

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## Vaccines: What are they made of?

Controversy continues regarding the link between autism and vaccines. Regardless of which side of the issue you are on when it comes to childhood vaccines, you might find it helpful to hear about some common ingredients in most vaccines. For example, most multiple dose vials contain thimerisol, a form of mercury (known to cause nerve damage), formaldehyde (a major

component of embalming fluid), aluminum (possible connection to brain damage), micro-organism contaminants (live or killed bacteria) and/or neomycin sulfate (interferes with B6 absorption). As new information becomes available, it is important to stay informed about this topic and consult with your child's physician to make the best possible choice for your family.

Autism & Aspergers Consulting, LLC, believes the use of childhood vaccines is an individual choice and does not endorse any particular position in this matter.



Vaccines like those for rubella are available as single doses.

## Dysfunction in Sensory Integration (Continued)

For children with Dysfunction in Sensory Integration (DSI) it is important to provide them with repeated activities to help integrate and regulate their sensory system. Autism & Aspergers Consulting, LLC, uses a two-part strategy to help children who show signs of DSI. The first step is to provide a Sensory Diet. The purpose of a sensory diet is to provide the child with sensory experiences which help the child

feel better. If the child is over aroused, a calming activity is used. If the child is under aroused, an invigorating activity would be more appropriate.

The second step is to provide Sensory Integration activities to help the child's nervous system adapt, respond and more efficiently process sensory information. In some instances mildly uncomfortable sensory ac-

tivities are conducted with the child (touching something slimy for example) and the child is encouraged to interact with the stimuli, but is never forced in any manner. By repeatedly exposing the child to the stimulus, the stimulus goes from being unpredictable in nature to a predictable sensory experience. Also, the neuronal circuit is exercised and much like a muscle becomes stronger and more

efficient in processing stimuli of this sort, causing the body to adapt in a more normal way to new sensory experiences in the future.

Although DSI is a complicated and difficult problem to overcome, with the help of the correct approach, and diligent implementation of programming, many children can significantly improve in the area of Sensory integration.

## Q & A with the President.

**Question:** In your literature, Autism & Aspergers Consulting refers to "An Integrated Solutions Approach." What does "Integrated Solutions" mean?

**Answer:** Our integrative approach is based upon ABA principles and research. We combine other approaches and research to create new and unique programming while remaining true to the fundamentals of ABA and the proven Lovaas curriculum.

Many people confuse eclectic and integrative. In eclecticism, one applies different therapy techniques "as is" without modification of the original format or necessarily believing in the theory that generated the technique. An integrative method takes proven techniques and molds them following ABA principles thereby generating new theories. To make an analogy, eclecticism is like having a large menu and ordering any type of food you want at random where integrative is like fusion cooking

that combines known dishes and flavors to create something completely new.

**Q:** What types of approaches do you use for your clients?

**A:** We use the BASIC IM model when evaluating a client's needs.

**B- Behavior:** Use principles of reinforcement, conditioning and extinction.

**A- Affect:** Use verbal and visual techniques to demonstrate acknowledgement and help clients clarify and understand feelings.

**S- Sensory:** Use Sensory Integration and stress release techniques.

**I- Imagery:** Teach clients to use visualization as a coping skill and to create positive self-image.

**C- Cognition:** Cognitive therapy techniques to heighten awareness, learn concepts and cognitively restructure thought patterns.

**I- Interpersonal skill development:** Use modeling and assertiveness training; develop social skills while dispersing or restructuring unhealthy interpersonal rela-

tionships.

**M- Medical:** Joint effort with doctors to coordinate medical treatments such as medication, diet and health supplements.

**Q:** Why include these methods in your program?

**A:** We believe in selecting the best treatment approach based upon what has worked for similar clients in the past. Why fit the client to the therapy when we can fit the therapy to the client.

**Q:** Are all of these techniques used for every child you work with?

**A:** No. Again, we see each child as an individual requiring different programming. We have standard curriculums for each disorder based upon research and clinical practice, but we also have support programming which varies tremendously from client to client. For example for young children with Autism we use the Lovaas curriculum and the Verbal Analysis approach, but we support these pr-



*James Deehr is the founder of Autism & Aspergers Consulting, LLC. In addition to clinical supervision, he also lectures around the country on various topics regarding special needs children.*

grams with Greenspan's Floor-time Interventions, Sensory Integration techniques, cognitive techniques and Applied Social Learning Theory.

**Q:** What do you feel are the benefits of an integrated intervention over a singular approach?

**A:** An integrated approach increases the potential for the best possible outcome for every client. When using a unified approach, it becomes teachable and usable for those implementing the



## **A Letter To Myself**

by Cynthia Cano

*This letter is addressed to myself to be read exactly three years from when my youngest son was first diagnosed with a disability.*

*Dear friend,*

*I know how completely devastated and afraid you are right now but I want you to know that I'm here for you. I know you feel like this is the worst thing that could have happened to you, and you feel like you are trapped inside a nightmare and can't wake up, but you are not alone. I'm here right beside you holding your hand and I will never let go.*

*I want you to know that I can look into the future and I promise you everything will be okay. Life isn't over and you will find your way out of the darkness you are in. Although this may seem and might very well be your most challenging situation in life, you will prevail. There will be bad days, but the good days will be sweeter and filled with more joy than you thought possible. Your son's accomplishments will propel you to experience a happiness that is written about by poets and great authors, but understood only by those who have been awakened and understand the simple everyday miracles in life.*

*I want you to know that this isn't a test or a punishment, simply the path your life has taken. You need to release yourself from any feelings of guilt over how this happened or if you are doing all you can for him. You will do everything possible to help him and stand by his side through it all. In the next three years to come he will open your eyes and provide you with secrets and understandings about life that you would have never been able to comprehend yourself. He will demand that you reach deep inside yourself and be braver, stronger, and more determined than you thought capable of. Also, I urge you to take time everyday (especially when he is sleeping and still looks like a little angel) to acknowledge his exquisite perfection at that moment and be thankful that he was sent here just for you.*

*Finally, I want you to dig your feet deep into the ground, hold on, and remember to keep breathing. Then, unclench your fists and let your arms go because this will be the ride of your life. If you don't ground yourself and find your balance you will fall, but if you hold on too tight and close your eyes you will miss the entire ride. So please try not to worry too much. Your son will guide you when you are lost, he will calm you when you are afraid, and most importantly he will fill you when you are empty. Remember I'm here for you, it's okay to cry and feel sad when you need to, but know that all things pass. Time stops for no one and he will only be this age once. Enjoy him, enjoy life, and feel everything.*

*Love,*

*Isaac's mom*



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**An Integrated Solutions Approach**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
[WWW.AACTNOW.COM](http://WWW.AACTNOW.COM)

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*Founded in September 2001, Autism & Aspergers Consulting, LLC, strives to provide the highest quality individualized in-home behavioral treatment for children between the ages of 2-15 with special needs. Since the company's inception we have led the way in innovative curriculums to dramatically improve children's lives. Our work is based on that of Dr. Ivar Lovaas whose research indicated 47% of children in the study recovered from their disorder when certain treatment conditions were met. We have taken this powerful approach and combined it with the latest advances in therapeutic intervention, including Floor time interventions, Sensory integration, Natural Environment Training and the Verbal Analysis approach. Although many of our client have a diagnosis of Autism, we also treat children with Aspergers, Traumatic Brain Injury, Cerebral Palsy and Downs Syndrome. In addition to in-home treatment programs we also provide informational workshops, school consultations and Family Mental Health Services.*

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