Tactile (Touch) Sense

Two different systems:

Discriminatory: Tells you where and what you are touching. So that we don't have to rely on visual cues.

Protective: reacts to light and unexpected touch and alerts us to danger.

Both work together to protect us and help us to adapt to different sensations

If not in balance child or person can experience touch as painful, intrusive and anxiety provoking, sometimes the anticipation of touch can cause reaction (e.g standing in line, being in a crowd)

Child can also seek touch, usually deep pressure touch.

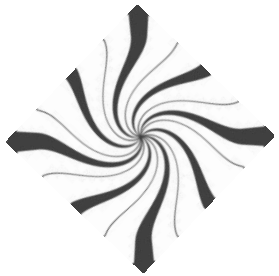
Visual Sense

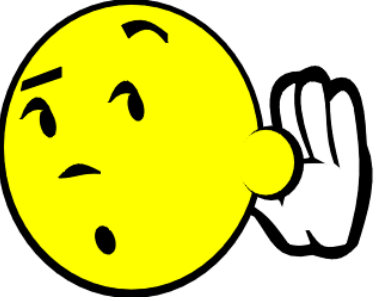
The perception of light, shape and movement, visual integration helps to attach meaning to things in the environment.

Children can be both attracted by and disturbed by light levels.

Flashing lights, fluorescent lights and sudden lights can cause behavioural reactions.

Light levels can also be soothing and calming



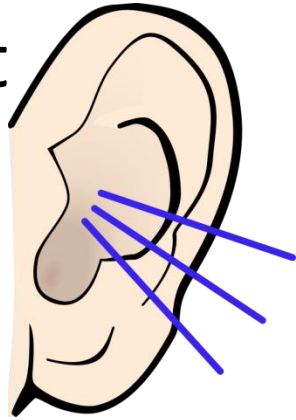


Auditory (hearing) sense

The sounds we hear and ability to listen and discriminate, works with the other senses to make sense of what we hear.

Sudden loud noises can alert.

Background noise can be hard to filter out and disproportionate attention can be paid to it



Gustatory (taste) and Olfactory (smell) sense

Receptors in the tongue and the nose.

In the tongue can distinguish sweet, sour, bitter and salty. These are important to keep us safe from harm.

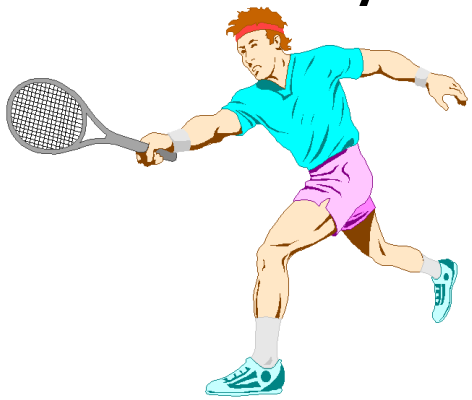
The nose provides us with information from particles in the air, directly linked to the brain smell can activate emotion directly, creates memory and this can influence our reaction to future smells

Proprioception (position and movement)

Information from our muscles and joints which tells us about our body's position in space, without reliance on visual input.

Important for smooth movement.

Children with poor proprioception have difficulty doing things with their eyes closed



Vestibular (Gravity, head movement. and balance)

Situated in the inner ear, receptors respond to gravity and the position of the head to tell us where we are in relation to gravity, whether we are moving fast or slow and in what direction.

Difficulties with the vestibular system can lead us to feel dizzy and to motion sickness, Children with poorly integrated vestibular systems can feel insecure when their feet are not on the floor or alternatively can spin without getting dizzy