



We Improve Communication for Life

Have Sensational Holidays!

For most children the holidays are full of joy. A visit from their cousins, a new dress, gifts to unwrap, and grandma's pumpkin pie brings a smile to their faces.

But for children with a sensory processing disorder, these special holiday traditions can bring confusion, stress, and discomfort instead. Here are some tips to help make the holidays more enjoyable for you and your sensational child!

- Don't commit to attend every event – keep your routine as consistent as possible particularly naps and bedtimes.
- Everyday clothes might be better than asking your child to dress up or wear a new outfit made out of a different fabric than he/she is used to wearing.
- Host the family meal at your home rather than going to a relative's.
- Seat your child at the end of the table rather than the middle, where he/she would be surrounded by the touch, smell and noise of other people.
- Designate a "cozy corner" or "safe space" for your child that is away from other guests so he/she can get away from the commotion.
- Have at least one food on the holiday dinner table you know your child enjoys. Avoid pressuring your child to eat new foods but instead model how you enjoy trying new things.
- Try to maintain naps and bedtimes, as much as possible.
- Explain your child's difficulties to your family and/or friends in advance. Teach them how to interact with your child in a way that is accommodating to his/her sensory needs.
- Talk to your child about the upcoming events. Create a timeline or schedule together. Use pictures of friends or relatives that will be visiting. You can even use pictures of the dishes that will be served at dinner.

Our Occupational Therapy Department specializes in the treatment of children diagnosed with a Sensory Processing Disorder. To learn more about our services, or about SPD, please visit www.columbusspeech.org or call (614) 263-5151.