

WHAT IS INTEROCEPTION?

Interoception refers to our perception of what is going on inside our bodies and is responsible for feelings of hunger, thirst, sickness, pain, having to go to the bathroom, tiredness, temperature, itch, and other internal sensations.

Strategies for Supporting Interoceptive Functioning

Common calming sensory techniques for children

- Repetitive, rhythmic vestibular input (swaying, swinging, rocking)
- Deep pressure input
- Heavy work activities

Common alerting sensory techniques

- Providing more intense, frequent sensory input to help promote awareness
- Active movement breaks
- Frequent changes in position

Mindfulness activities

- Body scanning visualizations
 - Bringing awareness and attention to the different parts of the body and referring to the sensations of breath, heartbeat, gurgling stomach, the weight of the limbs, etc.
- Meditation
- Yoga

Language and communication strategies

- Providing kids with the language to describe what they are feeling
- Giving kids mechanisms and opportunities to communicate these internal sensations (using visual prompts, picture cues, communication devices).

Social Emotional Teaching Strategies

- Helping kids recognize, identify, and communicate feelings and emotions
- Expressing our own emotions clearly and modeling adaptive responses to our emotions
- Verbally labeling children's emotions as we see them at home, in the classroom, or in therapy
- Playing games and reading books related to emotions and feelings