

# HEARING

## Our sense of sound



### What is hearing?

Hearing is our sense of sound and it allows us to interpret noises from our environment.

It allows us to detect tone and pitch, a sounds direction and proximity to us, its volume and its timing, and so can tell us if we are in danger or convey verbal information.



### What does oversensitivity look like?

If you're oversensitive to it you might:

- notice tiny noises that others wouldn't and be bothered by them
- have difficulty recognizing tone or pitch
- have difficulty with things such as sarcasm or emphasis
- not always notice danger or being spoken to
- seek out certain sounds or make your own to replace unpleasant ones from around you
- find a lot of noise too much and that this noise can hurt
- avoid noisy places

### What does undersensitivity look like?

If you're undersensitive to it you might:

- not notice sounds such as being spoken to
- have difficulty recognising tone or pitch
- miss verbal cues such as sarcasm emphasis or emotion
- seek out sounds or make your own like banging objects or being in crowded noisy spaces
- have difficulty understanding language or conveying emotion in your voice

### What helps?

- noise cancelling headphones or ear defenders and background music
- avoiding loud and busy places
- avoid sarcasm if the person has difficulty with this
- try to communicating emotions verbally or using visual supports
- give extra time to allow them to process all the information
- warn before loud situations
- having strategies such as having a safe space to go to can help

### What helps?

- visual cues to support verbal information
- five-point scales to help them know their speaking volume
- avoiding sarcasm if the person has difficulty with this
- communicating emotions verbally so there's no confusion
- allowing us to listen to background music or noise, such as white noise, as this can help provide stimulation and keep us engaged

