

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

