

Making Sense of getting back to normal

Auditory processing



autism
wellbeing



We interact with the world through our senses.

Our sensory systems receive and process signals from outside our bodies: touch, taste, smell, hearing and sight.

They also receive and process signals from inside our bodies: proprioception (body sense), vestibular (relation to gravity) and interoception (body signals – e.g. hunger, and emotions).

Our ears hear auditory information that is then passed to our brains for processing.

Each of us has a different level of auditory information that we need in order to be regulated and in the “just right state” so that we function at our best, connect with others and learn.

It is likely that the world will sound very loud and confusing with lots of competing sounds.



Tips for helping others:

- Be aware that some people may find the increase in volume caused by more traffic and crowds, painful.
- Lots of different sounds, noises and voices can be difficult to distinguish so keep background noise low to help people focus on conversation.
- Use the person's name to get their attention so that they are more easily able to distinguish that you wish to talk to them.
- Some people may need to make lots of noise so that they feel comfortable, or to drown out other noises.
- Understand that some people find certain familiar, repetitive sounds very regulating.

Tips for helping ourselves:

- Take noise cancelling headphones, (or similar), with you when you are out so that you can use them when required.
- Get used to visiting shops and towns gradually, by choosing times that are less busy at first.
- Take things step by step and don't try to cope with too many changes at once.
- Be aware of changes in your auditory processing and be proactive in regulating yourself.
- Limit the amount of auditory information you are processing to a comfortable level.
- If loud or sudden noises startle you remember it's ok to take time out to calm yourself.