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**The Relationship Between Sensory Reactivity Differences and Anxiety Subtypes in Autistic Children**

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Autistic children are at greater risk of developing anxiety than their nonautistic peers. Sensory reactivity differences have been implicated as one of the risk factors. Specifically, sensory hyperreactivity has previously been linked to anxiety, including separation anxiety and specific phobia; however, minimal research has explored the influence of sensory hyporeactivity and seeking. Therefore, the present study examined the correlational relationship between sensory reactivity differences and anxiety subtypes in 41 autistic children aged between 3 and 14 years, using parent- and self-reported measures. We found positive correlations between sensory hyperreactivity and total anxiety, separation anxiety and physical injury fears. However, when controlling for autism traits, we found sensory hyperreactivity to be related to physical injury fears and specific phobia, and sensory hyporeactivity to be related to lower total and social anxiety. We found no significant relationships between sensory seeking and anxiety. These results indicate that sensory hyperreactivity and hyporeactivity might be implicated in specific anxiety symptomology. Our results also indicate minimal agreement between parent- and self-reported anxieties, which highlights the limitations of informant reports for anxiety and the pressing need for objective anxiety assessments for autistic children to be developed. Our findings have important implications for limiting the development of anxiety in autistic children and suggest that sensory reactivity differences should be considered when developing targeted interventions for certain anxiety disorders. Autism Res 2019, 00: 1-11. © 2019 The Authors. Autism Research published by International Society for Autism Research published by Wiley Periodicals, Inc. LAY SUMMARY: The present study found that when considering autism traits, greater sensory hyperreactivity, such as being oversensitive to sounds, was related to elevated phobia-related symptoms and sensory hyporeactivity, such as being under-responsive to touch, was related to lower total and social anxieties. Sensory seeking, such as a fascination with lights, was not related to anxiety. Our results have important implications for targeted anxiety interventions for autistic children. However, due to minimal agreement between the parent- and child-reported scores, developing more objective measures of anxiety would be beneficial.

**SOURCE** : [Autism Research](https://dgjc.docguide.com/external/106405/?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov%2Fentrez%2Fquery.fcgi%3Fcmd%3DRetrieve%26db%3DPubMed%26dopt%3DAbstract%26list_uids%3D31909874)