Checklist for a Family Living with
SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER

PATIENCE

I know it it sounds crazy & every parent should be patient. But when having a child with SPD, you really have to stay calm. They are extra sensitive & can definitely sense when you are upset, agitated, & frustrated. Trust me, it is FRUSTRATING! To have an appointment you need to get to but your child cannot find anything that "feels right" & is screaming & kicking on the floor. I just wanted them to get dressed! How hard is it? Well, now that she is older & can really explain it to me - it is so hard on them!

A SAFE PLACE

Home is a safe place. Have you heard that your child is an angel at school & the teacher probably thinks you are certifiably insane for thinking something is wrong with your child? But the second you walk through your door, you are dealing with a one-hour meltdown that nothing triggered? It is because they feel safe to be themselves at home. They have done what you have taught them & behaved all day. Hiding all of those extra-sensitive emotions. So have a room (or walk-in closet if you have one) that is his or her safe place. Make a sensory corner with a bean bag chair, sensory toys, books, & a weighted blanket. That is where they can go to have that much needed meltdown. The more you try to pull them out of a meltdown, the worse you will make it. They need to get through it. This is much different than a tantrum, so don't punish them.

ANXIETY BOX

My daughter writes her anxieties or worries on paper & seals them in a box to leave them at home - it works! Have your child decorate it to make it bullet proof - the anxiety cannot get out once you close that lid!

ROUTINE

Routine is very important to these kiddos. I try to keep a routine here, but I have teenagers & I notice the stress it puts on Angie when we have to run out unexpectedly. I always try to prep her for the day if I know we have things to do.

WATCH WHAT YOU SAY AROUND YOUR CHILD

I know that we all know this. But I know that Angie hates when I talk about her in front of her. It makes her feel bad. That is the last thing I want to do! If you are on the phone, take it to another room if you need to talk about any issues.

WEIGHTED BLANKET

These are a life saver in my home! For me too! The weight from the blanket naturally releases serotonin, which clams you. WE ALL need one!

DON'T WAIT & SEE

If you think your child has sensory issues - get them checked out! Don't do what I did with my older daughter Michaela and think they will grow out of it. They don't. I wish I had known. Not that she didn't turn out amazing - because she did - but I could have helped her when she was younger.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

I am bad at this one! But having a sensitive child is exhausting. Try to make time for yourself to refresh. I am going to start horseback riding lessons for myself - I can't wait to start! Whether you go to the gym, go for a long walk, just binge on your favorite show - whatever YOU need - make time to do it! Happy mommy = calmer mommy

DON'T BLAME YOURSELF

I am bad at this one too - what the heck did I do to my kids? I don't have SPD, but I definitely have anxiety - so at least I can partially relate to them. I feel so guilty. BUT, It is not my fault.

JUST BREATHE

The meltdown will be over and you can move on with it.