

Visual Stimulation

General Ideas

- Try wearing a big hat and some bright make-up when trying to encourage eye contact.
- Try wearing some glittery jewellery – chunky necklaces with bright beads are great.
- Use patterned sheets rather than plain ones in the child's cot. When you lay the child on the floor try laying them in a piece of brightly coloured material. You may also find it handy to have a large piece of black fabric to lay the child on if you are trying to encourage the child to look at a specific toy/object.

Toys to Make from Everyday Objects

- Cover Pringle containers with hologram or other shiny contact. Gold and red are often the best. It may help to put some beans or rice inside – just make sure it's sealed up well.
- Put some crumpled up cellophane in an onion bag, it makes a great sound when squeezed.
- Use lengths of elastic to hang toys/objects, strips of brightly coloured or textured fabric from baby capsule handles, the back of the car seat, pram etc.
- Use sticky backed Velcro to stick light toys/objects to car seats, pram liner, clothes, highchair tray etc.

- Make shakers out of film containers, used 600ml soft drink containers, 1L plastic milk bottles etc. You can stick some contact on these too.
- Use mirrors, Christmas decorations and crystals hung in windows.

Other Tips and Ideas

- Observe what lighting conditions your child sees best in.
- Glare and dark shadowy areas generally make it difficult for a child with a vision impairment to see.
- Good contrast between background and object being viewed, assists with vision. Black and white is one of the most contrasting colour combinations. Stripes in these colours often encourages looking.
- Try not to clutter the child's visual field with too many objects at once.
- A moving object can often attract visual attention, rather than a stationary one.
- Suspend one or two brightly coloured toys above the child approximately 30cm away, or within the child's visual field, when the child is awake and alert.
- Light should always fall on the object being observed and not shine directly into the child's eyes.

For more information contact the Children and Youth Services team at VisAbility.



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