

Handout for the Therapro webinar  
***In-Sync Child Activities to Help Kids Develop and Enhance Visual Processing Skills***  
presented by Joye Newman - September 10, 2024

The In-Sync Child and Therapro  
present

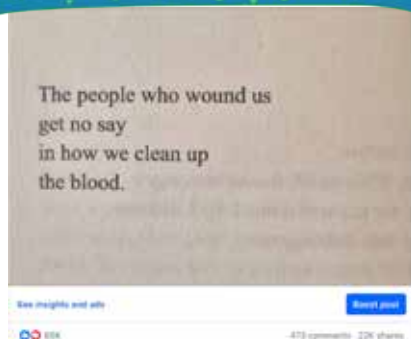
# ACTIVITIES FOR GETTING YOUR CHILD'S VISION IN-SYNC

Joye Newman, MA  
September 10, 2024

"A child is born with a pair of eyes,  
But not with a visual world.

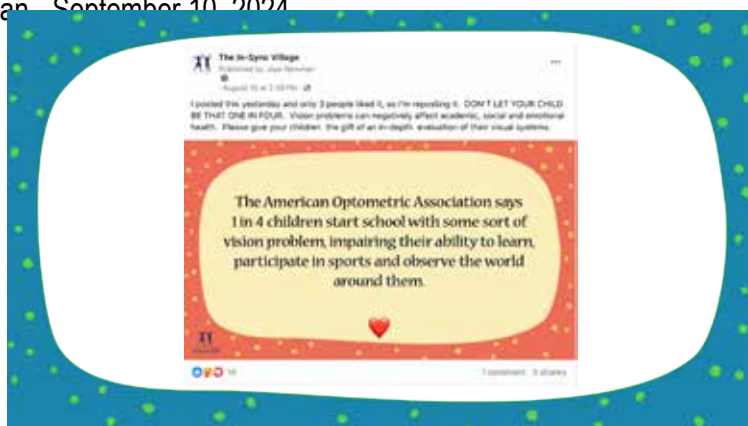
He must build that world himself,  
And it is his private creation."

-Arnold Gesell, MD, PhD



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**A study released in 2021, projects that over fifty percent of the global population will develop myopia by the year 2050.**

### **The Visual System**

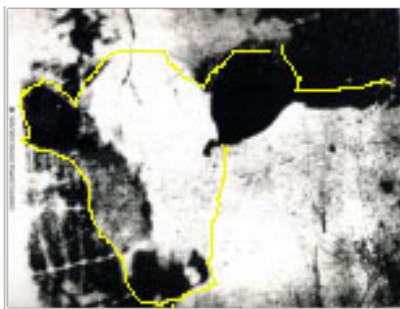
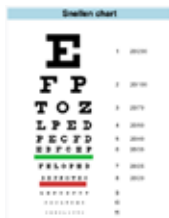
- Acuity
- Binocularity
- Fixation
- Tracking

### **Vision vs. Acuity**

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## Acuity

- Acuity is the measurement of sight, most often represented by the ratio 20/20.
- Is a measurement of sight only, and should not be confused with vision, which is the interpretation of what one sees.



**The brain is an amazing organ. It wants us to understand what we see.**

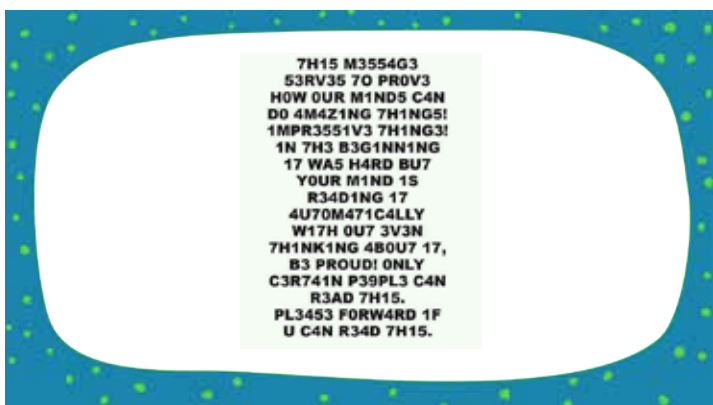
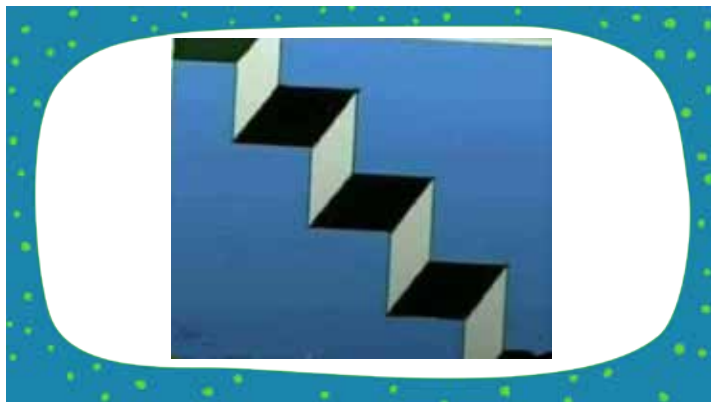
**The brain needs a "hook," or something it is familiar with in order to make sense of what we're seeing.....**

**How does one develop a "hook"?**




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### **Binocularity**



The ability to use both eyes together

### **We need BINOCULARITY for...**

- Depth perception
- Playing hopscotch
- Stepping onto an escalator
- Judging distances
- Catching a ball

### **Visual Fixation**



Focusing on one target for a period of time



## **We need FIXATION for...**

- Making and maintaining eye contact
- Taking in consistent visual information
- Completing art projects
- Reading

## **Visual Tracking**

The ability to watch a moving target with the eyes as it moves horizontally, vertically and in a circle, without any head movement.



## **We need VISUAL TRACKING for....**

- Crossing the street
- Catching a ball
- Playing sports
- Reading

## **Limit screens**

# **Go outside**

# **Use visual targets**

# **Be in a 3 dimensional world**

Simply moving through space is a visual activity.

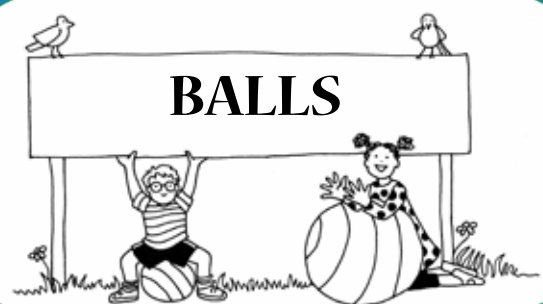
Add a target and it becomes more involved.

Change the way to move and make it fun.

**Hide and Seek  
Tag  
Scavenger Hunts  
Hopscotch**

## **Basic "Equipment" for Developing and Enhancing Vision**

- **Balls**
- **Balloons**
- **Bubbles**
- **Feathers**
- **Flashlights**



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- start by rolling on floor with both seated
- gently bounce the ball to the child
- bounce the ball to the child while standing
- gently toss the ball to the child

- use various size balls
- use variously textured balls
- vary the space where you play

### **Stop It, Cup!**



### **What You Need**

A tennis ball

Two plastic cups, preferably two different colors

### **What You Do**

1. Ask your child to sit on the floor at least 6 feet away from you.
2. Roll the ball from one hand to the other, stopping it by placing the cup on top of it. Say, "Watch how I stop this ball with the cup."
3. Slowly roll the ball to your child and have her stop it by placing the cup on top of it.
4. Say, "Now hold the cup with both hands. Catch the ball with the cup again." Roll the ball to your child and watch her capture it with both hands on the cup.
5. Give her the other cup and say, "Hold the red cup in one hand and the blue in the other. Now I'm going to tell you which cup to use to catch the ball." Roll the ball and call out, "Blue." Next, roll the ball and call out "Red." Call out the colors in random order.

### **Stop It!**

#### **What You Need**

A tennis ball



#### **What You Do**

1. Ask your child to sit on the floor at least 6 feet away from you.
2. Roll the ball from one hand to the other, stopping it by placing your open hand on top of it. Say, "Watch how I stop this ball with my hand."
3. Slowly roll the ball to her and have her stop it by placing her open hand on top of it.
4. Say, "This time, show me how you can stop the ball with your elbow."
5. Repeat the activity, asking her to stop the ball with other body parts, such as chin, knee, and foot.

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### **Ways to Make It More Challenging**

- Roll the ball at different rates of speed.
- Roll the ball slightly to her side, rather than directly to her.
- Have her play the game from a standing position.

### **Jump Up**



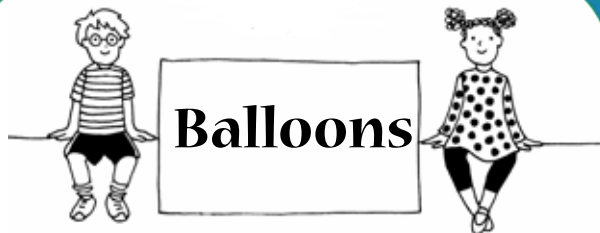
#### **What You Do**

1. Say, "Show me how you can jump up and down in the same place."
2. Say, "Now I'm going to roll this ball toward you. Show me how you can jump straight up in the air so the ball rolls right under your feet. Make sure your feet land at the same time. Ready?"
3. Roll the ball slowly toward your child's feet.
4. Say, "Each time I roll the ball, jump up. When the ball rolls under your feet without being touched, you get a point. How many points shall we score?"

### **Ways to Make It More Challenging**

- Roll the ball faster.
- Try to trick her by rolling the ball just enough to reach her, so it barely touches her feet. Say, "If you see that the ball is not going to roll under your feet, don't jump!"
- Use a bigger ball.

### **Balloons**



**Because a balloon moves slower than a ball,  
it's much easier to track.**

**Almost anything you can do with a ball,  
you can do with a balloon.**

**Try lying supine and  
keeping the balloon in the air.**

**Simply bounce the balloon in the air,  
keeping it up with your hand**

**Or your elbow**

**Or your knee**

**Or your foot**



**Play catch with a balloon.**  
**Alternate size, color,  
and shape of the balloon.**

**Have the adult lightly tap  
a balloon in the air.**  
**Have the child squirt the  
balloon with a water gun.**

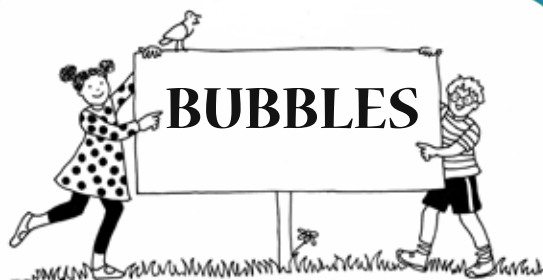
### **BALLOON BUFFOON**

#### **What You Do**

1. Point out the visual target, such as a tree, a parked car, the front door, or a picture on the wall.
2. Give Holly an inflated balloon and let her toss and catch it and otherwise experiment with it.
3. Say, "Hold the balloon between your hands and walk toward the target."
4. Say, "Hold the balloon with your elbows and move toward the target."
5. Say, "Hold the balloon between your knees and jump toward the target."

#### **Ways to Make it More Challenging**

- Vary the way in which Holly moves toward the target:
  - Jumping
  - Galloping
  - Quietly
  - Slowly and way up high
- Vary the body parts Holly uses to hold the balloon, such as:
  - Same side elbow and knee
  - Opposite elbow and knee
  - Ankles
  - Arms and torso
- Have Holly recite the alphabet or spell her name with each step, jump, etc.
- Challenge her and a friend to move around the space holding one balloon between various body parts, including:
  - Backs
  - Foreheads
  - Noises
  - Elbows
  - Different body parts from each other



Play Visions Touch A Bubbles -  
Bubbles Harden When They Contact  
The Air So Bubbles Do Not Break

**To introduce bubbles,  
just blow them gently  
and watch  
what the children do.**

**Try to catch one bubble at a time  
in a paper cup.**

**Hold the cup with both hands.**

**Use two cups, one in each hand  
and alternate hands.**

**Catch a bubble on one finger.**

**How many bubbles can you catch  
one on top of the other?**

**Can you build a bubble tower  
with each hand?**

**Squirt one bubble at a time  
with a water gun.**

**BYE, BYE BUBBLES**



Catching, clapping, squeezing, and popping bubbles encourage many important perceptual motor skills. Playing with bubbles is always wonderful because playing with bubbles induces works, fun, in a space where it's all right to get a little messy.

**What You Need**

- Bubbles
- Telephone book
- Paper towel tube
- Optional: toothpicks

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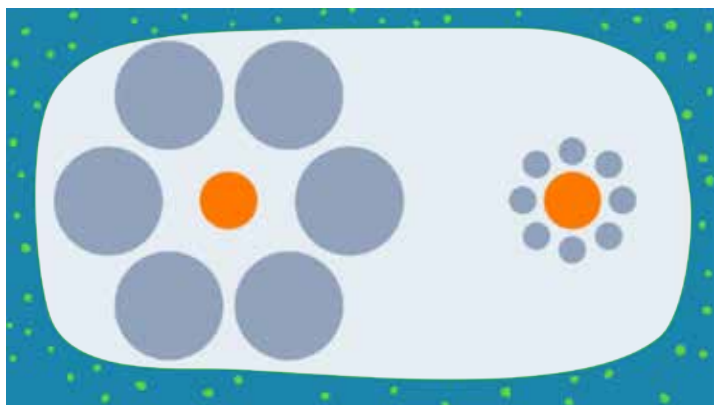
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### **What You Do**

1. Blow bubbles and ask Miri to catch them, any way she chooses. Try to blow only one or two bubbles at a time to make them easier to catch.
2. Ask Miri to stand on a telephone book to catch the bubbles.
3. Say:
  - "Clap a bubble between your hands. Just one at a time!"
  - "Squeeze one bubble at a time with one hand."
  - "Catch one bubble at a time, first with your right hand and then with your left hand."
4. Hold the paper towel roll vertically with both hands. Hand it to her and say, "Hold the paper towel roll this way with both hands. Try to catch a bubble on the top of the tube."

### **Ways to Make It More Challenging**

- Miri pops each bubble with toothpicks held in each hand, first using both hands working toward the middle on each bubble, and then using one hand at a time.
- She stands on one foot.



**Hold your feather way up high  
up high in the air.**

**Now let it go and watch it  
as it falls slowly to the floor.**

**Hold your feather way up high  
again. Now let it go and catch it...**

**With both hands**

**On the back of your hand**

**On your knee**

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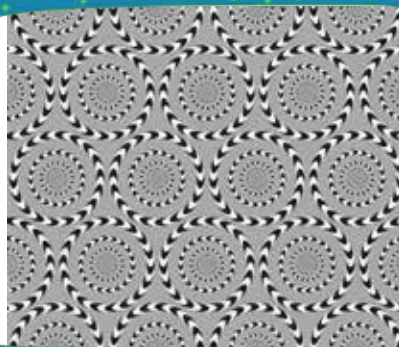
**While child is standing, ask the her to drop the feather from a height.**

**Challenge her to**

**Sit down and then catch the feather.**

**Spin around and catch the feather.**

**Clap her hands and catch the feather.**



### **Flashlight Tag**

**With child supine on the floor, hand him a flashlight and ask him to shine it on the ceiling.**

**Shine your light on the ceiling in a slow line so the child perceives it from left to right.**

**Ask him to shine his light on your light.**

**With child standing facing you, shine your light on the floor.**

**Ask the child to jump onto your light with both feet.**

**As she jumps, quickly move the light away.**

**Have child stand in front of a wall.**

**Shine your light on the wall and ask her to tap it with her hand.**

**As she begins to touch the light, quickly move it away.**

**To make it more difficult, call out the hand she should use to hit the light.**

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**Play the game horizontally and vertically.**

### **FOLLOW THE BUG**

#### **What You Need**

- Wall in a dimly lit room
- Flashlight
- Chair

#### **What You Do**

1. Have Sophie sit in an appropriately sized chair, that is, one that allows her feet to rest comfortably on the floor.
2. Say, "Sophie, hold this flashlight with both hands. Pretend that a bug is crawling along the line where the wall meets the ceiling. Shine your light on the make-believe bug."
3. Say, "Pretend the bug is creeping very slowly along the line, from left to right. Keep your light right on it! Keep your head still and use just your eyes."

#### **FLASHLIGHT FOCUS**



#### **What You Need**

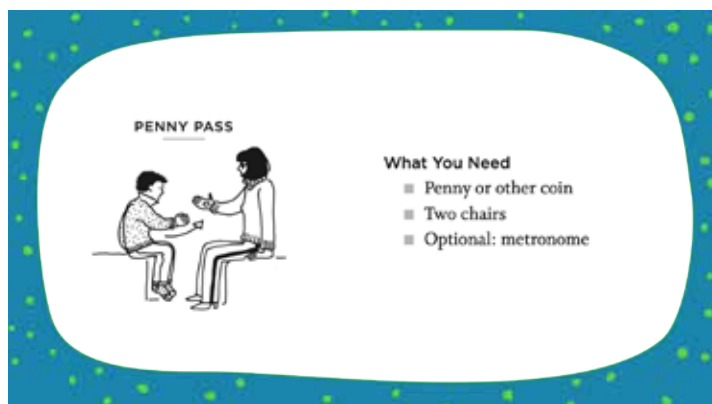
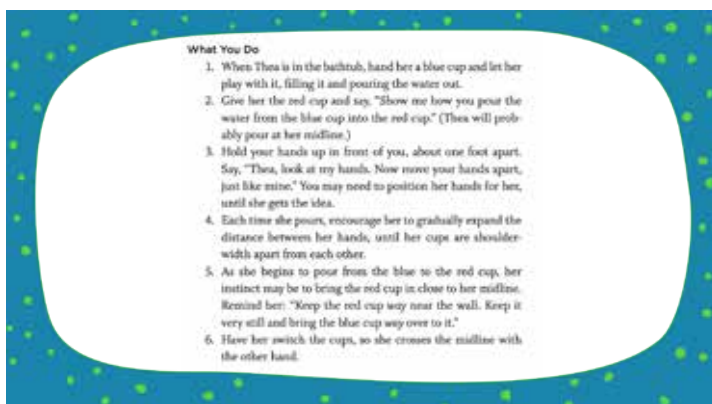
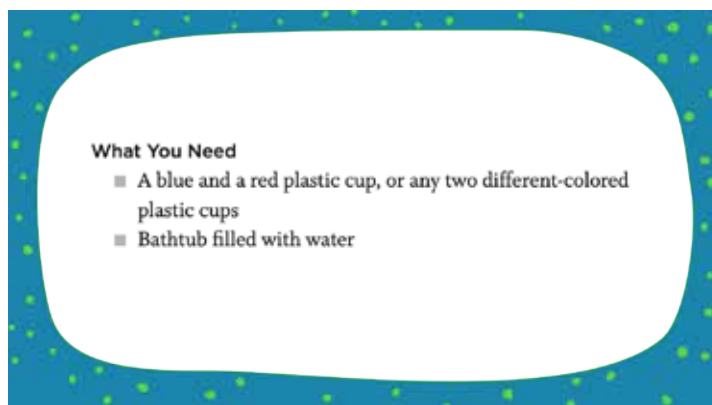
- Two flashlights
- Space to walk
- Optional: metronome

#### **What You Do**

1. Give Melissa one flashlight to hold in her right hand. Say, "Walk slowly across the room. Every time your left foot goes forward, shine the light on it."
2. Ask Melissa to put the flashlight in her left hand and shine the light on her right foot as she walks back to the starting point.
3. Give her the second flashlight so she holds one in each hand. Say, "Walk slowly and focus a light on a foot each time you take a step. Remember which light shines on which foot."



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## **What You Do**

1. Sit in a chair opposite Thom and show him a penny in your right hand.
2. Say, "Thom, watch my hand." Pass the penny from your right hand to your left hand, working slightly below Thom's eye level. Remind him: "Don't move your head, just move your eyes."
3. Say, "Thom, keep watching my hand." Then pass the penny from your left hand across to Thom's left hand.
4. Say, "Now just move the hand holding the penny and put the penny in your right (or 'your other') hand."
5. Say, "Now pass the penny to me." Hold out your right hand. Thom will cross the midline to pass the penny from his right hand to your right hand.
6. Repeat Steps 2 through 5, starting with your left hand.

## **PIPE CLEANER POKE**



### **What You Need**

- Three pipe cleaners in different colors, for example, yellow, red, and blue
- Optional: metronome

## **What You Do**

1. Twist the yellow pipe cleaner so that there is a circle at the top.
2. Stand in front of Doris. Hold the yellow pipe cleaner in front of her. Give her the red pipe cleaner. Say, "Show me how you poke your pipe cleaner into my circle and back out again very quickly. Keep your pipe cleaner in the center of the circle so it doesn't touch."
3. Hold the yellow pipe cleaner in different positions (planes)—vertically, horizontally, high, low, and so forth—so that Doris has to shift where and how she moves her pipe cleaner.
4. Once Doris is successful with the red pipe cleaner, give her the blue one for her other hand. Say, "Now let's do this another way. This time, alternate your hands. First, poke your red pipe cleaner in and out." Move the yellow pipe cleaner so that Doris is crossing the midline in order to be successful. Say, "Now poke the blue one."

## **HOW MANY STEPS?**

### **What You Need**

- Two items, such as beanbags, washcloths, coins, or pebbles, to use as markers—one for a starting place and one for a target
- Space to move

## **What You Do**

1. Put one beanbag on the floor and ask Aisha to stand on it.
2. Hand her the second beanbag and say, "Toss this beanbag in any direction."
3. Say, "The game is to estimate (or 'to guess') how many steps it will take for you to walk to the beanbag. Make your steps the same size. Think about it and tell me: How many steps?"
4. After Aisha gives an estimate, do not disagree or laugh, even if it is way off. Say, "Okay, walk to the beanbag. Look at it the whole time you're moving toward it. Let's count your steps together."
5. If her estimate is correct, have her throw the beanbag from that spot in another direction and repeat the activity.
6. If Aisha is inaccurate, ask her to come back to her starting place. Place a marker on the ground, half the distance between Aisha and the beanbag. Ask her to estimate again to the closer target.

## **EYE SPY**



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**What You Need**

- Chalkboard or poster board with a grid of sixteen squares, each about 4 by 4 inches. Write a letter, integer, or symbol in each square.

**What You Do**

1. Place the board at Annie's eye level and ask her to stand or sit so she can touch the chart. Say, "Look at the chart and point to the letter B (number 2, smiley face, etc.)."
2. Say, "Move your finger two squares to the right. What letter are you on?" If Annie doesn't yet know right and left, gesture toward the direction in which you want her to move her finger.
3. Repeat, asking Annie to move her finger along the chart, in all directions, for example:
  - Three squares to the left
  - One square up
  - Two squares down
4. Once Annie can do this with ease, ask her to stand or sit, with both feet on the floor, about 8 to 10 feet away from the chart.
5. Say, "Look at the letter B. Move just your eyes two squares to the right. Keep your head very still. What letter are your eyes on?"

## Size Wise



**What You Need**

A piece of string, 12 to 15 inches long

**What You Do**

1. Say, "Here's a piece of string. I have one, too. We're going to use our strings to measure things we see in this room."
2. Say, "I'm looking across the room at the switch plate. I'm going to use my string to show how wide I think it is." With both hands, hold your string horizontally in front of you to show how wide you think the switch plate is.
3. Walk to the switch plate while holding your string taut to see if your estimate is accurate.



## Symptoms of VISUAL DYSFUNCTION

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### **Symptoms of Visual Dysfunction**

#### **Appearance**

- Frequent tearing
- Red eyes or lids
- Crust on eyelids
- Excessive blinking
- One eye turning in or out
- Excessive squinting
- Head tilt
- Closing of one eye

### **Symptoms of Visual Dysfunction**

#### **Behavior : Attention**

- Difficulty completing tasks
- Tendency to fatigue
- Tendency to daydream

### **Symptoms of Visual Dysfunction**

#### **Behavior : Tracking**

- Moving head when looking at books
- Difficulty watching ball
- Losing place while reading
- Skipping words and lines
- Reversing letters and/or words

### **Symptoms of Visual Dysfunction**

#### **Behavior : Binocularity**

- Misjudging where things are in space
- Closing or squinting one eye
- Difficulty sustaining visual attention
- Difficulty maintaining eye contact
- Discomfort in crowded places

### **Symptoms of Visual Dysfunction**

#### **Child's Complaints**

- Eye discomfort after concentrated visual attention
- Headaches
- Burning of eyes
- Itching of eyes
- Report of double vision
- "Moving" objects (or words) tend to move

Developmental or Behavioral Optometrist

<http://oepf.org>





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### **Helpful Tip**

When handing something to a child, or when taking something from her, always be sure that she LOOKS at your hand. When you hand her a toy, move the toy until she LOOKS at what she is taking. When she gives you a toy, don't just take it from her; rather, move your hand here and there to make her LOOK at the toy's destination.

### **Helpful Classroom Tips**

- Place letters on bulletin boards only horizontally.
- Beware of visual clutter
- Use visual targets as often as possible
- Encourage children to move



**Growing an In-Sync Child**  
This seminal book provides parents, teachers, and professionals the tools, including 60 activities, to give every child a head start and a leg up. Winner of Teachers' Choice Award for the Classroom 2013.

**A Year of Mini-Moves for the In-Sync Child**  
52 weekly schedules. Your kids will wiggle and giggle with a fun moment idea every day of the year! Winner of Creative Child 2021 Product of the Year!

**Activity Cards and Book**  
Looking for quick, easy ways to keep kids "In-Sync"? You will love the 50 new activities in this handy, award-winning book! (Also available as boxed cards.) Mom's Choice 2013 Gold Award winner.

Keep in touch....

**[www.insyncchild.com](http://www.insyncchild.com)**

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**The In-Sync Village**

## **Stay In-Sync!**

Take a few minutes each day  
to give your children moving experiences  
to last a lifetime.