

- Does your child visually attend more when one color is presented over another?
- Is your child more likely to look at your face if you are wearing a red hat, scarf or lipstick?
- Does your child have preferred toys that are a consistent color?

We all tend to have a favorite color, but for a child with CVI a “preferred color” usually means there is a color that attracts their visual attention more than others. This color may be easier for them to look at. In using this preferred color by *highlighting* or *within* the object itself, we can help the child look at what we want them to engage with visually. Research does indicate that, in some individuals, shape perception can be significantly affected, while color vision remains intact (Zeki, Aglioti, McKeefry, & Berlucchi, 1999). Encouraging the use of vision with an easier skill (attending to color) can improve a child’s functional looking behaviors.

*Sarah, 9 months old, does not appear to use her vision to look at object often. However, her mom, Dana, has noticed that she **almost always notices objects that are red**. She particularly loves her Elmo toy and will bring her visual attention to it if it is held in front of her at about a foot away. Dana also noticed that when they had red, white and blue mylar balloons for a party, Sarah almost always focused her attention on the red one. After discussing these observations with their TSVI-EI, the family comes up **with a plan to try use her preferred color** to help Sarah look at things for longer periods of time. During Sarah’s playtime, Dana has started wearing bright red lipstick to see if she can get Sarah to attend to her face and her father, Jim, has been successful in getting her to smile at his face when he is wearing a red baseball cap.*

These materials are often already found in the family home, and can be used to **activate the visual system and to attract visual attention** in daily routines. If these items are silent, it will help the child to rely on visual attention, not the sounds.

Elmo, Big Bird, Cookie Monster, Clifford the Big Red Dog toy	Solid Colored Balls	Mylar balloons or wrapping paper	Bright red lipstick
Remote control cars (that have a slower speed)	Fire engines or school buses	Lava lamps	Solid caps or scarves
Solid color blankets or backgrounds	Holiday or emergency lights	Single color Holiday decorations	Solid colored pom-poms

Play/Floor Time

- _____ Provide a space on the floor on a solid colored blanket where the child is safe to move freely.
- _____ Present a toy in the child's preferred color to see if it helps catch the child's attention.
- _____ Watch for the child to "alert" to these objects. Sometimes it might be a smile, or becoming quiet or still, or directly looking at the object or turning in its direction.
- _____ Present child with a slow-moving object in their preferred color
- _____ Consider tying helium-filled balloons in the preferred color to a weight on the table, giving the child an opportunity to reach for or bat at the balloon.

Dressing/Diapering

- _____ Hold up the diaper/clothing items and shine light in the preferred color onto it. Label it for them "It's time for new diaper!" or "Let's put your pants on" before putting them on.
- _____ Present two different outfits (only one in the preferred color) and let the child wear what everyone they look at first.

Meal Time

- _____ Use a solid colored placemat with bowl and spoon in the child's preferred color.
- _____ Slip cuffs of the preferred color material onto the handles of utensils
- _____ Wrap a sock or a scrunchie in the child's preferred color around a bottle or drinking cup.
- _____ For children who use G-tubes make a bag or wrap with a scrunchie or ribbon in the child's favorite color. Lift it to eye level and say, "It's time for lunch."

Lap Time

- _____ Use a flashlight or directed light source in the child's preferred color from behind the child to shine directly onto the book or toy.
- _____ Make a book with different objects in the child's preferred color on each page.

Time Outdoors

- _____ Watching rolling balls in the child's preferred color, or siblings wearing jackets/shirts in the child's preferred color playing on a playground, soccer game, etc.
- _____ Place pinwheels in the preferred color in the ground along a pathway.
- _____ Hang holiday lights or mylar strands from trees branches and lie under a tree to watch the branches sway in the wind

Bed/BathTime

- _____ Use toys that float in the preferred color; like a red boat your child may be able to watch them move along the top of the water.
- _____ Turn on a lava lamp in the bedroom next to the bed, changing table or favorite chair.