

**Three In-Sync Child
Activities
To
Develop and Enhance Your
Child's
VISION**

GLOBAL AUTISM SUMMIT 2020



Bubbles

Bubbles can be a terrific tool for encouraging visual tracking. Initially blow bubbles and ask your child to catch them. Observe if he uses one hand or two. Does he *watch* the bubbles or does he stand still and wait for the bubbles to float in front of his face? Once your child is comfortable with the bubbles, ask him to stand in a particular place. Sometimes it's helpful to ask him to stand on a book in order to encourage consistent foot placement. Blow several bubbles (only one or two at a time, if possible) and ask your child to catch the bubbles by

- clapping each one between his hands
- "squeezing" one at a time with one hand at a time
- "popping" each one with toothpicks held in each hand
- "catching" each one on the top of an empty paper towel tube (held vertically with both hands)
- catching one bubble at a time alternating hands

This exercise is designed to improve **eye hand coordination, laterality, bilateral integration, midline crossing** and **visual tracking**. Please work towards

- having your child keep his feet in a stationary position
- accuracy in finding single bubbles rather than clapping or popping several at a time
- a bilateral (two handed) hold on the paper towel tube at all times
- accuracy in hand alternation

Flashlight Tag

Have your child lie in a supine position, on the floor or on her bed. Shine a flashlight on the ceiling and ask your child to watch it as it moves in a slow path. You can ask her to point to the light with her finger, as it moves. Next, give your child a flashlight of her own and let her experiment with shining it on the ceiling, walls and floor. Eventually, ask your child to shine her light on your light. You can move the light in slow paths or "jump" it from place to place, requiring her to shift her vision quickly. The sequence of difficulty in this exercise is

- simple experimentation by your child
- quick "jumps" of your child's light on your light on the ceiling
- slow, easy paths on the ceiling with your child keeping her light on yours throughout
- more intricate paths of light on the ceiling
- the same activities on a wall, requiring your child to be seated

These activities can be altered slightly to include

- your child jumping on the light with two feet as it is shone on the floor
- your child "catching" the light with her hand as it "jumps" from place to place on a wall (you can suggest she use only her right or left hand and alter the light position accordingly to encourage crossing of the midline; or you can suggest that she alternate hands, again placing the light so that the midline is crossed).

This exercise develops visual tracking, eye-hand coordination, visual-motor integration, bilateral integration, midline crossing and directionality. Please encourage the following:

- minimal head movement
- your child holds the flashlight with both hands to encourage bilateral integration
- accuracy in responses
- sustained tracking of light paths

A similar activity titled "Flashlight Tag" can be found in *Growing an In-Sync Child*, by Kranowitz and Newman on pages 70-71

Measuring

MEASURING is a terrific exercise to do when you're walking to the car, or on the playground. Just use objects you see, like a tree or a house, rather than a beanbag as your target. It's just as effective in the house.

Measuring helps your child develop and enhance

- spatial awareness (moving through distance, reading, organization)
- body awareness (sports, ease of movement)
- directionality (handwriting, math)

What You Need:

- something to look at such as a beanbag, or anything in your path
- something to use as a beginning point
- space to move

What to Do:

1. Put a beanbag on the floor and ask your child to stand on it.
2. Say, "Toss the beanbag in any direction."
3. Say, "How many steps will it take you to get to that bean bag? Remember that your steps need to be the same size."
4. Say, "OK. Walk to the beanbag. Remember to look at the beanbag the whole time."
5. As your child begins to walk, count her steps with her.
6. If your child is very inaccurate in her estimate, ask her to come back to her starting place. Place a marker half the distance between your child and the target (beanbag).
7. Ask, "How many steps to the marker?" Then repeat steps #4 and #5.
8. If your child is inaccurate in her estimate, say, "Turn around and go back to the first beanbag. Let's see if you can make it in the same number of steps it took you to get here."

What to Look For:

- Child's steps are normal size and equal
- Child looks at the target the whole time she is moving
- Child is accurate in her counting

Ways to Make It Harder:

- Ask your child to move through longer distances.
- Suggest the number of steps your child should take to reach her target.
- Ask her to take her steps to the beat of a metronome.
- Ask her to jump or to march instead of walking to the distance.

This exercise can be found in
Growing an In-Sync Child,
by Kranowitz and Newman on pages
174-175, titled
"How Many Steps?"