

# **PAEDIATRIC OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

## **VISUAL PERCEPTION:**

### **Definition:**

Visual perception is more than just the sense of vision. It refers to the ability to use visual information, to recognise, recall, discriminate, and make meaning/sense of what we see. Visual perception relates strongly to guidance of movement e.g. walking, writing, using scissors, and completing puzzles.

### **Functional Implications:**

- Handwriting is often uneven and poorly spaced
- May write with mirror / reversed letters, or words back to front or spelt phonically
- Difficulty concentrating - tends to flit from one activity to another
- Often appears to be lazy, day dreamy, not trying because he cannot cope with the demands of the activity. The effort is too great.
- Often have low self esteem through continually under achieving and is very likely to be teased in the classroom and/or on the games field or even by his family

### **Activity suggestions to help develop Visual Perceptual Skills:**

1. Candid camera - without warning, ask you child to close their eyes and describe something e.g. what they are wearing / what the room looks like etc.
2. I Spy - using the colour / size / shape / or beginning letter of something in plain sight
3. Memory game (Kim's game) - place a number of objects (eg.4-5 initially) on a tray ask the child to look at the objects for 30 seconds, cover the tray, and try to remember as many items as possible
4. What's been moved - in a familiar room, one person close their eyes while another person moves an object in the room to another position. The first person then tries to guess what's been moved.
5. Page recall - open story book to a page, look at it, close the book and ask the child to find the page
6. Concentration game (memory cards)
7. Peg board copycat - make a design and ask the child to copy it
8. Letter game - circle all of the similar letters in a paragraph
9. Mazes / Dot-to-dot / Spot the difference
10. Jigsaw puzzles
11. Simon say's
12. Matching / sorting / copying activities

### **Strategies to Help Develop Visual Perceptual Skills:**

- Use handouts to supplement work / Present small amounts of work at a time
- Use auditory/tactile/movement information to supplement visual
- Sequence and number blackboard/worksheet work
- Keep classroom environment/blackboard clutter free to eliminate visual distractions
- Because the child is bright, they usually realise their failures and become frustrated. They don't want to feel different. NB. they are not as lazy as they appear & do not try to fail without reason
- The child's interpretation of information is not as accurate as it should be and this can lead to confusion. S/he has to concentrate even harder than we do.
- A multi-sensory approach should be used with children with visual perceptual difficulties i.e. one which brings into play all the senses - speech, touch, vision, smell, and taste whenever possible