

Reach Out and Teach: Helping Your Child who is Visually Impaired Learn and Grow

South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment
Auckland, NZ
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to life.

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REACH OUT AND TEACH

HELPING YOUR CHILD WHO
IS VISUALLY IMPAIRED
LEARN AND GROW

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AFB PRESS
American Foundation for the Blind

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History

- First edition, 1985
- Federally-funded grant, written by Susan Spungin
- Surveys of parents, teachers, university faculty
- Field-tested nationally through correspondence and workshops
- Pre-Part C
- Meant to stand alone

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What's happened since?

- P.L. 99-457 (1986) and amendments
- Wide implementation
- More generic early intervention
- Related services (O&M)
- Canes for kids
- Natural environments
- Hand-under vs. hand-over
- ECC

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Anything else happen in last 25 years?

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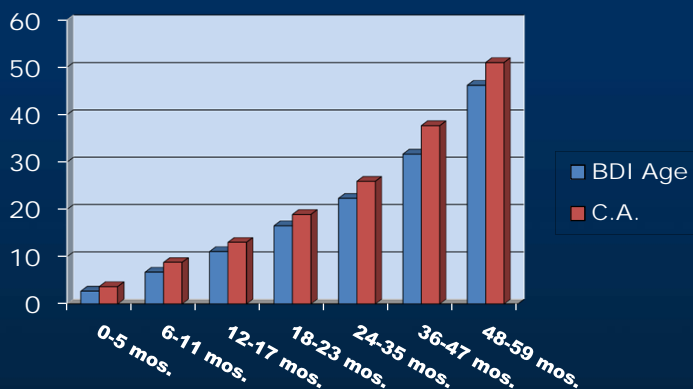
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Prism People



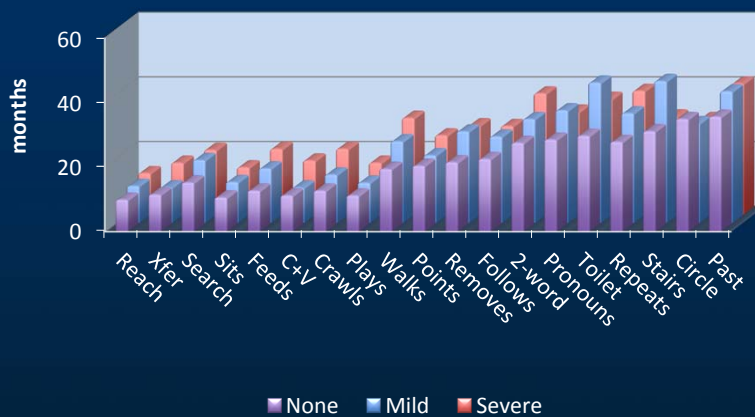
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Children with VI Only



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Milestones, by Disability Risk



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New Edition Table of Contents

Part I: Meeting your baby

Chapter 1: your child is visually impaired:
what now?

Chapter 2: Your child's vision

Chapter 3: Getting started: How you can
help your baby learn

Chapter 4: Early intervention: Why is it
important?

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Part II: Focus on Learning

Chapter 5: Your first year together: Emerging
skills (birth to 12 months)

Chapter 6: Life with your toddler: Practicing
beginning skills (9-30 months)

Chapter 7: Your preschooler and you:
Reinforcing development (24-48 months)

Chapter 8: Almost time for school: Focusing
on readiness (48-60 months)

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Chapter 9: Kindergarten and beyond: What to expect

Epilogue: The wisdom of friends and families

Glossary

Resources

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A Summary of Project PRISM

- Project PRISM was conducted between 1991 and 1996 at Teachers College, Columbia University, and the University of Northern Colorado.
- All 202 participants were diagnosed with visual impairment.
- The children were studied longitudinally, which means that all children were followed and tested over time (instead of testing only some of the children some of the time).

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- Children and their parents resided in Arizona, California, Colorado, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New Mexico, and Texas and were served by one of seven agencies specializing in serving children with visual impairments.
- Agencies were located in both urban and rural settings and differed in the types of services they provided as well as their resources and sources of funding. Services were delivered in agency centers, in families' homes, in a combination of the two, and included consulting services, and testing or evaluation services only.

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- Project evaluators administered 2,446 standardized tests during the course of the project.
- Thirty-nine percent (39.0%) of children were from non-European American ethnic groups.
- Parents completed more than 2653 questionnaires over the course of the project, at response rates ranging from 57.1 percent to 77.8 percent.
- The mean age at which children received a diagnosis of their visual disorder was 3.3 months.

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- The mean age of children when they entered Project PRISM was 8.7 months.
- Children in the study were studied for an average of 19.1 months.
- The leading diagnoses for children in this study were cortical visual impairment, retinopathy of prematurity, optic nerve hypoplasia, and albinism.
- At the conclusion of the study, 59.9 percent of PRISM subjects had been diagnosed with additional disabilities ranging from mild to severe.

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- More than one-fifth of children in this study (20.8%) weighed less than 1,000 grams at birth and one-fifth were born at 26 weeks or less gestation.
- The majority of children (75.9%) were hospitalized after birth for 30 days or less.
- There was great variability in the range of developmental scores for each age group, regardless of the unit of comparison.

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- Tests measured developmental milestones ranging from when an infant rolled over, to when she was able to jump; from paying attention to mother's voice, to speaking a complete sentence; from holding her bottle to making a peanut butter sandwich.

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Lessons from Project PRISM

- Children with visual impairments usually learn differently from children without disabilities.
- Some children start more slowly than others, but they may catch up as they grow older.
- Children with severe disabilities in addition to visual impairment have a more difficult time.
- Visual abilities may change over time.
- There is no way to predict a child's developmental course.

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Chapters

- Overlapping ages
- What you can expect to do—activities to be considered as possible
- Main goals during this period
- What you can expect your child to do—some of the developmental milestones that your child might be expected to accomplish (but also might not, given the variability in each child's development)
- How you can help your child learn—key tips or activities that you can use to help your child learn

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**You never know what might
make the difference for your
child until you try!**

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- Signs to watch out for—child behaviors that might indicate that you should consult with your pediatrician or early intervention specialist
- Safety tips—suggestions that promote your child's safety
- Toys your child might like—suggestions for the type of toys that will promote and facilitate your child's learning during this period

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How To Use RO&T

- Idiosyncratic – depends on child and family
- Start with what you know – chronological age
- Look at Critical Milestones and match child to these behaviors

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Corequisite Skills Chart

- My approach
- Based on typical development
- Age not the issue
- [corequisite_skills_2.doc](#)
- [coreq_skills_chart_typical.pdf](#)

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Corequisite Skills Checklist

- [Coreq Skills Assmt.pdf](#)

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Suggested Forms for AFB.org

- [First Year Chart.pdf](#)
- [Grasp flow chart.pdf](#)
- Others? What do YOU want?