

What can I do right away to help my child's vision?

Everyday activities such as dressing, bathing, feeding, and diaper changing are every day opportunities to support the development of your child's vision skills. Here are some easy ways to help your child's development throughout the day.

Dressing:

- While getting your child dressed, talk about how the materials feel. For example, soft, fuzzy, scratchy, rough.

Bath Time:

- Build "touch and feel" concepts into bath time. Encourage your child to feel the washcloth when it is dry and again once you wet it. Talk about each sensory experience.

Snack and Meal Time:

- Talk about different food textures and tastes, such as a crisp salty cracker; soft, sweet pudding; cold hard popsicle.

Diaper Changes:

- Be specific when talking to your baby so he or she begins to develop a sense of how words are used together to describe things. For example, "Let's get that wet/

dirty diaper off so you can feel clean and dry. I'm using this baby wipe to help you get clean. That smells good. How about some soft powder? Now you're all clean and dry, and you smell so good." One short exchange can plant the seeds for your child to learn several different concepts: wet/dry, clean/dirty, smells that are nice and not so nice.

My Early Intervention Program is:

My Vision Specialist's Name is:

Phone: () -



Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities
Rhode Island College
600 Mt. Pleasant Ave.
Providence, RI 02908 (401) 456-8072 Voice
7-1-1 or 1-800-745-5555 RI Relay TTY
7-1-1 or 1-866-355-9214 RI Relay Spanish

www.sherlockcenter.org



Rhode Island Early Intervention Vision Services

**Serving Infants and Toddlers
with Low Vision and Visual
Impairments**



What supports are available for my child and family?

Learning your infant or toddler has a vision impairment can be difficult. We are here to help. Infants begin learning about themselves and the world around them from the moment they are born. When a child has difficulty using their sight, we must help them to learn and play by using all of their available senses. Rhode Island Early Intervention (EI) Vision Specialists provide specialized support for infants and toddlers with impairments to their vision.

What is an Early Intervention Vision Specialist?

The Vision Specialists who work with children in Early Intervention have specialized education and training to support young children as they build skills in the areas of moving around their environments, learning new skills, play and exploration. These early skills provide the



foundation upon which children can safely explore the world around them.

RI Early Intervention Vision Specialists include both Teachers of Children with Visual Impairments (TVI) and Orientation and Mobility Specialists (O&M). All EI Vision Specialists have many years of experience working with young children with visual impairments. EI Vision Specialists have received identical coursework and training. TVI's have additional training in braille reading and academic supports.

How does an Early Intervention Vision Specialist help?

An EI Vision specialist will help families with environmental supports such as:

- Adjustment of lighting or surfaces to improve contrast, making it easier for your baby or toddler to see people and objects in their environment.
- Restructuring your child's daily surroundings to make learning and practicing new skills more fun, safe and effective.
- Work to identify the best positioning to allow your child access to toys, food, play, etc.
- Helping infants and toddlers to use their existing vision, along with their other senses, to move around their environments safely and independently.

- Help families support their child's overall development.

How does an Early Intervention Vision Specialist help?

YOU are the most important person on your child's team. As part of your child's IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) team, the EI Vision Specialist will review your priorities and outcomes, and gather information on your child's every day activities and routines. Together, you will develop strategies to provide your child many opportunities to practice his or her emerging skills throughout the day.

Your child's Vision Specialist will communicate and collaborate with any other specialists on your child's EI team in order to ensure coordinated care.

