

Encouraging Positive Social Communication Behaviors

Eye Tracking Skills

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Eye tracking is a social skill that is often not introduced, shaped or maintained in a child who is deaf or hard of hearing in their environment. The development of this skill is encouraged and recommended to create positive social communication skills among children ages 0-6. Maintaining eye contact is a stepping stone to building relationships with others. Developing tracking skills can lead to strong social connections with peers such as gathering information, appropriately gaining attention of others, communicating with peers, and increasing engagement in society.



1

EYE TRACKING PROMOTES:

- language, social, and relationships skills.
- brain development and attending skills.
- emotional connections with self and others.
- receiving and sharing of information.

2

EYE TRACKING SKILLS HELP DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING CHILDREN:

- mitigate the high risk of deficits in understanding emotional facial expressions.
- develop theory of Mind (TOM), which is affected by access of language.
- notice sections of the face in order to more accurately judge emotions.
- develop understanding of where to focus their attention.
- increase pragmatic skills.

3

SKILL DEVELOPMENT TECHNIQUES:

- encourages the child's preferred communication mode and gain their full attention by maintaining close proximity and insuring full visual access to speaker.
- allow time and prompts to help the child locate the person who is speaking or signing.
- allow the use facial expressions that convey the intended message.
- allow the child time to communicate.
- allow the child opportunities to visually inspect items prior to communicating.
- allow the child to scan and respond to the visual environment.
- encourage the child to attend to the auditory environment.
- allows frequent opportunities for understanding.

4

WHEN EYE TRACKING SKILLS ARE DEVELOPED, THE CHILD WILL BE BETTER ABLE TO:

- engage in social-emotional reciprocity.
- improve in nonverbal social communicative behaviors.
- develop, maintain and understand relationships.