

# **Ten Things You Need To Know About Vision**

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## What is Vision?

Did you know that you could have 20/20 eyesight, and still have 0/0 vision?

Many people don't. Most assume that vision is like a box camera. They believe that if their eyes are receiving light and focusing properly, their vision is fine. But that isn't always so.

**Vision is much more than simply focusing light properly.**

- Vision is Seeing clearly, singly, and comfortable with both eyes.
- Vision is the eyes working as a team at a variety of distances.
- Vision is receiving, processing and integrating information from other senses.
- Vision is attending to and remembering visual information.
- Vision is understanding and responding to what the eyes gather and the mind processes.

Vision more than just seeing 20/20

### Vision Starts with Reception

Visual reception (input) is the ability to see clearly and singly. Eye doctors routinely test for these two abilities.

However, there is a third component of reception that is also important, but isn't tested by many doctors—the ability to see comfortably.

For example, if you hold a pen within inches of your nose, you may be able to see clearly and singly. But for how long? Seeing the pen singly and clearly for just a few seconds does not mean that your eyes can work properly and without strain for longer periods.

For instance, you may be able to lift a chair with one hand for a few seconds, but

does that mean you can hold it at that height for thirty minutes? No.

Likewise, many children who can look at the tip of their nose cannot maintain clear, single vision at near for more than a few minutes. And those children who can't, feel strained, tired, or fatigued when reading. They may rub their eyes, blink, or close or cover one eye to avoid using them both. And often, they will try to avoid the activities that make them feel uncomfortable.

Watch for signs of strain and discomfort in your child as he or she reads, works on a computer, or writes, because these problems can affect learning.

### Visual Input Is Then Processed

Visual processing is the brain's ability to determine and compute the information our eyes receive. It's like a computer. You put data in (visual reception), and the computer (brain) manipulates (processes) the data.

Many children lack good visual processing skills and have trouble computing visual input. Consequently, their performance of everyday tasks such as reading, memorizing, and studying is far below and slower than normal.

### The Result of Visual Processing is Output

Output is the ability to take the gathered and processed information and make an appropriate response or action. Sometimes, the output will be the creation of a mental image. But, most often, the response is a verbal one, a gesture, or a written response.

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The VIP program is concerned with all three components of vision (reception, processing and output). But it stresses processing skills most because they are so vital to good learning.



task, and/or uses an excessive amount of energy to handle visual information, most likely has deficient processing skills.

### Why do some children have poor Visual Processing Skills and others don't?

No one knows the full reason why some children have a greater difficulty with these skills...it's part hereditary, part environment, and part educational.

The important thing to note is that these skills are learned skills. They can be improved.

And testing can pinpoint which skills are most deficient, so that therapy can focus on specific areas.

By concentrating on and correcting specific problem areas, therapy can eliminate many of the underlying causes of learning difficulties. This causes the symptoms of discomfort, poor memory, poor concentration, and comprehension, toiling over simple tasks, and avoiding complicated tasks to disappear.

### The limitations of VIP

If the symptoms and behaviors the child is experiencing are the result of poor visual processing skills, visual processing therapy can reduce or eliminate those problems.

And it's exciting to see the changes that can be made.

However, if the child's symptoms are not caused by poor visual processing skills, then the child will need to be referred elsewhere.

Also note that at all completion of the therapy, the child's reading or math level may not be immediately higher. Because we did not teach math or reading! We developed the skills that are needed to handle visual information faster, more effectively, and more efficiently. Now when the child reads or does math, it will be easier for him or her to stay on task, to complete

the work quickly, and to remember and understand what was read or calculated.

In other words, the child will now have the chance to catch up.

And although VIP is not a motivation enhancement program, most parents report an improvement in their child's self-esteem.

### Why is VIP so Successful?

VIP is a ten-week program. Unlike programs that take 12 to 18 months and produce very gradual changes, the VIP program makes very significant changes in a short time. This is extremely important because....

### The child must see changes.

If the child sees changes in his or her performance, it will raise self-esteem. And this will make the child want to work at improving his or her skills even more.

In fact, by the second session, all patients in VIP even those in kindergarten—are able to name the presidents of the United States forwards and backwards. This technique develops visualization skills and improves the ability to create mental images.

We also ask the child to go to school and recite the presidents in front of the class. This does amazing things for the self-esteem of a young child who normally struggles in school. Teachers, peers, and parents will know the child's abilities are far greater than before. And so will the child.

### Intense Sessions

VIP is intense and one-on-one.

One-on-one therapy is extremely important, especially when you consider that a child in public education in the United States gets an average of six and a half hours of one-on-one instruction over 13 years. *VIP provides 50-70 hours over 10 weeks.*

There are two reasons for one-on-one therapy. The first is feedback. When the child does something correctly, he or she is praised. When the child makes an error, he or she is made aware of it so that it can be corrected. Immediate feedback allows faster learning.

The second reason for one-on-one therapy is sequencing. Sequencing means the program is personalized to the child's deficiencies and needs.

If a task is too difficult, the child will become frustrated. If the task is too easy, the child will become bored. So the therapist designs the task to be challenging, and then slightly increases the demand of the task to force the deficient skills to improve.

It's very intensive, but children love intensity. Think about the hours children spend playing video games like "Mario Brothers." These games are based on sequencing and immediate feedback.

### **Integrative Therapy**

The primary cause of poor learning is that many learning skills that should be subconscious (automatic) are not.

For example, a fluent reader does not sound out words or pause to think of their meanings. These should be automatic. If they aren't, comprehension suffers.

The child, who has to consciously work at sounding out letters and blending those sounds, uses all his or her effort on the act of reading. This means that there isn't enough left over to comprehend the ideas that were read. Therefore, understanding and memory suffer.

The goal of VIP is to refine and improve poor or nonexistent skills through a series of therapy procedures. These procedures help those skills that should be subconscious to become so. Then, the conscious mind can concentrate on comprehending, remembering and understanding.

To improve a skill, the skill must first be brought from the unconscious level (where all habitual skills are) to the conscious level.

Then, as the skill is refined, it is forced back to the subconscious level with integrative therapy so that the child can perform better. A child who does not have to think about the act of reading is a much better reader—just as a typist who does not have to think about keys or finger movements is a much better typist.

Normally, new skills are put into the subconscious by repeating them over and over. All therapy works this way, whether it's occupational or psychological therapy.

<p><b>Integrative vision therapy causes new skills to become subconscious more quickly and effectively.</b></p>
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Integrative therapy asks the child to do an increasing number of processing tasks at a time. If the child is able to do two tasks at the same time, a third is added. If he or she is able to do three tasks simultaneously, a fourth is added. Since the conscious mind can only handle one task at a time, the others are forced to the subconscious, which is exactly where you want most processing skills.

*The result is that the child no longer has to learn to process information, and can now process information to learn.*

### **VIP Improves Many Skills**

#### **Processing Speed**

VIP develops processing speed, the speed at which a child performs an activity. Every therapy activity requires the child to handle more information in less time.

#### **Concentration and Attention Span**

VIP also develops concentration and attention span. When a child is given more and more tasks to do, he or she has to keep track of what is happening and can't let a noise or other stimuli interfere. The child needs to concentrate, pay attention, and integrate.

Concentration  
is the ability to organize multiple  
activities, both internally and  
externally.

Attention Span  
is the ability to maintain that level of  
organization over time.

### Integration

Each VIP therapy procedure asks the child to handle an increasing number of tasks, which forces more skills to the subconscious/automatic level. This will make learning new tasks easier and quicker.

Integration  
is the ability to organize many types  
of activities at the same time.

### Visualization

VIP procedures also increase skills in visualization by asking the child to create mental images in his or her mind. This increases the ability to comprehend, understand, and recall things later.

Visualization  
is the ability to create and use  
mental images to save energy or  
time.

### Significant Changes Take Place

Concentration, memory, visualization, integration, and processing speed all improve and become more automatic. (And that makes learning easier, faster, and more enjoyable.)

These five skills are basic to successful learning. Successful learning is the ability to stay on task and not be distracted. Successful learning is the ability to handle multiple things at one time. Successful learning is the speed at which the child can handle tasks. And successful learning is the ability to comprehend and remember what was read.

*Successful learning makes the child feel good.*

*The average child's visual processing skills improve 3.1 years in the ten-week span. Concentration improves an average of 4.6 years. That's significant. And parents, teachers, and the children really do see the difference.*

The number one change parents report is an improved self-esteem.

The second most noted change is how much faster a child does an activity. Many children don't bring their homework home because it's already done at school. Or if they do bring it home, they do it twice as fast.

In questionnaires given to parents, the third most common change reported is in their ability to stay on task. They aren't distracted as easily.

"We felt she was a bright, hard working child, but she seemed very reluctant to master basic academic skills. When we applied pressure—the reward/punishment approach—it only made her distracted, tearful, and angry. Although the therapy meant a financial sacrifice for us, I would encourage any parent to make the investment. What price can you put on a child being taught to read better, to understand, to concentrate, to remember, and to start a task and complete it. These are the building blocks of self-respect and success. Thank you VIP program and God Bless you for unlocking some of the mysteries of the complex learning process in our child."

"Chris' greatest achievement is his ability to read and comprehend something. He reads without skipping words as much, and he can answer questions more thoroughly. He also can get his assignments done in less time, and he has an I-can-get-it-done-quick attitude. These are the major changes we have seen."

“It was wonderful, the change we saw in Sara. Her grades and her whole attitude improved, even towards life. She went from a depressed moody worrier to a bouncy, alert, full of hope teenager.”

### **Fees**

If we can be of significant help, we will discuss the fees and payment plans during the consultation. Our fees are comparable to other types of therapy (e.g. physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, psychotherapy, etc.)

### **Commitment**

It is absolutely necessary for both parents to be at the consultation. To make significant changes in a child, both parents must fully understand the problems the child has, the consequences of those problems (how they'll affect his or her school work, vocation, earning power, and life), and what needs to be done to solve those problems.

Effort and time have to be devoted after the consultation and throughout the program as well—somewhere between a half-hour and an hour a day, depending upon the age of the child. If parents are not willing to spend at least that amount of time, then we will not work with their child.

VIP is a dynamic and successful program, but that success is based upon the intensity and hard work by the therapist, the child, and the parents.

**The Vision Improvement Program will help a child with vision-related learning difficulties!**

## **The VIP Role in Helping your Child Achieve**

Imagine a sawmill on the banks of a river. If the river system was ideal it would be wide, fast, and straight so that logs going to the sawmill would get there very quickly.

But all rivers are not that ideal.

Imagine that the sawmill is on the banks of a very slow, winding and narrow river with many boulders. Since this river system is not ideal, the logs will encounter many problems. Because the river is narrow and contains boulders, logs will often jam and will require a great deal of extra energy and effort to get them to the mill. And in areas where the current is weak, the logs will travel so slowly that it will seem to take forever getting them there. And if there is a fork in the river, some logs will travel down the wrong path and will be lost. As a result of all these problems, only a few logs will actually reach the mill.

If you owned the sawmill, you would agree that this river is not a very good system for transporting logs. You're losing too many of them. To solve the problem you might try to bypass the river completely and take the logs to the mill in a truck. This might work fairly well, but at an expense. You'll need trucks, drivers, and gas.

Now let's assume that the river is your child's visual system and that the logs are academic subjects, such as reading, writing and arithmetic. If your child has a poor visual processing system, a variety of things may happen to the information he or she is trying to learn.

If your child has poor visual integration (the ability to handle complex tasks), information may become "jammed." Because the task seems too difficult, your child may want to quit or try to avoid the task altogether. You could help your child with the work by breaking the task into easier steps, and he or she would most likely accomplish the task eventually. But it would take a long time and a lot of effort.

If your child lacks visual concentration skills (the ability to stay on task), information may "go down the wrong branch." A child like this has not learned to organize his or her environment and is highly sensitive to the many sensory inputs of the environment. This causes distractions. And because the child is so easily distracted and has such a poor attention span, he or she will lose a great deal of the information that he or she is trying to learn.

A child with poor visualization skills (the ability to create a mental pictures), also may have trouble with "jamming." If he or she can't easily create mental pictures, the child's ability to remember what was read, comprehend, and solve problems will suffer.

In summary, a child- that might be very bright- has a hard time learning because the visual processing system is poor. Even though we provide the child with the information, he or she cannot perform, as we would expect.

An educator would claim that this child is not a visual learner and needs to be taught through different methods. So the child may be put in a special program that teaches another method- perhaps through the auditory system. And it works to some degree, but at an expense. By avoiding the visual problem, we never force it to become better.

This will cost the child far more than it costs the saw mill owner for trucks, drivers, and gas! Much of the information a child gathers through the school years come through the visual system. And the amount of information traveling through the visual system increases to about 85 percent as the child enters high school.

To help a child with visual processing problems, we must stop going around the problems, or the “boulders.” They must be removed- chipped away. This is exactly what we do in our office. We do not teach reading, math or writing. We do not specialize in motivating a child. Our job is to mend rivers- to make sure that the child’s ability to process visual information is as straight, fast, efficient, and boulder-free as possible.

After we clean up a child’s visual system, he or she may still be one or two years behind in math or reading. This is because we did not work on math or reading. We cleaned up the river and made sure that it was operating properly. However, this means that now you can throw those academic logs into your child’s new visual system, and the child will find that reading and learning is much easier and faster than ever before.

The second most common comment that parents make to us at the end of therapy is that “my child gets his homework done faster” or “he doesn’t bring homework home anymore.” This is because the child’s ability to concentrate, comprehend, understand and get things done faster greatly improves after therapy. The child now has a chance to catch up!

Plus, through our therapy procedures, a child achieves success after success and can see the improvements in his or her ability to learn. This causes self-image to improve. Sixty percent of the parents we see at the end of therapy comment on the improvement in their child’s self-image and attitude.