

Module: **Visual Conditions and Functional Vision:
Early Intervention Issues**

**Session 4: Functional Vision Assessment and
Developmentally Appropriate Learning
Media Assessment**

**Handout B: The Process of Completing a Functional Vision
Assessment for Infants and Toddlers With Visual Impairments**

Murphy, J.L. (2004). *The process of completing a functional vision assessment for infants and toddlers with visual impairments*. Chapel Hill, NC: Early Intervention Training Center for Infants and Toddlers With Visual Impairments, FPG Child Development Institute, UNC-CH.

1. **Review medical records.** The analysis of available medical information provides the foundation for subsequent observations and assessment. The clinical eye report should provide a diagnosis that suggests particular visual behaviors to observe. The prognosis may provide direction for intervention.
2. **Interview caregivers and other early intervention team members.** Ask family members about their concerns and collect observational information from caregivers and other team members.
3. **Natural observation.** Observe the child during natural routines in different settings. List the routine and describe its context, such as
 - physical environment,
 - visual stimuli,
 - properties of objects, or
 - social environment.

Describe the child's visual and other sensory behaviors. Refer to the assessment of visual abilities when describing visual function.

Routine and context	Observation
Meal time	
Story sharing	
Indoor play	
Outdoor play	

4. **Assessment of visual abilities and behaviors.** Using this table, place an (X) in the square before each item that you assess. Describe the response in detail.

Assessment	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> External ocular status. <input type="checkbox"/> Appearance of the eyes <input type="checkbox"/> Nystagmus <input type="checkbox"/> Pupillary reflex <input type="checkbox"/> Blink reflex	
<input type="checkbox"/> Alignment and ocular motility <input type="checkbox"/> Light reflection <input type="checkbox"/> Vestibulo-ocular response	
<input type="checkbox"/> Oculomotor skills <input type="checkbox"/> Localizing <input type="checkbox"/> Fixating <input type="checkbox"/> Scanning <input type="checkbox"/> Tracking <input type="checkbox"/> Shifting gaze <input type="checkbox"/> Eye-hand coordination	
<input type="checkbox"/> Near/Intermediate responses (within 3 feet). Note whether the child tried to move closer to materials or whether he or she tilts or turns the head in trying to view objects. Observations may also include the child's ability to locate dropped objects and the ability to match developmentally appropriate objects or pictures.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Distance responses (beyond 3 feet). Document the child's ability to see detail when the object is not within touching distance.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Visual field Note any head tilts or turns, failure to reach for toys in certain visual quadrants, or unusual movements or postures. <input type="checkbox"/> Central <input type="checkbox"/> Peripheral	

Assessment	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Visual perceptual skills <input type="checkbox"/> Depth perception <input type="checkbox"/> Visual closure <input type="checkbox"/> Visual discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Visual association <input type="checkbox"/> Visual memory <input type="checkbox"/> Visual sequencing <input type="checkbox"/> Figure-ground discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Spatial relationships	
<input type="checkbox"/> Special visual behaviors (e.g., photophobia, selective responses)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Repetitive behaviors (e.g., hand flapping, head swaying, eye pressing)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of corrective lenses (e.g., avoiding use, looking over or under the lenses)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Orientation and mobility (e.g., postural adaptations, anticipation of obstacles, adaptation to surface changes, reaction to various illumination and contrast)	

For a more comprehensive assessment of visual function in infants and children with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities, refer to:
 Langley, M.B. (1998). *ISAVE: Individualized systematic assessment of visual efficiency*. Louisville, KY: American Printing House for the Blind.