autism wellbeing

Our Senses: Visual

Our eyes see visual information which is processed by our brain. Some autistic people have described having distorted vision. This is because their brain processes visual information in a way that can make images appear blurry or pixelated or even move about.

Our autistic children may see the world differently to us. They may not realise that their experience of visual information is different to other people's. This may feel confusing, distressing or frightening for them, and for us as parents.

Some autistic children may notice tiny details that others miss. They may be able to focus on details often overlooked by other people and notice if something is out of place or changed.

Some autistic people rely on familiarising themselves with routes, shops, and landmarks. They can find changes very unnerving and distressing and may need lots of reassurance when adjusting to unfamiliar or changed environments.

- Adjusting the lighting can help with sensory regulation. Some people find fluorescent lighting painful and distracting because they can see the flickering. Some people like a shaded rooms and others prefer natural light.
- Keep visual distractions to a minimum – some people may find too much sensory information painful.
- Some people will prefer familiarity when readjusting to the changes in the world: e.g. wear familiar clothes; be aware of the impact of your exaggerated facial expressions (if you are excited to see them).
- Some people may feel disorientated because things aren't where they were before, help them refamiliarise themselves or keep things as they were if possible.
- Wearing sunglasses or Irlen lenses can help some children.
- Wearing a cap with a peak may help filter out excess light and visual information. Clothing with hoods may be useful as well for reducing the amount of visual information needing to be processed.
- Some people find it soothing and regulating to keep a familiar object on them that is soothing to look at e.g. phone apps, photos, or sensory toy.