

# Eye Contact

tags: communication, social interactions

Eye contact has a socio-emotional connection.

Performing the ‘eye contact’ program is rooted in some controversy. There are debates between the function of avoiding eye contact. Some believe it is because of social deficits, others due to visual over stimulation and processing challenges. It is possible that is a combination of things. Depending upon the innervation of the brain synapses it would make sense there is a sliding scale of possible reasons. I use to perform this more as a direct program but now I typically target it incidentally. If the child is very young and has had limited exposure to focus training, you might want to give it a try as long as they don’t display discomfort.

If the child is demonstrating discomfort, accept a general look in the facial direction and don't overly stress about obtaining direct eye contact. Most individuals become more accepting overtime. Some individuals will remain having direct eye contact as a challenge throughout their lives.

	EYE CONTACT	Date Introduced	Date Mastered	Notes
1	Response to name: - individual next to for 1-3 seconds			
2	Response to name: - during an activity for 1-3 seconds			
3	Will engage in eye contact during interaction for: 3-5 seconds			

TIP  
Narrow the field of vision.  
For example: cup hands,  
put on baseball cap.

TIP  
When interacting and  
gaze wanders, move your  
fingers next to your eyes  
as a prompt.

TIP  
Use a reinforcer, such as  
an edible or small toy to  
attain gaze then move  
item next to your eyes.

TIP  
Don't push too hard with  
this program. Gains can  
be slow and there are  
opportunities throughout  
the day to practice.

