

Ideas for parents of children with Visual Impairments

1. Hand Search

Place instruments with different sounds and textures (e.g., shaker, mini cabasa) around your baby. Play one instrument while naming it. Have your baby search and reach for it from different positions. After your baby touches the instrument, allow him/her to play and explore it with you.

2. Sound Memory Game

Use a set of instruments (two of the same). Introduce the sound and texture of each instrument to your toddler. Then activate one instrument and let your toddler find its matching pair.

4. Sounding Environment

Tap a rhythm on a nearby chair, a wall, or on the kitchen counter and label the sound (e.g., "This is what your living room chair sounds like"). Quiz your child about the different sounds in your home. Additionally, you may use instruments for meaningful events and landmarks in the home environment (e.g., a triangle may identify lunch time in the kitchen).

3. Feel the Beat

Let your child feel the vibration of various instruments (e.g., drums, gongs) with his/her hands. Instead of the hands, have your child lay on a big drum and give him/her a "vibrational body massage" by playing the instrument rhythmically.

5. Musical Mini Route

Place your child's favorite instruments a short distance from each other. Encourage your child to move from one to the next sound source by playing each instrument and ask him/her to move towards you. After your child has successfully navigated the distance, play the instrument with him/her while singing a song as a reward.

Written by Petra Kern, Ph.D., MT-DMtG, MT-BC, MTA
Music Therapy Clinician, Educator, and Researcher
Owner of Music Therapy Consulting