



## FACT SHEET

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### Encouraging Exploration

Children with deafblindness need to be encouraged to explore their environment using all their senses. This exploration will help the child build skills in all areas of development.

**You can encourage the child to explore his surroundings in the following ways:**

1. Remove dangerous and valuable objects from the area, so the child will not fear getting hurt or getting in trouble. If you need to say “No” too many times, the child may not want to explore further.
2. Attach objects to the child’s chair, car seat, stroller, or wheelchair, and even clothing such as vest to allow contact with objects. They can be placed next to the child’s body without touching their hands or face. The child may just allow them to be there at first and later will explore them with other senses.
3. Games with objects can also be played, placing objects inside the child’s clothing to encourage the child to search for the object. Be sure to avoid those very sensitive areas of the child’s body and begin the games with body parts where they allow touch.
4. Place objects a few inches away from the child’s hands to make it easier for them to find the objects. They may accidentally bump into it and explore it further.
5. Combine the use of senses by adding light to noisemakers, vibration to sound, and interesting textures to brightly colored objects to encourage the child to use their remaining vision or hearing. An example would include feeling the vibration of a piano, placing a musical toy on a lighted surface, etc. These added senses will help to attract the child’s attention.

Adapted from Sternberg-White, S., Chen D., & Watts, J., (1992). *Developing Social-Emotional Skills. INSITE*: Utah State University, Logan, Utah