###### **What might help me? Things to consider for a young child with vision impairment**

•Use your child’s name when speaking to them and encourage other people to use your child’s name when talking to them. As well as helping them to realise that you are talking to them, they will begin to hear the difference when people talk to them and when people speak away from them to others

•Use the names of others you are speaking to at the beginning of the conversation so that your child knows whom you are speaking to

• Let them know who is around them and what is going on

• Use clear language and give a commentary of what you are doing and what is about to happen. Be specific.

• Position your child with their back to the window and don’t stand I front of a window when you are talking to or playing with them

• Allow them to come close to things and to position themselves so that they can best use their vision or touch

• Try to have their environment as uncluttered as possible and reduce distractions

• Turn off the radio or television when you want your child to look or hear and learn to listen to other sounds

• Help them to make sense of what they hear in busy settings where there are many sounds. Take them to the source of a sound to explain what it is and where it’s coming from

• Place items on a colour-contrasting surface or background

• Sing nursery rhymes and help them to do the actions

• Read and make up stories with your child. Encourage them to feel the book and help turn the pages

• Allow your child to explore a variety of textures e.g. brushes, silks, feathers etc.

• Create a treasure box – a box, bag or basket containing a collection of everyday items made of natural materials that vary in weight, size, texture, colour, taste, temperature and sound for them to explore e.g. a sponge, wooden rolling pin, the cardboard centre of a kitchen roll, different spoons, wooden and metal, brushes, an orange or lemon, etc.

• Use hand over/under hand demonstration where possible to show your child how to do something e.g. using a spoon at mealtimes

• Use real objects wherever possible during imaginative play e.g. real fruit and veg whilst playing shops

• Encourage your child whenever possible to do things for themselves

• Promote good listening skills by playing listening games within the home and out and about

• Give them time to think/respond/do/explore

• Allow them to do things by themselves. Encourage independence

• Let your child help you to do things and show them how to do things

• Name objects such as bottles, spoons, and clothing every time your child uses them. Naming things every day will make the words become familiar and help your child to associate them with objects and events

• Encourage your child to listen to the differences in sounds, such as moving a sound maker around your baby (in front and behind), and to listen to how your voice changes in different places, such as in the bathroom, kitchen or outdoors

Shopping list ideas

• Space blanket

• Umbrella – to create a plain background or use to hang visual toys

• Bright/ tactile books

• Brushes and various textures

• Light up toys

• Drum

• Cause and effect

• Busy boards

• Various containers and objects to put in them e.g. dry pasta, Lego Bricks, buttons etc.

You can find lots of additional about vision impairment and advice for helping your child in the early years in [this RNIB Guide for Parents](https://www.rnib.org.uk/sites/default/files/APDF-ENG021603_Early%20Support%20Parents%20Information.pdf).