



Watching television is one way to occupy children during patching, but there are other effective things to try!

The patch is in place to force the weaker eye to work: when children watch television, they may focus on sounds instead of sights. Think of how often you've seen kids 'watch' TV while using their eyes for other things. Activities that require active participation are fun and encourage your child to rely on sight, without any help from their ears.

## **Arts and crafts**

Activities that use fine motor skills (i.e., coloring, cutting, and pasting) are wonderful for encouraging use of the weaker eye. Initially children's eye-hand coordination may be poor; simple activities will help build confidence.

Paint-with-water books are great because the pictures help kids create a fun piece of art at a low ability level. Paint-with-water books are like coloring books. They are printed with dyes that become colorful with water. Children brush a damp paintbrush across a page and easily create colorful pictures. These books can be found near the coloring books in many grocery and drug stores.

## **Games**

Beanbag toss games can be fun. Find five or six different containers (i.e., bowls, boxes, pots and pans) and set them in a line on the floor, separated by a few inches. Have your child stand at one end of the line and try to toss a "ball" (Ping-Pong ball, rolled up sock or beanbag) into each of the buckets. If she misses, have her try again until she is able to get the ball into each of the buckets.

## **Reading**

Reading is another wonderful way to pass time. Many books require close attention, for example the Find the Skunk or Where's Wanda kinds of books; however, any book will keep eyes busy. As you read, follow the words with your finger, drawing your child's attention along with you. Talk about the pictures and have him try to guess what might come next. Even very young children will enjoy and can benefit from looking at wordless books with mom and dad. Librarians or sales associates in the bookstore can guide you to terrific picture books without text. Then your child can read the book to you!

Fun activities stimulate vision and make patch time easier for all. Your one-on-one attention may ease some of the difficulties associated with patching.

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