**CVI Assessment Area - Color (7:03)**

ILSA WILLEMS: Hello. My name is Ilse Willems. I'm a CVI project coordinator at the CVI center at Perkins. And in this video, we'll be talking about impact of color.

Individuals with CVI can rely more heavily on color, especially bright colors. They might show a strong color preference, one color that really helps to grab their attention. They can use color as a support for visual recognition. And impact of color requires ongoing assessment. So an individual with CVI has a strong color preference at the moment that can fade away or change over time. So you want to keep evaluating this.

In this picture, you'll see a boy with CVI. He has a blackboard on the table with lots of different single color just red items. There's a small red cube, a small red shaker egg, a red bear, a small red pillow. In his hand, he's closely attending to a small red Elmo. So for this student, the color red really helps to grab his attention, but now he's broadening his understanding of red. Red can be lots of different items. So using his preferred color to really help grab his attention and broaden his understanding.

What the research says. What do we already know about impact of color? We know that color can help to elicit visual attention. Color can increase motivation for individuals with CVI. Usually individuals with CVI prefer brighter colors versus paler or darker colors. Color helps individuals locate and reach for items. And color coding strategies support concept development.

Some individuals with CVI may only visually attend to items of one preferred color. They may only attend to items of one color versus multi-colored materials. They may use color as a support for visual recognition. And they may mistake one item for another if they are the same colors.

So in this photograph, you'll see a light purple drink bottle. And individuals with CVI might really rely on that color to help them to locate their drink bottle, to recognize it. If there's something else nearby that drink bottle or anywhere else in the house that's the same color, maybe generally the same shape that same light color, that light purple, they may mistake that other item for their drink bottle because they might really be using color as their method of recognition.

Some individuals with CVI may use color cues to help alert them to important features of an object. So in this photograph on the right, you'll see a little boy with CVI. And he loves doing laundry. So in order to make the washing machine more visually accessible and for him to complete the activity more independently, his mom just added a small strip of red tape to that button that he has to push in order to turn the machine on. So this way, he can use that color to help alert him to the button and to reach for the button more accurately.

Individuals with CVI may use color coding to find an object. And color can continue to be important, especially when locating items at a distance or looking an item amongst many other items. So we're thinking back to that light purple drink bottle on the previous slide. If there's a kitchen table that's cluttered but has lots of materials on it, the student might really use their memory of the color in order to find that item, their drink bottle, amongst the clutter on the table or from a distance.

In this example, an individual with CVI is learning sorting and matching skills based on color. So there's a little boy with CVI. He has a black tray in front of him. That black tray has a nice clear yellow outline, taped outlines. He knows exactly where the edges of his tray are. And on that tray there are two cups, a yellow cup and an orange cup. And he is counting pairs of different colors yellow and orange. So he's putting the yellow counting bears into the yellow cup and the orange counting bears into the orange cup. So he's really using color to support concept development and skill building.

Learning color and color coding skills could really help increase students' independence in a variety of ways. In this photograph, you'll see a black mat on a table. And a student has three different items on that place mat, a yellow plate, and nice bright orange cup, and then a silver spoon that has a bright red handle.

So now student can really use color to help them identify their items, to recognize them, and to know exactly where to reach. For example on that spoon, only the handle is a bright color. So then a student knows exactly where to reach for that spoon in order to really increase their independence during mealtime.

Mealtime can be difficult for a lot of students. Usually they might be in a noisy cafeteria. They're trying to combine their vision and their reaching skills all while eating and perhaps having social time. So the student can really benefit from these nice bright colors and color coding skills to help make the activity more accessible, to help really increase their independence.

I have two quotes from individuals with CVI on how they're impacted by color and how they use color. So this quote is from a child with CVI. And he said, "Mom, can you wear a red shirt so I can find you more easily?" This child knows that if they're in a crowded place, if he might be away from mom and needs to see her at a distance, having the bright red shirt can really alert him to her. So he can find her more easily in that crowd.

The next quote is from an adult with CVI. She said, "I want to show how I did algebra. It frankly made no sense because I have CVI and dyscalculia," which makes it harder for her to do arithmetic. "I had to color code the steps in the numbers."

So she shared a photograph of how she did her algebra. And there's lots of different algebraic equations, lots of different numbers. And what she did is she used different colored pens to just highlight different parts of the equation, so different numbers, different problems. And that way it was easier for her to see it more clearly, to really segment all the algebra problems. And then she was able to do it much more easily. So a nice quick color coding strategy to make the lesson much more accessible to her.

Here's our current research and literature on the impact of color, if you'd like to dive a little bit more deeply into this topic. Every child with CVI is teachable and every child has a right to a meaningful and accessible education. If you'd like more information on impact of color or any of the other visual behaviors, please check out cvinow.org.