

## Successful Adaptations for Learning to Use Touch Effectively

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### TACTILE MODELING

#### Definition

Demonstration of an activity by having the child (observer) feel the demonstrator's actions by touching parts of the body or objects involved in the action. A means of demonstrating something to a child who is totally blind.

#### Purpose

To convey information about an activity or action to a child who has severe visual impairments in a way that the child can perceive it tactilely and imitate it, if appropriate.

#### Examples

- Lavada has her 2-year-old son David on her lap with his back to her. Lavada sings and claps her hands between David's hands; then she stops and pauses for a few seconds. She resumes singing and prompts David to clap by tapping his hands and saying "You clap."
- The teacher shows 5-year-old Joseph the materials for the art activity: cardboard, pieces of wood and the glue bottle. She puts her hands under Joseph's hands so he can feel her grasp a piece of wood, squeeze the bottle of glue, put glue on the wood and stick it on the cardboard. She says "Your turn" and touches the bottle of glue to Joseph's hand.
- Juanita and John each have a communication board with tangible symbols in their elementary classroom. John picks up a symbol by putting his hand under Juanita's so she can follow his action. He touches Juanita's hand to indicate that it is her turn. Juanita selects a tangible symbol from her communication board.

#### Considerations

1. Model the action multiple times before expecting the child to imitate the action and provide sufficient wait time between tactile models so that the child will understand when the action is completed.
2. Determine whether the use of tactile modeling is an efficient method of instruction for an individual child given his or her individual preferences, needs, and abilities.

#### Advantages

- Tactile modeling provides a means for a child who is blind to observe the actions of another person.
- Tactile modeling promotes conversational turn taking. The teacher demonstrates something, the student repeats it, and the teacher provides feedback. This turn taking may include comments and nonverbal exchanges.

## Disadvantages

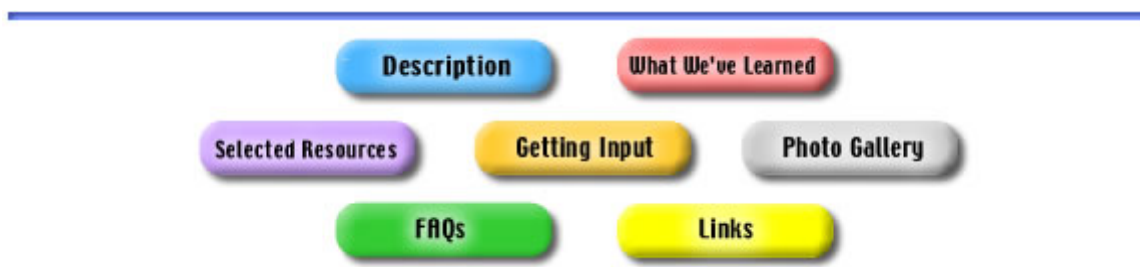
- Tactile modeling may be uncomfortable for the child and communication partner because of differences in their age, gender, relationship, culture and experiences.
- Young children may not easily or safely perceive some activities through tactile modeling (e.g., blowing out a candle).
- Tactile modeling provides one aspect of an activity at a time (e.g., steps in making a sandwich), so for multi step activities the child must remember a sequence of actions.
- Learning from tactile modeling requires hand use, cognitive skills, memory and the ability to synthesize information (which can develop over time).

## Source

***Tactile Modeling*** represents a synthesis of information from Project SALUTE's focus groups, National Advisory Committee, staff activities, and a review of relevant literature such as the following bibliography.

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