A Shared Vision
Partners in Pediatric Blindness and Visual Impairment

Let's Make a Texture Book

Early literacy begins in the first three years of a child's life. How do you make books engaging when the pictures are not interesting or meaningful to a very young child who's blind or visually impaired? A texture book is a simple solution and they're easy to make yourself. It might become your child's favorite book!

Texture books are board books with fabric, fur, leather, or other materials glued on each page. They introduce your child to the concept of a book with pages. They help your child learn early tactile skills, which are critical for understanding braille. It's fun to "read" the book together and feel each page. Plus, you can take a texture book anywhere and play with it – the checkout line in the grocery store, the doctor's office, or a friend's house.

Here are some tips for making your own texture book:

- Chipboard is an easy surface to glue materials to and it comes in a variety of sizes, some with pre-punched holes for the binding. It's available at craft stores.
- Use familiar textures that your child would touch at home – a blanket, a washcloth, the leather couch, the seat belt in the car, the dog's fur. Avoid abstract tactile illustrations such as rain, snow, ice or food which aren't practical to add to a book.
- Keep each page simple – one texture per page.
- Find materials to represent your textures in the remnant section of craft stores or around your house; cut them to fit your pages and use tacky glue like Aleene's to attach the materials to each page.
- Bind the book with ribbon; traditional ring binders can pose a choking hazard.
- "Read" the book to your child by turning the pages and touching the textures together. Talk about what the textures feel like and their similarities to things you have at home.

You can also make an "experience book" which is filled with textures from a special trip or experience. Then you can "read" the book and remember your adventure together. Here's an example:

- We went on a trip in the car. I like to shake mommy's keys when we go to the car. (Glue a key or attach a set of keys to the page.)

- We drove all the way to the beach. There was sand everywhere. (Glue some sand or sand paper to the page.)
- The water was cold! (Some things don't have an object to go with them but you could glue something sparkly or reflective to represent the water.)
- I liked to play with my bucket and shovel in the sand. (Attach a plastic shovel to the page.)
- I got tired. Mommy dried me off with a towel. (Glue a piece of towel to the page.)
- When we got home, I fell fast asleep. (Glue a piece of a blanket to the page.)