

Touching and perceiving

Noticing



Activity: Noticing an object hanging from a play arch

Make or buy a play arch and hang various tactile objects on the arch, depending on the abilities of the client.

Set-up of the activity

The tactile objects that you can hang on the arch can be, for example, a sponge, football, a ribbon or bead necklace. The arch should be set-up in such a way that the client can move freely while the objects hang within reach.

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- Place the play arch above the client.
- Wait until the client starts moving on his own and bumps against the hanging objects with his hands. This can also be a different body part if that is easier or more pleasant for the client.
- Stimulate the client to move by touching him with the objects. If necessary, help him move towards the objects.
- Hang something different from the arch if you have used the arch with the same objects several times. Observe whether the client notices the change.

Points for observation and focus

- Observe what is the client's natural movement pattern: does he, for example, always fidget with his fingers, does he kick his left leg back and forth or does he turn his head? If so, place the objects near the body parts that he tends to move so that they will be touched.
- Observe whether you notice any reaction, even if just a very small reaction, when a body part touches the object. Possible reactions can be, for example, a frown or stiffening of the body part that has been touched.

- Pay special attention to whether an object is pleasant for the client. It may be unpleasant for a client if he has no control over when he will be touched, because he then cannot avoid it.
- Take into account that round shapes and harder materials, such as plastic and wood, are usually more tolerable.

Alternative materials

- You can use a baby arch for very small children. Also for them, vary between objects.
- Various companies that specialise in multi-sensory environments (MSE) manufacture large wooden play arches. These arches can be placed, for example, on a table, floor or in a bed.
- For clients in a wheelchair, you can fasten the arch to the wheelchair.
- You can use the "Little Room" of Lily Nielsen. For more information go to visit www.activelearningspace.org
- You can hang various play objects to an elastic cord. Tip: place a balloon or beach ball in a fabric cover (see also the activity Balloon cover in Tactual exploration).

Can also be used in the categories

- Tactual exploration (TE)
- Touch strategy (TS)