

# **Chapter Eleven**

## **Suggestions for Classroom Teachers and Parents**

**T**he purpose of this chapter is to share with parents and teachers, some ideas or approaches to help a child who has difficulty meeting the needs of the classroom. These suggestions are meant to take the pressure off the child while he is attempting to achieve, but has difficulty making it. The suggestions are as follows:

1. Have the child use a line marker while reading to help him keep his place.

Of course, this is for the child who constantly loses his place or has difficulty holding his place while reading. Do not allow him to use his finger unless he cannot make an eye fixation on words without using his fingers for reinforcement; a line marker is more desirable.

There have been many pros and cons to this concept of using a line marker or a finger. The use of a finger makes it difficult to read by phrases and encourages word by word reading. The argument that is most often expressed is, *do not give the child a crutch because he will then become dependent on it and will not be able to read without it!* It seems that when a child is struggling to achieve, it would be more humane to help him by making the mechanics of the situation easier while you and he are working to develop the basic skill. If using a line marker or his finger will help the child get over a hurdle, help him—don't punish him.

2. Break assignments down into smaller amounts at one time.

For example, should the child have new spelling words, give him two at a time. Make sure he knows the two before giving him another two. Or, should he have a whole sheet of math problems to do, give him two or three problems at a time rather than the whole sheet.

By following this procedure a catastrophic affect and panic may be avoided because too large an assignment (in the child's eyes) is presented.

3. Be consistent with the child.

Children having difficulty in the learning situation frequently have problems in orientation and when things are inconsistent they find it frustrating to perform.

4. Provide relatively immediate feedback on the accuracy of the child's work. It is important not to leave the child hanging. When he can see his error and his process is explained, this will give him more positive feelings about himself in the situation.

5. Have the child correct his errors immediately after errors have been pointed out. This will take the sting out of making mistakes and help the child learn the proper process for accuracy.

6. When the class is too large and/or if the teacher doesn't want to embarrass the child, seat him in a place where he can, as quietly as possible, hand the teacher completed work. The teacher can check it over without calling undue attention to the child or disturbing the class.

7. Have the child hold something in his hand while sitting and listening. This will help children pay attention who always have to have their hands going. By giving them something to hold, they do not have to go around touching everything or biting their nails.

8. Work with concrete and tactful materials. This will help the child who still uses his hands to explore the world gain information. Instead of constantly saying, "Don't touch," give him something to touch and work with. What the toucher is really telling you is that he learns best with his hands. While he is making the transition to where he can just use his eyes for information processing, let him use his hands.

9. Have the child hold his pencil in proper pencil grasp. Holding his pencil properly will relieve muscular tension and help his handwriting. Also emphasize proper posture while he writes.
10. Engage the child in conversation. Have him tell you about what goes on in his life—what he thinks, how it is, where he saw it, etc. Draw him out. Do not criticize what he says. Learn to listen to him.
11. Have the child tell you stories about pictures or events and write it down. Develop his own book by using his own words as reading material. (Read books by Sylvia Ashton-Warner<sup>1</sup>.) Help the child feel that he belongs.
12. Provide parents with positive feedback about their children. Should there be a problem in the classroom, work it out with the child, do not complain to the parents—they feel as frustrated as the teacher.
13. Dictate verbal instructions to the child and have him carry them out. Start from simple instructions and make them more complicated as he demonstrates improvement.
  - a. Ask the child to get you single items in the room; for example, “Get me the black pencil.” When he can do that, ask him to get two items, then three, etc.
  - b. Ask him to get an item and place it somewhere in the room. For example, “Get me the yellow book that is on the table and put it on the chair.”
  - c. Make the instructions more complicated. For example, “Get me the yellow book and the black pencil. Put the book on the chair and hand me the pencil.” As the child gains proficiency, increase the complexity of the instructions.
14. Read to the child and discuss with him what was read. When you read to the child, alter your voice and become animated to illustrate the different situations or characters you are reading about.

Should a child have difficulty reading his assignments because he does not read well, read to him. It is better that the child with a reading problem gains information and is able to participate in class on a verbal basis, than that he should struggle trying to get the assignment and feel like a fool in class because he cannot answer questions. Children having difficulty need a boost emotionally. Forcing them to read when they have trouble compounds their problem. When the child learns to read more effectively he will ask you to stop and he will do it himself. In the meanwhile he has the information.

---

1. Sylvia Constance Ashton-Warner, (17 December 1908 – 28 April 1984), New Zealand writer, poet and educator, was born on 17 December 1908, in Stratford, New Zealand. She spent many years teaching Māori children, using stimulating and often pioneering techniques which she wrote about in her 1963 treatise, *Teacher*; and in the various volumes of her autobiography. Her success derived from a commitment to “releasing the native imagery and using it for working material” and her belief that communication must produce a mutual response in order to affect a lasting change. As a novelist, she produced several works mostly centered around strong female characters. Her novel, *Spinster*, (1958) was made into the 1961 film, *Two Loves*, (also known as *The Spinster*) starring Shirley MacLaine. She was awarded an MBE for services to education and literature. Ashton-Warner died on 28 April 1984, in Tauranga.

# **Chapter Twelve**

## **Parent And Child Communication**

### **As Related To Vision**

#### **How Does Communication Relate to Vision?**

**A**s a behavioral optometrist for the past 61 years, I have made many observations about human behavior and human needs. In order to help my patients who had problems in processing visual information, I found that there was not one book, not one specific method, nor any group or person who had all of the answers to help these people with their problems. The research was always interesting, but didn't seem to have a human component in the equation. Some of the research appeared to show that many conditions were not helped with vision therapy, then years later this was disproven and it was found that vision therapy did help. The people who did the research had a conventional model of vision, not a behavioral model. Others became all hung up in minutia and never offered practical suggestions.

As a clinician, my concern was in learning about procedures that would help my patients. It was important to me to think out of the box and to ignore conventional thinking. To do this it was necessary to learn what was going on in other professions as well as my own about how our brain, body, and physiology functioned. Thankfully, I met many people who thought as I did, both in my profession and outside of it. The Optometric Extension Program was the leader in the holistic approach to vision and vision care. The College of Optometrists in Vision Development also provided seminars and literature about the behavioral approach to vision care.

What I am trying to share with you are the results and "how to" that I have learned overall of these years. During this time many, many people have been helped to achieve beyond any expectations that were offered to them by those who practiced conventional "eye care."

#### **Blind with Anger**

One of the reasons that we are so concerned with the use of language and methods of communicating is because of its relationship to vision. When there is anything interfering in the process of vision, the person will not function as efficiently as they might. You have heard the phrase, "blind with anger". This happens because visual processes close down when we are angry, afraid, frustrated, or under stress. When people are open with communication, they see better, hear better, and function better. My purpose in the discussion of communicating with children is to keep them open so that they can process information more effectively whether that information comes to them through their eyes and is put through the visual process as they might do in reading, or hearing which they put through the auditory process, or in a combination of ways. Vision is the ultimate process and it relates to all other processes of the body. Because of vision we are able to look at something and know, not only what it is, but how it feels, what it made of, its weight, its use, and many other facets of the object. We are able to hear a sound and visualize what is making the sound. When we read, we are frequently able to create a picture from the words on the page.

#### **Responsibility for Self**

When we work with a person, child, or adult, if the child does not communicate, it becomes exceedingly difficult to make progress. Communication is the key to cooperation and success. The child must take responsibility for himself in order to be successful.

How do we help a child or adult develop responsibility for himself? Questions are used to start this process of "self". I ask questions because it is necessary to get them thinking and processing what is happening. Children sometimes complain that I frequently answer their questions with a question. My answer to this is, "Do I?" The first question is: "With whom does your world start?"

Many children will answer with, "My mother or father?" Very few will say, "Me".

Many questions may follow until the child gets the understanding that he is the one who experiences the world from himself outward. It is necessary for the child to realize that he is the one who feels both physically and emotionally who he is and where he is. This is called "orientation to space". Too many people are not aware of their physical selves.

Another question: "Who is responsible for what you do?"

It may take awhile, but the child will get the message that he is responsible for his actions and his performance.

Another question: "Who is here for help to do better in school and at sports or to get your eyes straight?" Then, "Is that something that you want?"

Another question: "Do you think that you are important?"

We want the child to realize that he is important to himself and what he does reflects his feeling of importance to himself. Once we have that understood, then when he acts out or doesn't cooperate, we ask him how his behavior shows that he is important to himself. After going through this a few times, we almost always have total cooperation. Cooperation leads to success.

I ask parents to use this method of questions to get cooperation from their child. We all know that yelling and anger doesn't get the job done. This way might be worth trying.

The book, *I'm OK - You're OK*, by Thomas Harris, Harper & Row, New York 1969 may be very helpful in gaining insight of how to communicate with anyone. (Thomas A. Harris, 1969)

The following is our model for communication with a child:

**Caring – not crushing**  
**Expecting effort – not demanding perfection**  
**Guidance – not patronage**  
**Leading – not pushing**  
**Faith, fun, fair play**  
**These create a climate in which a child can learn**

## Praise and Compliment

How do you compliment or praise your child? Do you say, "Good boy!" or "Good job!" "You are wonderful!"? Do you express your feelings or your judgments? The following is an example of what might be said when a child shows you a picture he has so proudly created:

Parent: "Oh what a beautiful picture, you are such a great artist, you are wonderful!"

That might be the last picture the child ever makes. He may be afraid that the next picture he makes will not be as "good"? Then what should be said? It may be that the picture isn't really so great, but the child thinks that he did everything correctly. What happens if the teacher marks him lower than he expects or if his contemporaries make fun of what he has created? Is the picture really beautiful? Is he a great artist? Is he really wonderful? He might make more pictures, but what will he learn about creating art when he has it all together to start? What will be said when the art work isn't so good? Will that imply that he isn't really great or wonderful?

Expressing your feelings and observations would be much more effective in the long run. The parent could say one or all of the following:

- Parent: "That picture is so pleasing to look at." "I like it."
- "I like the way you used colors."
- "Tell me about it."
- "I'm so proud of how you did that picture."

In this way the child is put on stage to share with you what he tried to represent. Make your comments reflect your positive feelings about what you are seeing or what the child does. You can also make comments about what you don't like. Expressing your positive reactions and feelings leaves the door open for a discussion about what the child has done. Should you truly dislike what the child has shown you, you have alternatives, which are: say nothing, pick out positives, or just get the child talking about his creation.

Parents will tell me that they just want to give the child creative criticism. There is no such thing! No one enjoys criticism. Asking questions is more effective.

## **Good and Bad**

What does good mean and what can a person (child) learn from hearing that what he has done is "good"? What does "bad" mean and what can a child learn from hearing that what he has done is "bad"? When a child does something that pleases a parent, he is told that he is "good". What conflict does it throw him into when he does something that displeases the parent and he is told that he is "bad"? How can he be a good boy and a bad boy at the same time—which is it?

Here is another example. When I have finished my vision and performance evaluation of a child and the mother says to the child, "You did a good job!" In private, I will ask the mother how she knew that the child did a good job. She might say, "He cooperated with you and behaved."

I will ask the parent if she meant to praise the child. I then will ask if I may rephrase what she said. The parent will usually agree. Praise works best when it is descriptive of your feelings; for example the parent could have said, "I like the way you worked with Dr. Wiener and I am proud of you." Now the child will know what was meant by "good".

Should the child have been uncooperative and difficult to work with, the mother could have told him that she was unhappy with the way he acted. She could say, "I am unhappy with the way you behaved." Or, "Do you think that you acted in a way to make me proud of you?"

Many times praise is a form of manipulation in order to have the other person feel good or to have someone like you. Be honest in your praise and compliment or praise small things that the child does. When the child helps around the house, let him know that it pleases you and that he has made things easier for you. Describe the act and express your feeling about it, not your judgment. Using the words 'good' or 'bad' expresses judgment, which should be avoided.

## **Practice**

Practice what we discuss when you communicate with others. Watch for their reaction to how you say things. You will find it very interesting to hear their responses as well as their body language.

The next time you attend a lecture, or after hearing a sermon, go up to the lecturer or the theologian and instead of saying, "That was a wonderful talk (or sermon)," say "I found what you had to say was very meaningful." Also thank him or her for sharing. Do not tell them that they did a good job or that was a good lecture. Try to make comments about some of the items that were covered and how it was meaningful to you. In that way he or she will be pleased to know that you listened to what was said and they might even discuss it further with you.

## **Love**

Do not relate love to accomplishment. Love should be unconditional - no strings attached. When a child does not meet expectations, or doesn't perform well, look at the performance and keep love out of it. There should be a differentiation between love and behavior. It is very possible to love someone without liking the way they behave.

It used to be that children wanted love from their parents and would go to extremes to get that love. Times have changed and so has the vector. Today, parents seem to want the love of their children. This has created a situation where the child is in charge and learns how to use this in manipulating the parent.

Parents want their children to be successful. What does the child want? A child usually wants to please his parents and have them proud of him. When the child does not achieve, he is fully aware of it and is not happy about it. The child may resort to all kinds of behavioral defenses, such as "I don't care!", passive behavior, clowning (class clown), depression, or attempting to achieve in other areas such as sports. The child must learn that you may not be happy about his lack of achievement, but that has nothing to do with your love of him. Praise the child for those things that please you and where he does achieve. Don't be afraid that he won't love you when you discuss his short comings. When the child knows that he can discuss his problems with you openly and honestly, he will.

## **Too Much Love**

Some parents feel the need to constantly affirm their love for their child. They do this by telling the child, "I love you" even at times when this is inappropriate. Some mothers will hug and kiss the child in the middle of a discussion. Sometimes I wonder if the parent feels guilty about having negative feelings towards the child in trouble. I am not saying that a parent shouldn't tell a child they love him or should not hold or kiss the child, but to do it at an appropriate time.

There are those parents who constantly tell their child that he is the smartest, the best, the most creative, the most brilliant, etc. When speaking about the child they tell how wonderful he is—frequently in front of the child. The thought is to build the child's ego. Does this make him afraid of not being able to function up to that high standard when he attempts something in the future? It seems that in order to save himself, the child may think it might be better not to try. They must learn to cope with lowered achievement or failure and learn to handle differences in his behavior and performance. What happens when his teachers and peers don't see him the way his parents talk about him? Somebody is lying about his performance and ability. When he faces reality that he is not the "super" child his parents have built him up to be, he will not know what to do or how to handle him feelings. He may get out of it all by becoming passive and depressed.

Again, we come back to honest praise, or when not being happy with a child's performance by reflecting your feelings, not your judgments.

## **Sabotage**

There are times when we have a child who is in vision therapy who is not cooperative and is difficult to work with. After a meaningful therapy session where the child has cooperated, I will say to the mother, "Your son worked very well with me and we got a lot done." Too often, the parent will look at the child and in loud voice and says, "Why don't you do that all the time?!!" Watching the expression on the child's face and his body language, I see what happens to him as his parent pokes a hole in his emotional balloon. Instead of sabotaging me and the child, all that had to be said was to express positive feeling by saying "I'm proud of you."

## **Be an Observer**

Step back and observe your child's performance and behavior. Too often parents jump in fast when a child is introduced to someone or doesn't react immediately to a given situation. Many times when a child

receives a compliment and takes time to say, "Thank you," the parent will quickly say, "Say thank you!". When someone says, "Thank you" to the child the parent doesn't give him time to respond with, "You're welcome." Wait and see what the child will do. Be an observer.

There are children who function at the tactful level and must touch everything that attracts their attention. Watch what the child does. What does he do when he touches something? Frequently this means that the child gets his information and experience by touching things and as a result he gives us insights to how to teach or help the child. This child will need developmental activities to help him transfer touch to vision. He will learn to know how things feel by looking at them. By being an observer of behavior you learn how the child functions and what he needs. You also learn where the child is developmentally and what activities will help him.

Parents will say "Don't touch anything!" "Don't touch that!" The child has heard this so many times over and over again that he has learned to tune it out. He touches without any thought that he shouldn't touch. He has to be given a way to process what he hears. I do this in my office by telling a must touch child the following: "You are allowed to touch anything in this office." The child and his parent will usually look at me. I wait for the child to move and then I say, "You can touch anything in this office that belongs to you." When the child does touch or tries to manipulate something that I don't want manipulated, I simply in a low calm voice ask, "Does that belong to you?" After doing this a few times, the child processes this (gets the message internally) and usually looks and asks if he may touch something. There is no longer a need to say "Don't touch!"

## **Stalling**

Not all children react immediately when asked a question or asked to do a chore. Children process information differently. Some children get the point immediately and others have to think it through. It is important to know the way each child processes information. Knowing this can save aggravation when a child is asked to do something or for an answer to a problem. The other concern is to differentiate processing speed from manipulation. A child learns very quickly how to manipulate a parent. He learns that if he doesn't respond quickly enough, the parent will do it.

There are times when a child will not react immediately to what his parents want him to do. This may apply to homework, performing a chore, or stopping an activity. Sometimes it may appear as if the child doesn't even hear you. The basic question is, "does the child hear you, is he slow to process the information, or is he ignoring you?" This must be ascertained before any action is taken, and may be determined as follows:

1. Ask the child if he has heard what you said.
2. Give the child time to respond as he may be a slow processor.
3. After a reasonable time, ask him to repeat what you said.
4. Should he respond with what you said, then ask when he will do it.

Assuming that he doesn't follow through and whatever it is doesn't get done and your anxiety builds up along with your anger (frustration), do not do it for him. This may apply to simple things such as taking out the garbage or putting a dish in the sink. In that instance, look at the child, get his attention and say and do the following:

1. "Read my mind" (If no response from the child, do 2.)
2. Point to the object and repeat "Read my mind" (if no response, do 3.)
3. Pick up the object or touch it and ask "What is it I want you to do?"
4. If none of this works, do not allow the child to leave the room, and use your ingenuity. Play 20 questions until the child gets the idea. Not allowing the child to leave the room or walk away from the

situation delays him in anything that he wants to do. It will get easier as the child learns that you mean business.

5. When the child does what is asked of him, share your feelings by saying something like, "Thank you, you made things easier for me and I appreciate your help." (Please do not say "Good boy or girl!")

Should the child leave the room without doing what has been asked, the typical parent will do what the child has been asked to do (not with a happy face). This is also true when a child doesn't do his homework. The parent is concerned that if the homework isn't done the child will be marked down by the teacher and may even fail the course. To offset this happening, the parent does the homework for the child. What does this behavior on the part of the parent teach the child? Who is being manipulated and becomes frustrated and angry, the parent or the child?

What are the consequences of a parent taking over the child's tasks or homework? The child learns that if he stalls long enough, his parent will do it. What if the child fails because he doesn't get his homework in? Whose ego is hurt more, the child's or the parents? Yes, a child is expected to do chores around the house and help out and to take personal responsibility for himself. He is also expected to do his school work. The child has to learn and accept that there are certain things that he is responsible for doing.

Should the child not cooperate or help, or if he avoids doing his school work, then restrictions have to be put into effect. When it pertains to homework, a certain time and consistent place to do it should be agreed upon. He will not be allowed to watch television, play with his games, or other diversions until homework and study are completed. When a child needs help, offer it. Helping a child should be mutually agreed upon. Don't start helping the child and wind up doing it because it is taking too long to complete. Let the child know that there is nothing else he will be allowed to do until his work is completed.

## Guilt

It is not unusual for parents to feel guilty about how they think about and treat their children. Some of the afterthoughts are:

- » I shouldn't have been so strict!
- » I shouldn't have raised my voice!
- » I shouldn't have gotten so angry!
- » I should be more patient!
- » I should be more understanding!
- » I should be kinder!
- » Why did I ever have a child?!
- » I don't know what to do!

We could go on and on with the self incrimination, but to no avail. Guilt doesn't accomplish anything. Guilt is counterproductive. Parents feel guilty because they don't know what to do to help or communicate with their child.

A number of years ago my older son asked me the following:

"Dad, knowing what you know about communication techniques and how to speak to children, would you have raised me and my brother differently?"

After thinking awhile, I answered with the following: "Yes ....I would have made other mistakes."

Hindsight is always better than foresight. When we are young and inexperienced, we do what we feel is the right thing to do at that time. When we are older and have more experience, we see things differently

and approach things differently. We cannot fault ourselves for not having the knowledge and experience that we accumulate over the years. As human beings we act with the knowledge we have at any given moment in time. Years later, what we did and how we acted in the past will look different.

No one taught us how to be parents, yet other people will criticize what you may be doing with your child. These people will always come in with negatives about your actions. Criticism is never constructive. Suggestions may be constructive, but only when you ask for it.

One of the most difficult things for a parent to accept is that when there is a disagreement with a child and the child doesn't get his way, in the eyes of the child the parent is "wrong". That being the case, it becomes important to do what you believe is appropriate for the situation. It is important to follow your "gut" reaction to handling issues—just use meaningful language.

A parent who wasn't making any progress in getting her way with her child would say, "I'm going to get a heart attack from your behavior!" trying to make the child feel guilty. Another mother would tell the child that he "let her down"! It doesn't usually work. One of the factors about guilt is that we will keep repeating the behavior. Children who feel guilt will usually repeat the negative performance. The long term feeling of guilt generated in a child will usually have more significant and negative behaviors in a child as he gets older.

## **Dealing with a Child's Anger**

You are having a discussion with your child and he wants to buy something or do something, but hasn't fulfilled his obligations and you say, "No!" Your child looks at you and with anger in his voice, he says "I hate you!"? or "I don't love you!" How would you react?

Do you meet anger with anger? Do you think that this is truly how he feels about you? It will not help to become angry or to feel hurt by the child's remarks. He is probably frustrated and angry because he is not getting his way or he doesn't want to do something you want him to do. He is striking out in a way to upset you. You cannot let it work, otherwise it becomes habit. Were you to meet anger with anger, the child has succeeded in gaining control of the situation.

To gain control of the situation, instead of meeting anger with anger, an appropriate response could be, "I can't control how you feel, but I still love you. Now if you are angry at me, how about just telling me what it is that you are angry about and let us discuss it." Discuss and explore the child's point of view without putting him down. Then make your decision.

This type of behavior occurs in the teen years in children. As the children matures physiologically and their endocrine systems become more active, their hormones take over very strongly. Some children start using curse words to express their anger and frustration. Typically, parents will say something like "Don't you dare talk to me that way, I am your parent and I don't have to put up with it!" or "If you talk to me that way, I will punish you and you will be very sorry!" It doesn't work because the parent has lost control. The child is now in control and the parent has to get it back.

Don't react to the words in an authoritarian way. To handle the situation you might try saying, "I really want to hear what you are saying, but I find that I am reacting to the words you are using. It would help me understand what you are trying to say by your using words that I can deal with." In addition you might ask the child to tell you the meaning of the words that he is using and how the meaning of the words are appropriate to what he is trying to say.

Stick to what you say and keep saying it over and over again until the child responds in a way that both of you can communicate. When you keep changing what you say, the child knows that he is getting to you. When you just keep repeating what you have said, he then has the burden of changing direction. Issues can be resolved. Once you and your child experience resolving an issue without anger, it will be easier to deal with other issues in the future.

## **Television and Hand-Held Games**

Television time should be restricted to an hour a day and hand-held games no longer than 30 minutes. There are certain rules for watching television and using hand-held games, which are as follows:

- Television: Sit up, lights on in the room, sit at least 10 feet from the TV set. Sit up: Sit so that both eyes are viewing the television equally. When lying down or on a side, the eyes do not focus equally and will cause difficulty in binocular vision (the use of the two eyes as a team).
- Lights on in the room: Television is a light source and watching it in the dark is similar to looking at a bare light bulb in a dark room. Looking at it for any period of time puts stress on the eyes and resultant stress on the whole body. It also cuts off peripheral vision, which is important for body balance and for the two eyes to work as a team.
- Sit at least 10 feet away: Sitting closer will add stress to the whole body and may cause unnecessary increase in focusing. Getting too close to anything that is done for a prolonged time can cause stress in the visual system and the body. Too much sustained concentrated effort could result in visual problems, such as, myopia (near sightedness), astigmatism, eyes turning in or out and undue stress while doing school work.

### **Hand-held games**

Most children hold hand-held games too close to their eyes which causes them to concentrate too intensely. For the least stress to the visual system, and the muscles of the neck and back, the distance from the center of the nose to the object being viewed should equal the distance from the elbow to the first knuckle of the fist (about 14 to 15 inches). Holding a game too close can have negative, and potentially, harmful impacts to a child's (or adult's) vision. Consider the following:

1. Because the print and pictures are very small, the child needs to focus with increased optical power to see the objects clearly causing tension in not only the eye muscles, but also in the muscles of the neck and back.
2. Because the child looks at a fixed, and undesirable, distance for continuous periods of time, there is no release of focus as the game is being played. One should not look at one point in space for lengthy periods. It is important to look around the room occasionally. This lack of release may result in the development of myopia, astigmatism, unequal use between the eyes and problems in the teaming of the eyes.
3. The intense concentration may result in loss of peripheral awareness, visual and auditory. Does the child, while engaged in the game, hear you when you call? Does he see you when you walk next to him?

The games are here to stay (unfortunately). Have the child observe the following simple rules:

1. Hold the game at the proper distance.
2. Hold the game with two hands so that both eyes view it at the same distance.
3. Have lights on in the room. The game, though illuminated, should be used in a lighted environment.
4. Look up occasionally and scan the room.

It would be much to the child's benefit to go outdoors when possible and, when in the house, play ball or another game that requires visual judgements of distance. These activities afford a needed release from intense nearpoint activity.