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Spring 2023

## Occupational therapy within the Senior Community: Low Vision's Influence on Social Participation

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### Recommended Citation

DiFranco, Erin, "Occupational therapy within the Senior Community: Low Vision's Influence on Social Participation" (2023). *Occupational Therapy Doctoral Student Capstone Posters*. 9.  
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## Background and Proposal Process

Despite research indicating that health concerns in older adults can negatively impact their social participation, there is little research on how low vision specifically impacts social participation.

With my capstone project at *Ohio Living* in the activities department, I hoped to not only shed light on the impact low vision could have on social participation, but to also provide solutions for individuals with low vision to partake in meaningful social activities with their peers.

## Biography

My name is Erin DiFranco, and I am a 3rd year student in CSU's Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program. I became interested in the topic of low vision when I recognized the gap in literature in relation to OT and low vision. As a future OT, I hope to advocate the importance of addressing low vision concerns throughout my practice.



## Capstone Activities

- Created a low vision accessible activity booklet for residents
- Completed CEU course "An Introduction to Low Vision Rehabilitation for Occupational Therapists"
- Created a low vision handout for staff/family members (see below)
- Coordinated and led low-vision accessible "Jumbo Print Games" with residents

## Low Vision Handout

### LOW VISION TIPS

During leisure activities!

#### BIGGER

- Encourage resident to get closer to what they're looking at or bring object closer
- Hold reading material/objects at chest height
- Use magnifier
- Enlarge printed items on copier/scanner or retype in large font

#### BRIGHTER

- Bring light closer to activity if possible or move resident near light source
- Goose-neck lamps are recommended

#### Decrease Glare

- A resident with low vision may see glare in areas you do not!
- Position light over resident's shoulder or off to the side of the resident while they complete an activity
  - Avoid shiny or reflective surfaces
  - Use a typoscope (black plastic card with rectangle cut for line of text to show)
  - Wear sunglasses or visor

#### BOLDER

- Use strong color contrasts
- Use dark backgrounds for light objects and light backgrounds for dark objects (example: use black or white construction paper as a background for an activity on a table)

## Low Vision Rehabilitation CEU



## Key References

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## Acknowledgements

I would like to give a special thank you to Luci Remchick, Activities Coordinator, for all her support and guidance throughout my capstone experience! I would also like to thank all other activities staff for being so welcoming and helpful.