



VISUALLY DRIVEN

What is visually driven behaviour?

When someone with Autism becomes tired or heightened, they can enter a state of being **visually driven** (also called being 'monosensory'). In this state all of their senses become dormant or 'go to sleep'. This includes, critically, their sense of their own body.

In this state, the only sense which continues to function normally is **vision**.

What does this look like?

When a person is visually-driven their eyes take over their entire body. They will become very attracted to visually-appealing stimuli. They may do things such as:

- Being 'glued' to a window
- Staring at bright pictures
- Running towards bright objects
- Moving around a room touching and playing with colourful toys
- Becoming fixated on electronic screens
- Running onto a busy road

At the same time, they are very unlikely to respond to verbal prompts. At these times it's important to remember that if you talk, it will be like they can't hear you.

How to manage visually-driven behaviour?

It depends on the situation...

If the person is in danger	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physically stop them• Turn them around so their vision focuses on something safer.
If you want to help them out of their visually driven state	Optimise their arousal through metronome supports, movement or other supports.
If you just need them to do something else	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use your hand to block their vision from what they are being attracted to• Take them by the hand• Gently guide them with a touch on the back