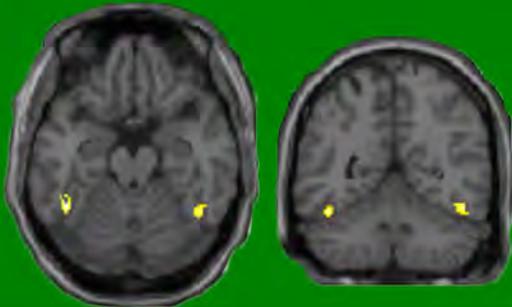


## Why Faces?

All faces contain the same basic features: two eyes, a nose, and a mouth. However, the brain processes faces in a unique way, allowing us to determine a person's identity, age, gender, and mood by picking up on very subtle facial information. There are areas of the brain devoted to this unique processing. If these areas are impaired, an individual will have face recognition problems, but not necessarily problems processing other visual stimuli.

### Face Recognition Areas of the Brain



### How do people cope with face blindness?

At this point, there are no successful treatments for face blindness. However, individuals with the disorder typically develop strategies to compensate for their face recognition difficulties. They will often use non-facial clues to recognize someone, such as hairstyle, body type, clothing, voice, gait, or behavior. Friends and family of individuals with face blindness can help them by pointing to people when mentioning them by name. Schoolteachers and peers can also make certain accommodations for children struggling with face blindness, such as wearing nametags, or placing name-cards on desks.



### Contact Us:

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[www.faceblind.org/social\\_perception.index](http://www.faceblind.org/social_perception.index)



## Face Blindness in Children

Duchaine Social Perception Lab





### What is face blindness?

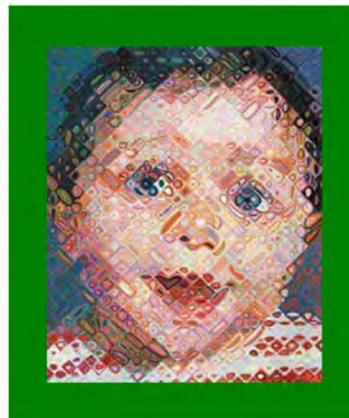
Face blindness, also known as prosopagnosia, is defined by extreme difficulties with face recognition. This can result from brain damage (acquired prosopagnosia), or may be present from birth without any known injury (developmental prosopagnosia). Individuals with prosopagnosia are unable to recognize even very-familiar faces. They struggle with faces of family and friends, and some even fail to recognize their own faces in a mirror. For adults, this inability to recognize faces can lead to anxiety in social situations. For children, it can cause stress at school and is potentially dangerous: children who become separated from their caregivers may not be able to relocate them, or they may inadvertently approach strangers who they mistake for familiar individuals. The prevalence of prosopagnosia is approximately 1 in 50.



### How is face blindness identified?

Face blindness can be difficult to identify because individuals with the disorder have normal intelligence and otherwise normal vision. In addition, abnormal behaviors that are often associated with face blindness, such as social avoidance and failure to make eye contact, can be mistaken for other disorders, such as autism spectrum disorder. People with face blindness often experience...

- Failure to recognize someone, especially if they have changed their appearance or are seen out of context
- Anxiety and fear that they will be unable to recognize a friend or colleague
- Loss of self-confidence due to social isolation, avoidance of social situations, and past social embarrassment
- Difficulty following the plots of TV shows with human characters, as they can fail to recognize a character after a change in scene and/or clothing



### Children with face blindness often also experience these difficulties:



- Lack of fear of strangers because they can't differentiate familiar from unfamiliar faces

- Intense fear of getting lost or separated from parents and teachers because they know that they would have difficulty recognizing and relocating them

- Behaving differently at school and at home, as they may feel more comfortable with family members who they find easier to recognize based on non-facial cues (like hair style)



- Refusal to perform tasks that require identifying individuals, e.g. handing back assignments in class



However, not everyone with face blindness displays all of these symptoms. In fact, some individuals don't even realize that their difficulties with face recognition are abnormal- they think that everyone struggles to recognize faces.