How your Brain is "wired" in Ocular Blindness and Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI)

The Laboratory for Visual Neuroplasticity
Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary
Harvard Medical School

http://scholar.harvard.edu/merabetlab

Research Project

We are interested in investigating how the brain adapts to visual impairment. Previous studies using modern day brain scanning techniques have shown us that in the case of blindness, the visual brain is responsible for processing other senses (such as hearing and touch). The ability of the brain to "re-wire" itself may represent the basis for compensatory behaviors observed in individuals living with blindness and visual impairment.

To help answer these questions, we will be using an advanced brain scanning technique called Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). While in the scanner, we will ask participants to perform simple behavioral tasks (e.g. identify sounds or tactile patterns, visual patterns). During this time, the scanner will detect signals that tell us something about how your brain is working and helps us build pictures that tell us something about how your brain is “wired” and how it functions.

Eligibility:

1. Aged between 14 and 45 years and have binocular blindness due to damage to the eye.
OR
2. Aged between 14 and 24 years and have visual impairment consistent with a diagnosis of cortical visual impairment (CVI)

Participation requires a total of 2 (two) 1 hour sessions (training and scanning).

Total compensation is $80.00.

If interested in participating, please contact The Laboratory for Visual Neuroplasticity at (617) 573-3794 or visit our website at:

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Collaborating Centers:
- Boston Children's Hospital
- Boston University School of Medicine
- New England Eye Low Vision Clinic at the Perkins School for the Blind
- Carroll Center for the Blind