Illusions are fun to look at, but they also provide vision scientists with important insights into the way children experience the world. My children found their world changing colour during a recent visit to my lab.

It is a rare achievement to make it through dinner at our house without someone crying over spilt milk (or water, or any other liquid the kids are drinking). As I mop up the evening mess, I suspect similar scenes are played out at dinner tables around the country.

It doesn't seem to matter how many times you ask children to pay attention or to be careful. Time and time again, an arm shoots out, milk goes flying and a child protests, "it wasn't my fault!"

Next time you feel your parental frustration rising, it might be worth considering what science has to say about this. It turns out children may be less responsible for these accidents than you might assume.

Firstly, children do not develop adult levels of visual acuity until around 3-5 years of age . In other words, if young children were able to read they would require much larger text than adults to distinguish the letters.

In addition to fine visual details appearing more blurry, there is considerable evidence that the processing capacity of children is also greatly diminished compared to adults . The concept of "capacity" refers to the number of visual objects or features that a person is typically aware of at any time.

People are often surprised to learn that the vast majority of information in our visual environment normally goes unnoticed
. This is particularly the case in cluttered or dynamic environments where a range of influences such as "crowding effects" impact the amount of information we can process at a time.

Disclosure

Olivia Carter receives funding from the Australian Research Council.

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Read more http://theconversation.com/why-kids-knock-over-drinks-and-must-be-careful-around-cars-82208