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GRATITUDE

By Tanni L. Anthony

When eating bamboo sprouts, remember the man who planted them.

~ Chinese Proverb



As the 2011 year comes to a close and with our national holiday dedicated to giving thanks just behind us, it seems right to express great gratitude for all we have been given and have to look forward to in the new year. I am continually reminded of the many good and important gifts we have in our state and country for children and youth with disabilities. While there is always room to grow, there is still much to celebrate and honor with our gratitude. The proverbial bamboo sprouts we eat today are, in many ways, indeed from the plantings of yesterday.


Many of the original planters are long out of sight, their contributions made decades ago to ensure a free appropriate education to all students, home school options, parents as partners, etc.— please remember-in-gratitude all the parents and professionals who came before us and brought positive change through their actions for our benefit. We can honor their work by expressing our thanks to those in our current everyday world. Please take a moment to say "thank you" aloud to those around you who have continued to till the soil, gather the harvest, and nurture new growth. Drop a note of appreciation to a parent who helped solve a school challenge, say an extra kind word to the bus driver who ensures your child's safe journey from home and school each day, or praise a teacher who made a difference in your child's life, or thank the school principal for exceptional leadership.

In gratitude - I remember each of you for all you have given and shared in 2011.

WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE!

**A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers
of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired
November—December 2011**

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Bits From Bonnie

By Bonnie Snyder

BonnieLS21@gmail.com

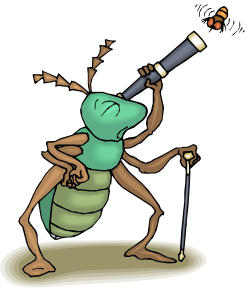
<http://TVIVIP.org>

This has been a very busy time. At the end of October, I had the pleasure of presenting at the AER Conference in Cleveland. My presentation was on "Creating a Community Partnership" and my community partner, Dr. Sudhanshu Semwal, co-presented via Skype. The presentation was well attended and well received. We had a very robust and productive question and answer session at the end, as well. It was really neat that even people who did not attend the presentation came up to me and talked to me about it throughout the remainder of the conference. AER's Executive Director, Lou Tutt, did me the honor of attending the presentation. Thank you, Lou!

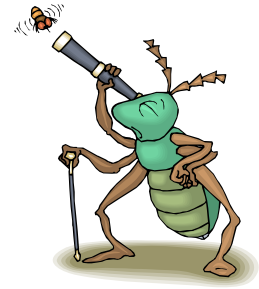
Over the four days of the conference, I met and talked to many really nice people. All in all, it was a really excellent experience. And, I truly believe that Lou Tutt is the right person at the right time to lead this organization.

I am embarking on a new project. If you or your district or BOCES have old technology for the blind that is no longer used, I would ask that you consider sending it to me rather than just discarding it. I would like to recycle this technology in several ways, particularly by "harvesting" the braille displays and, with the help of some wonderfully bright and creative minds at UCCS, try to come up with new ways to use them. So, please let me know if you have devices that you would be willing to send along.

Editor's Note: How wonderful for Colorado that Bonnie and Dr. Semwal were presenters at the regional AER Conference presenter. It is exciting that the Technology Symposium has garnered national attention. If you do not have this year's symposium on your calendars, please add the date May 12th (in Colorado Springs) to your list of great things to do next spring.



LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



The CDE Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Schedule Clinic Schedule for School Year 2011-2012

REGION	DATES	PAPERWORK DEADLINE	SITE COORDINATOR
Northern (Location to be determined)	Fri Feb 10, 2012 Sat Feb 11, 2012	January 20, 2012	Rita Abright Vicki Pearson
Southern (CSDB low vision room)	Fri Mar 2, 2012	February 17, 2012	Donice Fennimore

Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Update

By Debbie Haberkorn

The third Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic of 2011-2012 was held November 9-11, 2011 at Anchor Center for Blind Children in Denver. This three day clinic provided evaluations for 16 students from six administrative units (Arapahoe County District 5, Adams County District 12, Denver County District 1, Douglas County District RE-1, Jefferson County District RE-1 and Northwest Colorado BOCES). Thirteen sets of parents and 14 TVIs attended the evaluations with their students. The team would like to thank Nancy Knight for coordinating the clinic. Nancy’s help in setting up the clinic, the support she provided during the clinic and her assistance in packing all of the equipment back into the van was greatly appreciated. The team would also like to thank Anchor Center for Blind Children for hosting the clinic again this year.

Clinic Reminders (Please and Thank You):

- ◆ PLEASE ensure that your paperwork for the clinic is filled out by the deadline dates. If clinic paperwork is late, we will not be able to accommodate your student.
- ◆ All students attending the Low Vision Evaluation Clinics should be registered with the Colorado Instructional Materials Center.
- ◆ Also please remember that the TVI should accompany the student and parent(s) to the clinic. This is an expectation so that the TVI is in an optimal position to provide any follow-up device training and guidance with the student and family.



“Education for Life” Application Deadline: *March 1, 2012*

Up to \$42,000 may be awarded to six deserving recipients. In addition the SEE THE FUTURE Fund has formed a partnership with the Kane Family Foundation. The merit-based Kane Foundation is offering two “full-ride tuition” scholarships to visually impaired or blind students who meet the SEE THE FUTURE Fund criteria (see below) and are nominated by the SEE THE FUTURE Fund selection committee. Presently, Kane – SEE THE FUTURE recipients must attend CU-Boulder, CU-Denver, or CU-Colorado Springs.

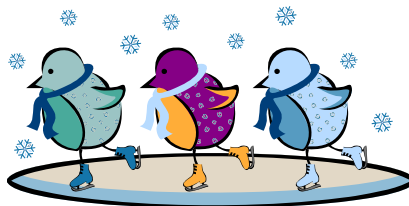
To apply for an “Education for Life” scholarship and to obtain more information, please go to: www.seethefuture.org and click on “Education for Life” scholarships. You may also call Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund at (719) 471-3200.

The SEE THE FUTURE / Kane Scholarship Criteria:

- ◆ **Acceptance to CU-Boulder, CU-Denver, or CU-Colorado Springs.**
- ◆ **Un-weighted high school GPA: 3.40 or higher (through senior year).**
- ◆ **Achieve an A or a B in at least one AP (Advanced Placement) or IB (International Baccalaureate) course during junior or senior year.** If a school district does not offer AP or IB courses, the student must address this in their application. If an applicant is graduating from the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, that student must achieve an A or B in at least one AP class from a local high school.
- ◆ **Achieve an ACT composite score of 25 (80th percentile) or above.**

TCAP (formerly the CSAP) Frequently Asked Questions

You may now find a Frequently Asked Questions document about the TCAP on the Office of Student Assessment Website. The FAQs can be found on the TCAP Frameworks webpage at www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csap/csap_frameworks.html Additionally, there is a Question and Answer document that goes into more detail on the answers given to questions during the October 4th TCAP Frameworks Webinar. The Q&A document can be found here www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/training_info.html The TCAP Frameworks on the CDE website are now updated to account for formatting and minor text edits. The front matter also now includes the link to the CAS Code Reference System. No changes have been made to CAS/MCS alignments.



Spotlight on



Glaucoma

Information retrieved from: <http://www.glaucoma.org/glaucoma/>

What is Glaucoma? Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that cause damage to the optic nerve. The optic nerve is the part of the eye that carries the images we see to the brain. Glaucoma is often called the silent thief of sight, gradually stealing without warning and often without symptoms. If left untreated, glaucoma can lead to blindness.

It was once thought that elevated pressure inside the eye was the main cause of optic nerve damage. Although elevated pressure is clearly a risk factor, medical researchers and experts now know that other factors must also be involved because even people with "normal" pressure can experience vision loss from glaucoma.

To understand how glaucoma develops, it is helpful to understand how fluid circulates within the eye. Fluid is produced inside of the eye by a structure known as the ciliary body. This structure is located just beneath the iris. The fluid then travels through the pupil, and exits via the eye's drainage system, called the trabecular meshwork.

In healthy eyes there is a normal balance between the fluid that is made in the eye and the fluid that leaves the eye. Therefore, this fluid creates a relatively constant and healthy pressure within the eye. This intraocular pressure is needed to keep the eye inflated, nourished, and functioning properly.

Can Glaucoma Occur in a Very Young Child? There is more than one name for congenital glaucoma (childhood glaucoma / pediatric or infantile glaucoma) occurs in babies and young children. It is usually diagnosed within the first year of life. Congenital glaucoma is a rare condition that may be inherited, caused by incorrect development of the eye's drainage system before birth. This leads to increased intraocular pressure, which in turn damages the optic nerve. Congenital glaucoma occurs in one out of every 10,000 births in the United States.

Children can also be at risk for glaucoma when an abnormal drainage system occurs due to another disease in the eye. This is called secondary glaucoma. In these cases, the glaucoma may be associated with recognizable iris (the colored part of the eye), corneal, or other eye problems. For example, children with aniridia have an increased risk for developing glaucoma.

Who is at Risk for Glaucoma? Everyone is at risk for glaucoma from babies to senior citizens. Older people are at a higher risk for glaucoma, but as noted, babies can be born with glaucoma. Young adults can get glaucoma, too. African Americans in particular are susceptible at a younger age. Other high-risk groups include: people over 60, family members of those already diagnosed, diabetics, and people who are severely near-sighted.

What are the Different Types of Glaucoma? There are several types of glaucoma. The two main types are open-angle and angle-closure.

Spotlight on



Open-Angle glaucoma: Open-angle glaucoma is the most common form of glaucoma, accounting for at least 90% of all glaucoma cases. Open-angle glaucoma is caused by the slow clogging of the drainage canals, which results in increased eye pressure. There is a wide and open angle between the iris and cornea. Open-angle glaucoma develops slowly and is a lifelong condition. People with this condition may have overt symptoms until there is vision loss.

Angle-Closure Glaucoma: Also called acute glaucoma or narrow-angle glaucoma, this is a less common form of glaucoma and is caused by blocked drainage canals, resulting in a sudden rise in intraocular pressure. There is a closed or narrow angle between the iris and cornea. There are usually symptoms and damage that are very noticeable and which require immediate medical attention.

Normal-Tension Glaucoma (NTG): Also called low-tension or normal-pressure glaucoma, the optic nerve is damaged even though the eye pressure is not very high. The causes of NTG are still unknown.

Congenital Glaucoma: This type of glaucoma occurs in babies when there is incorrect or incomplete development of the eye's drainage canals during the prenatal period. This is a rare condition that may be inherited. When uncomplicated, microsurgery can often correct the structural defects. Other cases are treated with medication and surgery.

Other Types of Glaucoma: Variants of open-angle and angle-closure glaucoma include:

- ◆ Secondary Glaucoma
- ◆ Pigmentary Glaucoma
- ◆ Pseudoexfoliative Glaucoma
- ◆ Traumatic Glaucoma
- ◆ Neovascular Glaucoma
- ◆ Irido Corneal Endothelial Syndrome (ICE)



What is the Prevalence of Glaucoma: Glaucoma can cause blindness, if it is left untreated. And unfortunately approximately 10% of people with glaucoma who receive proper treatment still experience loss of vision. It is estimated that over 4 million Americans have glaucoma. It is the leading cause of blindness among African Americans. Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in the world, according to the World Health Organization.

What are Symptoms of Glaucoma? Symptoms of congenital glaucoma may include the following:

- ◆ enlarged eyes
- ◆ cloudiness of the cornea (the clear cover of the eye)
- ◆ photosensitivity (sensitivity to light).

Spotlight on

With later onset open-angle glaucoma, the most common form, there are virtually no symptoms. Usually, no pain is associated with increased eye pressure. Vision loss begins with peripheral or side vision. A person may compensate for this unconsciously by turning his or her head to the side, and may not notice anything until significant vision is lost. The best way to protect one's sight from glaucoma is to get tested. If someone is diagnosed with glaucoma, treatment can begin immediately.

What Tests Can be used to Identify Glaucoma? Diagnosing glaucoma is not always easy, and careful evaluation of the optic nerve continues to be essential to diagnosis and treatment.. Doctors look at many factors before making decisions about a recommended treatment. If a condition is particularly difficult to diagnose or treat, the person may be referred to a glaucoma specialist.

Tonometry: Tonometry measures the pressure within each eye. During tonometry eye drops are used to numb the eye. Then a doctor or technician uses a tool called a tonometer to measure the inner pressure of the eye. A small amount of pressure is applied to the eye by a tiny tool or by a warm puff of air. The range for normal pressure is 12-22 mm Hg ("mm Hg" refers to millimeters of mercury, a scale used to record eye pressure). Most glaucoma cases are diagnosed with pressure exceeding 20mm Hg. However, some people can have glaucoma at pressures between 12 -22mm Hg. Eye pressure is unique to each person.

Ophthalmoscopy: This diagnostic procedure helps the doctor examine an optic nerve for glaucoma damage. Eye drops are used to dilate the pupil so that the doctor can see through your eye to examine the shape and color of the optic nerve. The doctor will then use a small tool with a light on the end to light and magnify the optic nerve. If the intraocular pressure is not within the normal range or if the optic nerve looks unusual, the eye doctor may pursue one or two additional glaucoma exams: perimetry and gonioscopy.

Perimetry: This is a visual field test that produces a map of a person's complete field of vision. This test will help the doctor determine whether a person's vision has been affected by glaucoma. During this test, the person will be asked to look straight ahead and then indicate when a moving light passes within his or her peripheral (or side) vision. This helps draw a "map" of the person's visual field. Once glaucoma has been diagnosed, visual field tests are usually done one to two times a year to check for any changes in the person's vision.

Gonioscopy: This diagnostic exam helps determine whether the angle where the iris meets the cornea is open and wide or narrow and closed. During the exam, eye drops are used to numb the eye. A hand-held contact lens is gently placed on the eye. This contact lens has a mirror that shows the doctor if the angle between the iris and cornea is closed and blocked (a possible sign of angle-closure or acute glaucoma) or wide and open (a possible sign of open-angle, chronic glaucoma).

Pachymetry: This simple and painless test to measure the thickness of the cornea -- the clear window at the front of the eye. A probe called a pachymeter is gently placed on the front of the eye (the cornea) to measure its thickness. Pachymetry can help with a glaucoma diagnosis, because corneal thickness has the



potential to influence eye pressure readings. With this measurement, your doctor can better understand the person's intraocular pressure reading and develop a treatment plan. The procedure takes only about a minute to measure both eyes.

How is Glaucoma Treated? Glaucoma is not curable, and vision lost cannot be regained. With medication and/or surgery, it is possible to halt further loss of vision. Since open-angle glaucoma is a chronic condition, it must be monitored for life. Diagnosis is the first step to preserving a person's vision.

Medical treatments may involve the use of topical eye drops and oral medications. These treatments help to either increase the exit of fluid from the eye or decrease the production of fluid inside the eye. Each results in lower eye pressure.

There are two main types of surgical treatments: filtering surgery and laser surgery. Filtering surgery (also known as micro surgery) involves the use of small surgical tools to create a drainage canal in the eye. In contrast, laser surgery uses a small but powerful beam of light to make a small opening in the eye tissue.

What are the Educational Needs of a Child with Glaucoma? If the learner's vision and learning is impacted (or expected to be impacted with a progressive loss), the child may be eligible for special education and related services. If the child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a teacher certified in the area of visual impairment (TVI) and a certified orientation and mobility specialist (COMS) will likely be on the educational team. These providers will provide specialized instructional, aids, and/or equipment to address the learner's educational and mobility needs.

Resources

Congenital Glaucoma Network - <http://congenitalglaucomanetwork.com/>

This network was founded as a place to facilitate discussion, provide support, and promote awareness of congenital and childhood glaucoma

Workshop on Personal Financial Literacy within the Colorado Academic Standards

The Colorado Jump\$tart Coalition and Great-West Life are offering a FREE, hands-on, 3-day workshop to help you and fellow educators build knowledge about personal financial literacy topics in the Colorado Academic Standards to reinforce your excitement and ability to bring the same knowledge to students. Reimbursement is available for substitutes for Thursday and Friday. To register access Colorado Jump\$tart Coalition's website and then click on 2012 Fiscal Fitness under the Quick Links on the front page. <http://www.cojumpstart.org>

Date: January 26 – 28, 2012, Time: 3:15- 4:00 PM

Location: Front Range Community College in Westminster

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

A new O&M listserv has been created. If you are interested in joining, please go to:

OrientationAndMobility-subscribe@yahooroups.com

then reply to the confirmation e-mail asking who you are to ensure only interested parties are really involved in this national listserv.



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

30 College Scholarships for Blind Students



The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) Scholarship Committee is a national program to recognize achievement by blind student. The program gives annually a total of \$122,000 in scholarships to 30 legally blind college students. The awards range from \$3,000 to \$12,000. Their contest for 2012 begins the first week of November 2011. Membership in the NFB is NOT a requirement and many non-members win every year. The 2011 contest (rules and requirements are posted) are posted at www.nfb.org/scholarships.

Standards Implementation Toolkit Resources Discipline Concept Maps

Discipline Concept Maps (DCM) provide a visual representation of unifying themes and organizing and supporting concepts at each grade level. The DCMs provide a central purpose for that discipline at that grade level and depict how concepts relate to each other for intentional planning. They provide a framework for entering the standards in a way that honors the emphasis on 21st Century learning and interdisciplinary connections across the content areas. Check out the Discipline Concept Maps at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sitoolkit/DesignTools.htm>



WellPoint Foundation Impacting Blind and Visually Impaired Teens Nationwide

18 Agencies Participating in Fitness Challenge

Thanks to a generous \$150,000 grant from the WellPoint Foundation to the United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA), 18 partnering agencies from across the United States are providing more than 700 blind and visually impaired teenagers with an opportunity to increase their physical fitness levels and begin living a healthy and active lifestyle. The USABA-WellPoint Foundation National Fitness Challenge program is a year-long program that began this summer.

“Our goal is to help each participating teen become more fit and lose weight by using fun and challenging physical activities”, said Mark Lucas, executive director of the United States Association of Blind Athletes. “Each participating agency submits baseline data and monthly updates that are used to create and modify achievable fitness and weight loss goals for the teens to help them decrease their Body Mass Index.”

Research has consistently shown that individuals who participate in regular physical activity to improve their health have higher energy levels, a lower risk of health-related diseases, improved psychological health, and lower rates of depression and anxiety. Unfortunately, because of the many barriers and misconceptions about their abilities, approximately 70 percent of the nearly 56,000 children who are blind and visually impaired in the United States do not participate in even a limited physical education curriculum.

“The WellPoint Foundation is committed to helping children and adults live active lives and avoid the health risks associated with sedentary lifestyles and obesity,” said Mike Walsh, president and general manager of WellPoint’s Specialty Products, which includes dental, vision, workers’ compensation, voluntary, life and disability benefits. “We believe no one should ever be denied the right to enjoy the physical and emotional benefits of exercise, and we are proud to partner with the USABA to ensure that vision impairments do not limit the recreational opportunities afforded to teenagers across the country.”

The 18 agencies participating in the USABA-WellPoint Foundation National Fitness Challenge program include:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| The Braille Institute of Orange County | California |
| The Braille Institute of Los Angeles | California |
| LightHouse for the Blind of San Francisco | California |
| Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind | Colorado |
| Colorado Center for the Blind | Colorado |
| State of Connecticut: Board of Education & Services for the Blind | Connecticut |
| Center for the Visually Impaired | Georgia |

Indiana School for the Blind	Indiana
Kentucky Association of Blind Athletes	Kentucky
Delta Gamma Center for the Visually Impaired	Missouri
Missouri School for the Blind	Missouri
Inter-Actions in New Hampshire	New Hampshire
New York Institute for Special Education	New York
Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment	New York
Lighthouse International	New York
Cleveland Society for the Blind	Ohio
Ohio School f/t Blind and Columbus Parks Recreation	Ohio
Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped	Wisconsin

The funds from the WellPoint Foundation grant are used to provide talking pedometers, t-shirts, prizes, fitness and nutrition coaches for teens participating in the program.

About USABA

Since its founding in 1976, USABA, a community-based organization of the United States Olympic Committee, has reached more than 100,000 blind individuals. The organization has emerged as more than just a world-class trainer of blind athletes, it has become a champion of the abilities of Americans who are legally blind. USABA's mission: to enhance the lives of blind and visually impaired people by providing the opportunity for participation in sports and physical activity. For more information go to <http://usaba.org/>

About WellPoint Foundation

The WellPoint Foundation is the philanthropic arm of WellPoint, Inc. and through charitable contributions and programs, the Foundation promotes the inherent commitment of WellPoint, Inc. to enhance the health and well-being of individuals and families in communities that WellPoint, Inc. and its affiliated health plans serve. The Foundation focuses its funding on strategic initiatives that address and provide innovative solutions to health care challenges, as well as promoting the Healthy Generations Program, a multi-generational initiative that targets specific disease states and medical conditions. These disease states and medical conditions include: prenatal care in the first trimester, low birth weight babies, cardiac morbidity rates, long term activities that decrease obesity and increase physical activity, diabetes prevalence in adult populations, adult pneumococcal and influenza vaccinations and smoking cessation. The Foundation also coordinates the company's annual associate giving campaign and provides a 50 percent match of associates' campaign pledges. To learn more about the WellPoint Foundation, please visit: <http://www.wellpointfoundation.org/>.





Colorado Association for Education and Rehabilitation
of the Blind and Visually Impaired



10th Annual SNOWSHOE WEEKEND

**Sponsored by CAER (CO AER Chapter) and the
Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind (CSDB)**

FEBRUARY 24 - 26, 2012

Join us for the 10th annual Snowshoe weekend. This year we will be heading up to the YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch in Granby, CO.

WHO: All students with visual impairments in the State of COLORADO, ages 8 to 18.

WHEN: February 24-February 26, 2011

- Check in at **4:00 p.m.** February 24th (Friday)

- Check out at **1:00 p.m.** February 26 (Sunday)

WHERE: YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch, Granby, CO **Parents will be responsible for transporting children to and from the YMCA. We may be able to arrange carpools when all registrations are in.**

WHY: To experience a weekend in the mountains snowshoeing and hanging out with new and old friends.

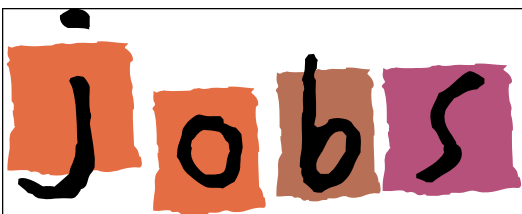
Student COST: \$50.00/ person (A matching amount will be provided by the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind to defer expenses) **PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO CAER!**

Complete the registration form and mail to: Mike Plansker, 12911 Spruce St., Thornton, CO 80602

Registration Deadline: December 16, 2011

Questions? Contact Mike at 303.870.7649 or Mike.e.plansker@adams12.org





IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for this school year. Please keep in touch with Tanni about your job openings. If you know of an anticipated opening in your part of the state, please begin working to recruit someone into our field by ensuring he or she has an opportunity to learn about being a TVI and/or an Orientation and Mobility Specialist. This may be a paraeducator, a brailist, and/or a colleague already in the teaching profession. Please work with Dr. Paula Conroy to learn more about the UNC distance education / graduate program to prepare TVIs and O&M Specialists in Colorado!

TVI = teacher certified in the area of visual impairment.
COMS = certified orientation and mobility specialist

Metro Region Jobs

- ✓ **Early Childhood TVI** (1FTE): Anchor Center for Blind Children. Submit cover letter and resume to Alice Applebaum at aapplebaum@anchorcenter.org
- ✓ **Vocation Rehabilitation Counselor / O&M Specialist** (1 FTE): Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. For more information, please contact Lindsey Pacheco at (303) 866.3319 or Lindsey.Pacheco@state.co.us
- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (1 FTE): Aurora Public Schools. Apply online at www.aps.k12.co.us. For more information contact Jo Cunningham at 720-271-9668 or Brenda Shepard @ 303 995 7913

Southern Region Jobs

- ✓ **TVI - Elementary Education/Special Needs** (1 FTE): Contact Chelle Lutz, CSDB at clutz@csdb.org for more information.
- ✓ **TVI - Mathematics** (1 FTE / Mathematics): Contact Chelle Lutz, CSDB at clutz@csdb.org for more information.
- ✓ **Program Coordinator**, School for the Blind, (1 FTE): Contact Chelle Lutz, CSDB at clutz@csdb.org for more information.

Statewide

- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (hourly contract work): Colorado Virtual Academy position. Flexible to your schedule. Contact Stacy Altman at 720-379-3985 or saltman@covcs.org



A NATIONAL PROGRAM
OF BRAILLE INSTITUTE

THE 2012 COLORADO BRAILLE CHALLENGE

Sponsored by the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB)

2012 PERMISSION FORM

MUST BE SIGNED BY PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN AND BE RETURNED TO DIANE COVINGTON, COLORADO SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND, 33 NORTH INSTITUTE ST., COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80903, OR FAX TO (719) 578-2225, BY DECEMBER 23, 2011. ONLY CONTESTS SUBMITTED WITH A SIGNED PERMISSION FORM ATTACHED WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE BRAILLE CHALLENGE® FINALS AT BRAILLE INSTITUTE®.

(Please print name clearly, as you would like it to appear on your certificate)

Last Name _____ First Name _____
Address _____ Apt. No. _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Birthdate _____ Age _____ Grade _____ Telephone (____) _____
E-mail _____ T-Shirt Size _____ Alternate phone (____) _____
Adult attending with student _____ TVI Parent Para

CONTEST RELEASE

I hereby give permission to CSDB and Braille Institute of America, Inc. ("BIA"), for my child to participate in The Braille Challenge preliminary contest. I understand that if my child qualifies, he or she is eligible to attend The Braille Challenge final contest in Los Angeles on June 23, 2012.

PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE

I hereby authorize CSDB and BIA to photograph, videotape, or otherwise record by visual, audio, electronic or manual means, the visual likeness and/or voice or other sounds created by the above named contestant (collectively "Reproductions"). The Governor Morehead School and BIA may use or permit to be used the Reproductions in any CD, DVD, exhibition, display, publication, solicitation or promotional or educational material or on any website including without limitation BIA's website, Facebook, or YouTube without compensation to the contestant, the contestant's heirs, successors or assigns.

Parent's Signature _____
Print Name _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY AGENCY REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Regional Coordinator Name _____
Name of Teacher for Visually Impaired _____
Teacher's Email _____ **Teacher's Phone** _____

Mark one:
Student Contest Level App Fresh Soph JV Va

Mark one: At Grade Level **Or** Below Grade Level (BGL) (If Apprentice BGL Contracted or Uncontracted)

1-800-BRAILLE (272-4553) • www.braillechallenge.org

DOTS OF INTEREST



The Evolution of Braille: Can the Past Help Plan the Future?

Part two of a three-part article from the Braille Authority of North America (BANA)

Part one of this article gave an overview of the vast changes that have occurred in both print and braille in the last few decades. This installment provides background on the Braille Authority of North America as well as a glimpse into its deliberations. The article also offers perspectives on the challenges of producing braille today given current codes and current production methods.

The Workings of the Braille Authority of North America: The mission of the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) is to assure literacy for tactile readers through standardization of braille and/or tactile graphics. BANA's purpose is to promote and facilitate the use, teaching, and production of braille. It publishes rules, interprets those rules, and renders opinions pertaining to braille in all existing and future codes. It deals with codes now in existence or to be developed in the future, in collaboration with other countries using English braille. In exercising its function and authority, BANA considers the effects of its decisions on other existing braille codes and formats, the ease of production by various methods, and acceptability to readers. The board of BANA and all of its committees are made up of educators, transcribers, braille producers, and braille readers. More than 100 people are involved in BANA's work.

As language changes, the need for new ways to represent things in braille continues to raise the need for new symbols and new uses of current symbols. Braille readers need access to the same information as do their print-reading counterparts in this age in which the norms for printed material are evolving rapidly.

Despite the need to respond to the changes in language, making changes in braille is not easy. BANA must deliberate very carefully before making even small changes to braille. It is essential that BANA consider the impact of any changes on readability, "writeability" (that is, how easy it is to write the code using various tools), computability (which refers to how accurately it can be translated and represented electronically), space considerations, familiarity to current braille readers, and so on. There are many goals to balance, and not all of them can be achieved effectively all of the time. The benefits of making any change must be shown to outweigh the drawbacks. For example, when the term and icon for the euro were adopted in Europe in 1995, a braille symbol had to be invented to represent that new print symbol. In 2007, BANA adopted new symbols for copyright and trademark; before that, the practice had been to spell out the word, even though a print symbol was used in the original text. BANA cannot ignore the changing conventions of print without putting braille readers at a significant disadvantage. The current process of "keeping up" has been to add new symbols as they come up, but with each new symbol and each new rule change, more ambiguity and more conflict are being created in braille. An example of this is given later in this article.

The following case provides a look into the workings of one of the BANA technical committees and the process through which decisions are weighed and made. Each technical committee of BANA works on various "charges" regarding changes and clarifications to a particular braille code. The committees work via email and teleconferences, and provide written reports of their progress to the BANA Board for each of its semi-annual meetings. The Literary Braille Technical Committee was working on the seemingly simple task of deciding how to show partial emphasis of a word. Partially emphasized words—that is, using indicators to identify bold or colored print or other font changes—are appearing with increasing frequency in elementary school textbooks, as well as in other materials that include challenging text such as product brand names, mentioned later in this article. The committee's report to the Board in the fall of 2006 included the following informal narrative as an illustration of the process by

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which the committee members approached this task. Read along and follow their thinking as they attempt to solve this issue:

First: We decide, following our principles, not to add a hyphen to signal the transition between regular print and italic or fully capitalized print, giving the braille reader more accurate information about the print text. Of course, we all want to do that.

Second: We decide to use the termination indicator as necessary to end italics or all caps. That looks good. All is going well. This is going to be easy!

Third: Someone points out that, following these rules, an italic indicator could come before an e, n, s, d, or t, causing confusion between the italicized letter and a contraction.

Fourth: We then consider the letter sign to fix the problem; no, that won't work. It's not clear to the reader.

Fifth: OK, we'll require uncontracted braille in partially emphasized words. That's consistent with the current *Braille Formats* guidelines.

Sixth: That would solve the problem, but how is the reader going to know that this is uncontracted braille? Sometimes a contraction not used early in the word will be a tip-off. Maybe the problem contraction will be the only one. Then the reader may have to stop to think a minute, but, if reasonably well educated, will probably be able to figure it out. It will be even easier if the reader happens to know the rule about use of uncontracted braille in this instance. How often will one find the word "uses" with the final s in italics? I guess, even then, the reader could probably tell whether "uses" or "useless" were intended. Sigh . . . Not a perfect fix—especially in textbooks for children in elementary grades.

What number are we on now? Well, maybe those hyphens weren't so bad after all. Now, why was it we wanted to get rid of them? Oh, that's right, to give the braille reader accurate information about the print. How about making a symbol meaning "uncontracted braille coming?" That would solve the problem completely! Wow! Let's do it!

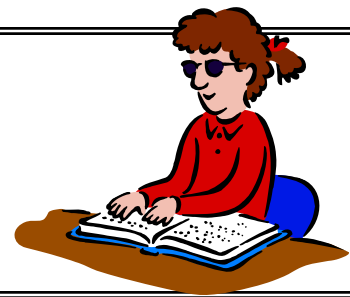
Now what symbol should we use: a. Double letter sign? We could, but then we'd have to change the non-Latin passage indicator. b. Three letter signs? Too long—it will never fly. c. Letter sign followed by dots 2-3? That's kind of nice, but we'll have to be sure we don't want to use the letter sign for out-of-place punctuation. That will take a long time.

Are we having fun yet? We thought this would be so easy to solve!

Code building is a more challenging task than it first appears; even simple "fixes" become complicated given the complexities of our current codes. The literary braille code was not designed to be "extensible"—that is, there are no clear and specific rules for building and changing symbols in a logical fashion. Right now, every proposed change to the braille code has to be considered individually in an ad hoc fashion.

Current Challenges in Transcription, Translation, and Backtranslation of Braille: As discussed in the first part of this article, braille transcribers often use braille translation software to make their work more efficient. Braille translation software converts the text in an electronic document into characters that can be embossed in braille onto paper or that can be shown on a refreshable braille display. The software is written so that, as much as possible, it follows the rules for correct usage and placement of braille contractions and symbols. While this software can often do a very good job of converting print characters into braille symbols, there are still some situations in which a transcriber must intervene in order to produce accurate and comprehensible braille. Charts and tables,

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descriptions of pictures, and transcription of spatial arithmetic are some obvious examples. However, there are other instances that may be less obvious. Currently, human intervention is often required for such details as ensuring correct use of single and double quotation marks, proper displaying of acronyms and web addresses, handling of long passages written in all uppercase letters, removing excessive emphasis indication, correct use of dashes and hyphens, to name only a few. The intervention is largely required because the way these items are handled in print can vary greatly from document to document, and the rules for their use are far more restrictive in braille than they are in print. Transcribers may need to follow additional steps to change an electronic file into correct braille in other situations as well, such as changing decorative letters into text because the software does not recognize these images as letters.

A transcriber can produce braille that can be read either on paper or on a refreshable braille display. However, as braille readers gain greater access to refreshable braille displays, the more common scenario is that they are using the displays to read directly from the screens of computers and mobile devices, and no transcriber is involved. Using this "on-the-fly" translation without transcriber intervention, the texts are often displayed incorrectly. Here are three examples:

Example 1. According to current codes, email addresses should be brailled in Computer Braille Code so that each character in the address is clear to the reader. Yet, when reading in contracted refreshable braille from a computer screen, an e-mail address will display in contracted literary braille, making the characters ambiguous. The user can take steps to view the address with no translation applied, but then the surrounding text is also displayed in uncoded characters.

Special symbols often display incorrectly. For example, both the tilde and the caret display as dots 4-5. The underline character displays as dots 4-6, no matter where it is, creating confusion with the print "dot" that appears in virtually every electronic address. These ambiguities can make for garbled translations and incorrect information to the reader.

Example 2. There is often a great deal of confusion among single quotation marks, apostrophes, and accent marks. Because of the various ways these symbols are used in print, sometimes inner quotation marks display in refreshable braille as apostrophes (dot 3), and sometimes a mark that is intended as an apostrophe or accent mark is shown as an opening inner quotation mark (dots 6, 2-3-6).

Example 3. When the sentence "H₂O = water" is displayed in refreshable braille, the fact that the 2 is subscripted is usually ignored, and the equals sign may display as a full cell. If, as in this example, it is spaced away from the formula, the sentence reads instead as "H₂O for water." What's more, the way these situations are handled varies depending upon the screen reader or translation program being used; for instance, some programs simply display the = sign as the word "equals" instead of the symbol. Therefore the braille reader is not getting the same information as the print reader of this text.

Changing print conventions further complicate the job of accurate braille translation. There are situations in which it is unclear how to braille something correctly at all according to the current BANA codes. For example, a dollar sign most often comes at the beginning of a string of numbers, and the braille symbol for the dollar sign in the literary code (dots 2-5-6 when placed before a number sign) seems to have been chosen with the assumption that this would always be the case. Unlike the print dollar sign, the braille symbol is dependent upon its placement for its meaning; in other contexts, dots 2-5-6 has numerous possible meanings. How, then, should we handle the name of the pop music sensation that is pronounced "Kesha," but who uses a dollar sign instead of an S in the middle of her name?

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According to the literary braille code, an out-of-place dollar sign should be brailled as dot-4, 2-5-6, that is, dot-4 dollar sign. This seems to work when the dollar sign is by itself or when it follows a number or is in a context that refers to currency. Since the dot 4 also can stand for some kind of accent or letter modification and is also used as a "print symbol indicator," the braille reader might be quite puzzled to have dot 4, dots 2-5-6 turn up in the middle of a person's name.

For clarity, should the name Ke\$ha simply be brailled with an s instead of a dollar sign? That solution might work as far as "readability," but it does not provide the braille reader the same information that the print reader has. A transcriber encountering this name may spell it Kesha, but include a transcriber's note indicating that the s is shown as a dollar sign in print. Of course, this solution is clear, but it requires the involvement of a transcriber rather than the name automatically and correctly displaying on a braille device.

"But there is an easy fix," the astute braille reader may say. "There is a perfectly good symbol for the dollar sign in the math code—BANA should just use that in the literary code, too!" The dot-4 s may work because it is unambiguous, and is associated with the shape of the print dollar sign. However, a change of the literary dollar sign to the one used in the Nemeth Code would require use of different rules from those that apply in the Nemeth code. In the literary code, a number sign is required after the currency symbol if it precedes numbers and the numbers are in the top of the cell. However, in Nemeth code, there would be no number sign following the dollar sign and the numbers are brailled in the lower part of the cell. Even with this approach, consistency still has not been established.

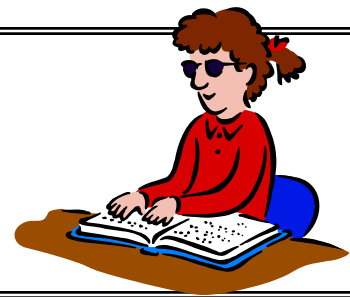
The example above of the out-of-place dollar sign is not an isolated instance. There are countless other examples of words written in ways that make it difficult to apply some of the context-based braille rules developed many decades ago. For example, brand and company names, such as the sports store FanNation and the online service Bookshare.org use creative punctuation and capitalization to make their names stand out, but also make an exact representation in braille more complex. If a company uses nonstandard symbols in its name and a blind person misspells the company name on a cover letter for a job application because she did not get accurate information from the braille, what are the chances that person will get the job? Should she have to check the spelling using audio or relying on a sighted person to tell her how it is spelled or should braille, the primary literacy tool for people who are blind, be capable of giving the most accurate information?

Aside from the difficulties in literary contexts, it is becoming increasingly problematic that a completely different code is used for mathematical and technical materials. These materials currently do not translate correctly with the use of software that does not include transcriber intervention. The need for a solution to this issue is ever more urgent as mathematical and computer code expressions increasingly appear in everyday contexts.

To be clear, at this moment there is no known solution that would completely eliminate the need for a trained transcriber to intervene in order to verify that the format of an embossed braille document is clear and conveys enough information about the layout of a print page or document. This is especially true in educational materials. Transcribers will likely always be needed for creating tactile graphics, complex mathematics and science materials, and other complicated written matter. It would be much more productive, however, if, their work could be focused on these difficult materials rather than on ensuring that each and every dot in the text is correct. The more frequently that human intervention and judgment calls must be made, the more likely that braille production is delayed, that costs are increased, and that the braille is less accurate.

Another area of concern is backtranslation, which is the process by which software converts contracted braille materials into print. Backtranslation is most often used when a person creates a document in braille on a computer or other electronic device and then either prints the document, emails it, or simply saves it into a mainstream file type.

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This process can be especially useful for braille-using students who need to write in braille to support their developing braille literacy, but who also need for their work to be readable by their non-braille-reading teachers and by fellow students with whom they may collaborate on projects. In the workplace, braille readers can also benefit from the ability to type text using the computer keyboard as a sort of "electronic braille" by using six keys or by attaching other braille devices, thus producing text readable as print by someone who does not read braille. The software and hardware exist for this need to be met in a seamless way, but there are sometimes problems that occur during the process of backtranslation—even when the person who typed in braille followed the rules of the code perfectly. Many of the examples given in this article are also problematic when dealing with backtranslation.

When a braille reader reads a document that has been translated from a print original, reading itself is a form of back translation. The braille document gives the braille reader information about the print original. Ideally, that information is both complete and accurate. The more print changes, the greater is the inability of the current braille codes to do that job.

Conclusion It is, without question, desirable for users to have independent access to braille materials. The proliferation of braille translation software, of braille embossers, and of refreshable braille displays has given braille readers more access to braille from more sources than ever before. With this greater access has come the need to consider multiple factors in the development of new rules and symbols for braille. In order to meet the needs of today, which are different from past decades, braille needs some systematic changes that will allow for the following:

- ◆ room within the code to add new symbols in a systematic way so that a braille reader has access to the same information as a print reader
- ◆ consistency of symbols so that correct braille will be shown when reading a computer or mobile device screen using braille
- ◆ ability for backtranslation to work more reliably
- ◆ ability to get better "on-the-fly" braille for mathematical/technical material, which is increasingly appearing in everyday contexts

It is clear that BANA cannot continue to adjust the codes on a symbol by symbol basis. Our community needs a flexible code that can grow with the English language and the changing ways it is represented in print. Braille needs to translate into and from print with complete accuracy. To keep up with growing demands, braille needs to be produced more quickly and with less human intervention than is currently required. BANA is considering solutions that will permit this. The third installment of this three-part article will outline these potential solutions.

Colorado Braille Competency Reminder

If you are a first-year TVI, please remember that you must demonstrate braille competency before the end of your first instructional year. If you are in process of renewing your CDE certificate of braille competency, you have five years to successfully complete 15 modules in literary braille. It is the responsibility of the testing candidates to keep a record of the date of their initial certificate and each passed module.

For questions about braille testing requirements, please contact Tanni at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681. All testing procedure documents can also be found at: www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/BLV.asp

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**The Hadley School
for the Blind**

Brailleing Signs is Cool to Do (A Song to Enjoy!)

Thanks to Rita Albright for sending the link to this song, which can be found on the Hadley School for the Blind at http://www.hadley.edu/resources_list_detail.asp?resourceid=33#hat

2012 Print-Braille Calendar from NBP

National Braille Press announces their new calendar for 2012 featuring favorite scenes from popular Dr. Seuss books! The print-braille calendar includes the Cat in the Hat, Fox in Sox, the Grinch and other beloved characters along with quotes from the books they appear in. As a special bonus, a sheet of stickers is included to help keep track of birthdays, appointments and other special days. The calendar sells for \$13.99 and usually goes fast, so order today! To order or read more, visit www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/2012SEUSS.html or call toll-free 800-548-7323.

Second Edition of Let's Learn Shapes with Shapely-CAL

The second edition of the print-braille book *Let's Learn Shapes with Shapely-CAL* is now available from Creative Adaptations for Learning (CAL). Pages are designed to teach children how to interpret illustrations by touch. These tactile graphics will enable the young child who is blind or visually impaired to develop an understanding of what a picture is and how a picture represents the actual environment. Shapes, colors, counting, sequencing and item identification are presented with a playful rhyming text. The new edition of the book is \$35 and includes suggested activities. For more information, visit www.cal-s.org or phone (516) 466-9143.

NASA Releases Lunar Book in Braille

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and its Lunar Science Institute (NLSI) announce publication of *Getting a Feel for Lunar Craters*, a book in braille with tactile illustrations designed to teach students who are blind or visually impaired about the moon's surface. David Hurd, a space science professor at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, Edinboro, Pa., is the book's author. He and tactile engineer John Matlock began creating tactile astronomy tools after a student with a visual impairment signed up for Hurd's introductory astronomy course. The book is also available as downloadable PDF and audio files from the NLSI site. The first printing of the book has run out, but a second printing is in the works. To be placed on a waiting list for the book, send an email to nasa_order@lcjvs.net. For more information, visit lunar-science.arc.nasa.gov/tactile.

BANA Tactile Graphics Guidelines Online

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) is pleased to announce that the HTML web version of the Guidelines and Standards for Tactile Graphics, 2010 is now available on the BANA website. This is the initial release of this long-anticipated publication. You can access the guidelines at the following link: www.brailleauthority.org/tg.

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Humanware™ SCHOLARSHIP

HumanWare Scholarship: HumanWare announces an essay contest promoting early braille literacy. In one thousand words or less, tell HumanWare why you feel braille literacy will be key to your child's success and describe the role you think the Mountbatten Learning System will play in his or her future. Essays must be submitted with the written support of an early childhood or early intervention professional. Parents and professionals are welcome to provide any supporting material to their application.

All applicants must reside in the United States or its Territories. Entries on behalf of children between the ages of 3 and 8 years, who are learning braille or are assessed as future braille learners, will be accepted. The winner will receive a complete Mountbatten Learning System Educational pack, and must be willing to participate in promotional events or to attend a public award ceremony. Entries must be submitted before **December 31, 2011**. To email your entry, or for more information, contact Sharon Spiker at sharon.spiker@humanware.com.



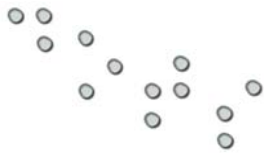
BANA Publishes Part Two of Article on the Evolution of Braille

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) has recently released the second segment of a three-part article on the evolution of braille. In this piece, BANA focuses on the complexities of code building as well as on current challenges in transcription, translation, and backtranslation of braille. (*Editor's Note: This segment is on pages 15-19 of this newsletter*).

Parts One and Two of "The Evolution of Braille: Can the Past Help Plan the Future?" are now posted on the BANA website at: www.brailleauthority.org. The final segment of this significant article will be released in early December. BANA will announce its publication through press releases and email announcements. BANA will meet on November 3–6, 2011, in Baltimore, MD. Guests are invited to attend BANA Board meetings and to observe the deliberations. The Board's agenda includes reports from all of BANA's committees as well as from September's World Congress Braille21 conference in Leipzig, Germany. If you are interested in attending the BANA meeting, please contact Chair Judy Dixon to reserve space.

Follow BANA's work via BANA-Announce, a one-way email list that shares news and information. To join this list, send a blank email to bana-announce-subscribe@brailleauthority.org and follow the directions in the confirmation email.

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Sources for Braille Books

American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults, www.actionfund.org

American Printing House for the Blind, www.aph.org

Braille Institute of America, www.brailleinstitute.org

Braille International, www.brailleintl.org

National Braille Press, www.nbp.org

Seedlings Braille Books for Children, www.seedlings.org

Sources for Braille Games, Toys, Jewelry, Etc.

American Printing House for the Blind, www.aph.org

At First Sight Braille Jewelry, www.braillejewelry.blogspot.com

Braille-a-Wear, www.braille-a-wear.com

Braille Gifts, www.braillegifts.com

Creative Adaptations for Learning, www.cal-s.org

Exceptional Teaching, Inc., www.exceptionalteaching.net

Independent Living Aids, www.independentliving.com

LS&S, www.lssproducts.com

Secrets Braille Jewelry, www.braillejewelry.com

Tack-Tiles Braille Systems, www.tack-tiles.com

New Rules this Year..... the Braille Challenge

Please be aware of these new rules for the February 3, 2012 Braille Challenge, which will be held on the campus of CSDB. Students may use ANY MANUAL braille – this includes the Perkins Classic, the new APH/Perkins Light Touch, and the APH/Perkins Next Generation braille. Answer sheets can be brailled using either 8 ½ x 11” or 11 ½ x 11” paper, depending on the braille a student uses. The Speed & Accuracy contest is now formatted for 8 ½ x 11” paper to accommodate the Next Generation smaller paper size. Students using larger paper will braille shorter lines.

If you use 11 ½ x 11” paper, you may use three-hole-punched sheets to help students insert it properly. Sheets should be inserted with the holes on the left.



Calendar of Events

2011 2011 2011 2011 2011 2011 2011 2011 2011 2011 2011

- December 7 - 10** **2011 Getting In Touch With Literacy Conference - Louisville, KY**
Contact: Janie Blome jblome@aph.org or Jane Thompson jthompson@aph.org
- December 12** **Southern Region TVI Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs (1 - 3 p.m.)**
Contact: Jim Olson – jolson@csdb.org
- December 12** **Colorado English Language Acquisition Proficiency Assessment (CELApro)**
 Early Testing Window for Speaking begins K-12 Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking
- December 16** **CIMC will mail corrected VI Registration spreadsheets to districts**
Contact: Jim Olson – jolson@csdb.org
- December 16** **Colorado Deafblind Census Packets Due Back to CDE ESSU**
Contact: Tanni Anthony (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012

- January 2** **CIMC Federal Quota Count Day**
Contact: Jim Olson – jolson@csdb.org
- January 9** **Southern Region TVI Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs (1 - 3 pm)**
Contact: Jim Olson – jolson@csdb.org
- January 12 - 31** **Colorado English Language Acquisition Proficiency Assessment (CELApro)**
 Testing Window for Grades K-12 Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking
- January 12** **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs**
Contact: Sue Pfaffenhauser at spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
- January 25 - 28** **Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference - Orlando, FL**
Visit: www.atia.org
- January 31** **Deadline for returning corrected count day spreadsheets to the CIMC**
Contact: Jim Olson – jolson@csdb.org
- February 2 - March 23** **Colorado Alternate (CoAlt) - Testing Window**
 Grades 3-10 Rdg, Grades 3-10 Wrtg, Grades 3-10 Math, Grades 5, 8,& 10 Science
- February 3** **Braille Challenge—CSDB in Colorado Springs**
Contact: npagani@csdb.org

More Calendar of Events

2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012
February 8										CAER Meeting Contact: Mike Plansker at Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org
February 9										CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs Contact: Sue Pfaffenhauser at spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
February 10-12										Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic - TBD Contact: Rita Albright rita.albright@bvsd.org / Vicki Pearson at vpearson1@yahoo.com
February 13										Southern Region TVI Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs (1 - 3 pm) Contact: Jim Olson – jolson@csdb.org
February 13 - 24										Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) - Early Testing Window Grade 3 Reading or Lectura
February 15										Colorado Commission for the Blind Meeting - Denver, CO (9:15am - 2:00pm) Contact: Jean McAllister - jean.mcallister@state.co.us
February 24 - 26										Snow Shoe Weekend Contact: Mike Plansker at Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org
February 27 - March 3										C-SUN Conference - San Diego, CA Visit: www.csun.edu
February 27 - March 9										Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) - Regular Testing Window Grade 3 Reading or Lectura
March 2										“Education for Life” See the Future Fund Application Deadline Visit: www.seethefuture.org
March 2										Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic - CSDB, Colorado Springs Contact: Donice Fennimore 719-578-2100 / dfennimore@csdb.org
March 5 - April 6										Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) - Early Testing Window
March 7										CAER Meeting - (by phone) Contact: Mike Plansker Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org
March 8										CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs Contact: Sue Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
March 12 - April 13										Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) - Regular Testing Window
March 15 - 18										CTEBVI Conference - Los Angeles, CA Visit: www.ctevh.org
April 2 - 27										11th Grade Alternate Testing Window
April 3 - 5										Canadian Vision Teacher’s Conference 2012 - Richmond Hill, Ontario Contact: Kevin Stewart at Kevin.stewart@yrdsb.edu.on.ca

More Calendar of Events

2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012
April 9										Southern Region TVI Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs (1 - 3 pm) <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson – jolson@csdb.org
April 11										CAER Meeting - <u>Contact:</u> Mike Plansker at Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org
April 11 - 14										National Council of Exceptional Children - Denver, CO <u>Visit:</u> www.cec.sped.org
April 12										CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs <u>Contact:</u> Sue Pfaffenhauser at spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
April 24										Colorado ACT (CO ACT) - Initial Test Date, Grade 11
April 30 - May 4										Data Entry on the ADE Site for 11th Grade Alternate Test
May 8										Colorado ACT (CO ACT) - Make-up Test Date, Grade 11
May 12										Technology Symposium - Colorado Springs <u>Contact:</u> Bonnie Snyder – bonnieLS21@gmail.com
May 14										Southern Region TVI Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs (1 - 3 pm) <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson – jolson@csdb.org
May 16										Colorado Commission for the Blind Meeting - Denver, CO (9:15am - 2:00pm) <u>Contact:</u> Jean McAllister - jean.mcallister@state.co.us
June 6										CAER Meeting - Left Hand, Longmont <u>Contact:</u> Mike Plansker at Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org
June 11 - 15										2012 Summer Institute on Deafblindness and SSN - Denver, CO <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony at 303-866-6681 / anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
June 21										CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs <u>Contact:</u> Sue Pfaffenhauser at spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
July 12 - 15										Nat'l Organization for Albinism & Hypopigmentation Conference - St Louis, MO <u>Visit:</u> www.albinism.org/noahevents.html
July 18 - 22										AER 2012 International Conference - Bellevue, WA <u>Visit:</u> www.aerbvi.org
August 15										Colorado Commission for the Blind Meeting - Denver, CO (9:15am - 2:00pm) <u>Contact:</u> Jean McAllister - jean.mcallister@state.co.us
November 7										Colorado Commission for the Blind Meeting - TBD, CO (9:15am - 2:00pm) <u>Contact:</u> Jean McAllister - jean.mcallister@state.co.us



**Now available online, an updated Spanish version of
*Questions Often Asked by Parents about Special
Education Services***



We've updated our common questions document to reflect current IDEA requirements. Feel free to download and share this document with the Spanish-speaking families you serve:

<http://nichcy.org/espanol/publicaciones/lq1sp>

Hemos actualizado nuestra publicación, "Preguntas Comunes de los Padres sobre la Educación Especial" para reflejar los requisitos actuales de IDEA. Siéntase libre de descargar y compartir este documento con las familias que sirven que hablan español:

<http://nichcy.org/espanol/publicaciones/lq1sp>

**Spanish Language Version of
Amended Procedural Safeguards Notice - Now Available Online!**

The Procedural Safeguards Notice, amended July 1, 2011, is now available in Spanish on the CDE special education law website. Additionally, the following dispute resolution documents are also now available in Spanish:

- ◆ Dispute Resolution Rights (brochure)
- ◆ Mediation Services (brochure)
- ◆ Dispute Resolution Options Table

For more information, please go to:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/info.htm>



PARENTS ENCOURAGING PARENTS

Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conferences are family-centered events designed to offer support, information and education to **both parents and professionals** who work with children with disabilities across Colorado. PEP promotes the partnerships between parents and professionals that are essential in supporting and including children with disabilities in schools and communities.

The 2011-2012 PEP Conferences will be held:

- **February 2-4, 2012 in Colorado Springs, Colorado**
- **April 26-28, 2012 (Location to be determined)**

For more information about PEP and to complete the preliminary application, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP.asp>. You may also call 303-866-6846 or 1-877-834-0588 toll-free for general information. We look forward to seeing you at PEP!



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Parents: If you are moving out of state or your child has graduated, please be in touch so we can remove your name from our newsletter mailing list. If your child is still enrolled in a Colorado school district and you have a new mailing address, please be in touch with your address changes

TVIs and COMSs: If you have any changes in program contact information for the next school year, please help us out and send Tanni these changes.

Thanks to everyone for helping to keep our mailing list up-to-date! Send changes to anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or to Tanni Anthony, CDE ESLU, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1175, Denver, CO 80202. Or call and leave her a voice message at (303) 866-6681.



New Educator Licensing System - Important Heads Up!

As of October 15, CDE's Educator Licensing Office will discontinue using the old licensing system. This will require that all applications submitted after this date will have to be returned to the applicants. The applicants will be re-directed to apply through our new eLicensing system at: <https://www.colorado.gov/cde/licensing/>

Update on CDE and The New Teacher Project

CDE and the Colorado Department of Higher Education have partnered with The New Teacher Project (TNTP) to support their work in developing an effectiveness-based system of educator licensure, induction and preparation that is aligned with the state's new educator evaluation system.

In August, the initiative established the Colorado Educator Pipeline Task Force to bring together key voices from around the state to gather recommendations for redesigning licensure and induction in Colorado and connecting it to measure of effectiveness. The task force held their first meeting on August 29, during which time the group reviewed data related to induction and retention and engaged in a discussion on licensure and induction. The second meeting, held on September 30, focused on the current structure of Colorado's licensure system and potential changes to link the system to measures of effectiveness.

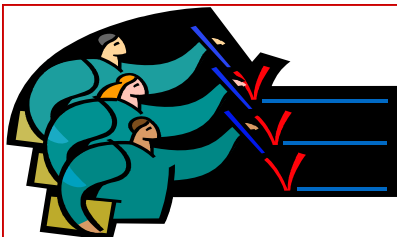
TNTP has also begun reaching out to other key audiences throughout Colorado, to gather input and feedback related to licensure and induction. Interested in learning more about the initiative? Click the link below to receive updates through the distribution list. For more information, please go to: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/>

CDE Accommodations Manual / Nonstandard Accommodations

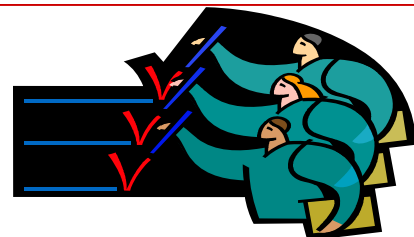
The 2011- 2012 Colorado Accommodations Manual is now available on the CDE Unit of Student Assessment website. All TVIs are strongly encouraged to be familiar with this manual. The manual covers four types of accommodations that are used for instruction and assessment. Not all instructional accommodations are allowable for state assessments.

Please go to <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/publications.html> to download the manual, which details both instructional and assessment accommodations specifically for students with visual disabilities, including deafblindness.

If you would like to apply for a nonstandard accommodation, please work with you District Assessment Coordinator (DAC). All nonstandard accommodations requests must be filed with CDE no later than **December 15, 2011**.



CHECK IT OUT!



Questionnaire on Digital Technology and Accessibility in Schools



The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) is seeking information about accessibility barriers in the digital technology used by all students, teachers, and administrators in K-12 schools, universities, and colleges in the United States. They encourage students, teachers, administrators, and parents of blind students to complete a questionnaire (at http://www.nfb.org/nfb/directTechAccess_193.asp) so that the NFB can learn more about educational technology that is either helping or hindering the

learning process for blind students. If you are a parent of a blind student who is unable to complete the questionnaire on his/her own, please complete the questionnaire on behalf of your child and include your name and contact information. The NFB will not voluntarily release any identifying information or responses without a parents' permission. If you have questions about completing this form, please contact Clara Van Gerven by [e-mail](#) or by phone at (410) 659-9314, extension 2410.

SAVE THE DATE! - NFB Jernigan Institute Teacher Leader Seminar

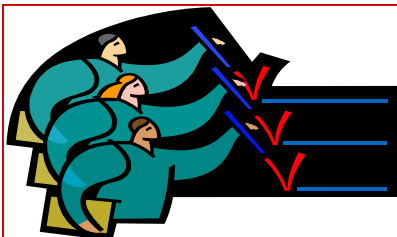
The National Federation of the Blind understands how important it is for teachers working in a low incidence field, like blindness, to find opportunities to collaborate and network. In an effort to foster learning, interaction, and community, the NFB is hosting a Teacher Leader Seminar. During this three-day conference, teachers will have the opportunity to learn, grow, and meet other professionals. This conference will include learning sessions and Make and Takes, networking with other teachers and professionals, and best practice and technology discussions. Teachers will have the chance to influence the content of sessions and lead discussions. Participants are strongly encouraged to take advantage of social media before, during, and after this seminar to stay in contact with each other and teachers in the field.

The National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute is collaborating with the National Organization of Professionals in Blindness Education to hold this Teacher Leader Seminar on **January 27-29, 2012** in Baltimore, MD. This conference is open to teachers of blind students, orientation and mobility instructors, classroom teachers, students in graduate programs and all other blindness professionals. Registration cost is \$100 dollars and includes meals during the program. The first fifty teachers to register will be offered on-site accommodations. Please register at www.nfb.org/tls.

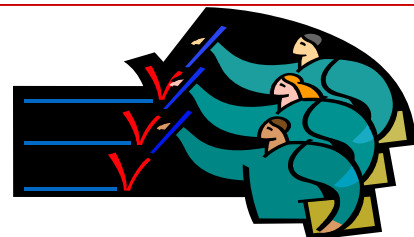
If you have any questions please contact Emily Gibbs, Education Program Specialist at (410) 659-9314 ext. 2407 or e-mail egibbs@nfb.org

Watch the Winter 2012 Promo Video and Participate in the Unforgettable APH Star Contest

The winter 2012 Unforgettable APH Star product video contest is now accepting entries! Before you take off for the holidays, make a quick video featuring an APH product and become eligible to win cash prizes up to \$150.00. The deadline to send us your video is February 13th, but we can't wait to see your creation so send it ASAP! Watch the new promo video to learn more about the contest and view other product videos now at www.aph.org/contest.



CHECK IT OUT!



NEW ECSE VIDEO:

Child Outcomes Step by Step

http://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter/RMVideoSeries_GeneralInterest.htm#top

Child Outcomes Step By Step



This video provides an overview of three global child outcomes that comprise a part of what is measured in the assessment system used in the Results Matter program. The three child outcomes demonstrate the integrated nature of child development and learning and highlight knowledge and skills key to success in early childhood and beyond.

The video is a collaborative presentation of Results Matter, Colorado Department of Education, the Desired Results access Project, Napa County Office of Education, funded by the California Department of Education, Special Education Division, and the Early Childhood Outcomes Center, funded by the Office of Special Education Programs.



Purpose: The DIAGRAM Center has been established by the US Department of Education (Office of Special Education Programs) to help find ways to make image descriptions in textbooks for students with print disabilities be more effective and less costly. As the work of the Diagram Center progresses, the contents of their website will evolve.

Management: The Diagram Center is managed by (<http://www.benetech.org/>) in partnership with the WGBH National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM) and the US Fund for DAISY. Benetech is a non-profit organization where the power of the human mind unites with a deep passion for social improvement to create innovative technology solutions which address unmet needs in literacy, human rights, and environmental conservation. NCAM (<http://ncam.wgbh.org/>) is a non-profit Research and Development (R&D) organization dedicated to achieving media access equality for people with disabilities. The DAISY Consortium (<http://www.daisy.org/>) develops, maintains and promotes international DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) Standards. DAISY digital format assists people who, for various reasons, have challenges using regular printed media.

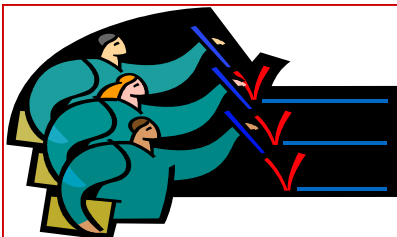
For more information, please go to: <http://www.diagramcenter.org>

Math Resources for Young Children

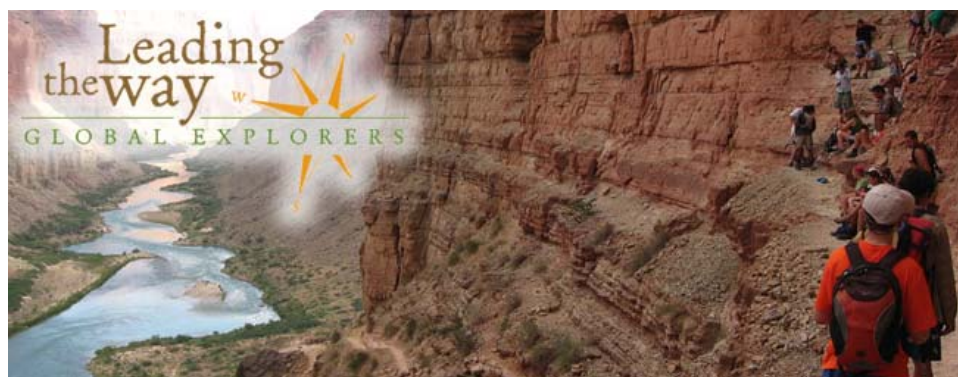
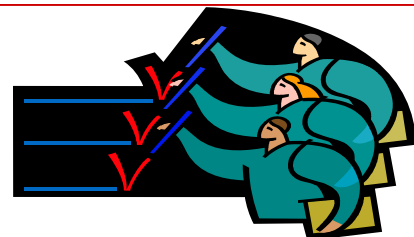
In Alberta, Canada several of teachers developed a Math Resource Curriculum specifically around Numeracy Literacy for young children.

It is available for download from:

<http://vision.alberta.ca/resources/adaptingprograms/math.aspx>



CHECK IT OUT!



Announcing 2012 Travel Opportunities for Blind/VI Students

Developed in partnership with world-renowned blind adventurer Erik Weihenmayer, the Global Explorers Leading the Way program brings together blind, visually impaired, and sighted students ages 15 to 21 on incredible journeys. Leading the Way integrates science, service, leadership, and culture in a three-phase program that includes pre-travel curriculum, a life-changing travel experience, and a follow-up global citizenship project. Through their unique stories, the teams spread messages of hope while breaking down barriers between those with and without disabilities.

Raft the Grand Canyon or Trek to Machu Picchu - Application Deadline is November 18, 2011
When: July 20-31, 2012, Price: ~\$2,000 (TBA) + Airfare to/from Phoenix, AZ, Scholarships available!

Peruvian Highlands Expedition: Cusco, Sacred Valley & Machu Picchu, Peru
When: July 8-17, 2012, Price: ~\$3,510 + Airfare to/from Lima, Peru | Scholarships ARE available!

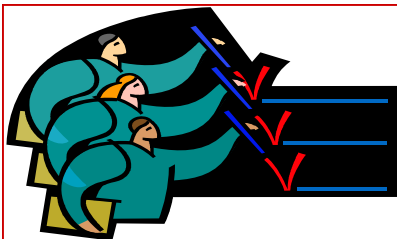
Apply online at www.globalexplorers.org/leadingtheway.

To request additional info (braille and LP materials are available) contact **Maggie Jeffries** at maggie@globalexplorers.org or 1-877-627-1425.

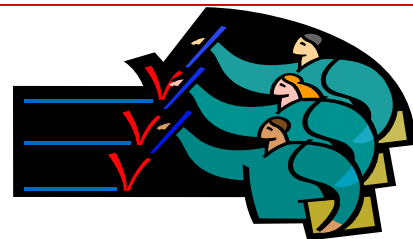
NASA SEEKING INTERNS WITH DISABILITIES FOR SUMMER 2012!!!

NASA is looking to increase the number of students with disabilities pursuing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers through our internship programs. Students can apply for summer internships now! The deadline for submitting applications is February 1, 2012. They can register for an account and look for internships anytime at the One Stop Shopping Initiative (OSSI): Student On-Line Application for Recruiting interns, fellows and scholars (SOLAR) at <http://intern.nasa.gov>. Summer 2012 internships run for ten weeks from early June through early/mid August. NASA internships are also offered during Spring, Fall and Year Long Sessions.

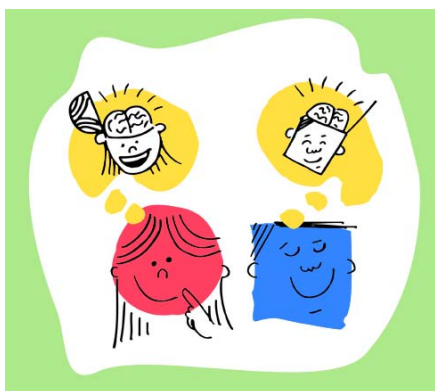




CHECK IT OUT!



MIT Study Looking for Subjects: Brain Development in Children Who Are Blind



The MIT Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences is conducting research on how the brain develops and functions in children who are blind. These studies examine the development of language, perception, and social reasoning.

Some specific questions the study will address are: How does the brain work in children who are blind? Are parts of the brain that sighted children use to see doing other things in children who are blind? How do brain regions that support language and social reasoning developing in children who are blind?

During these studies children play a variety of fun games with researchers. These games are played with computers, toys, props and Braille books. These interesting activities help the scientists learn more about how children think. Some of the games are played while children are in an MRI scanner. By imaging the brain while children listen to stories and sounds, the scientists can discover how the brain makes language and perception possible.

To learn more about this research please email mit.kids.brains@gmail.com or call 617-286-6476.

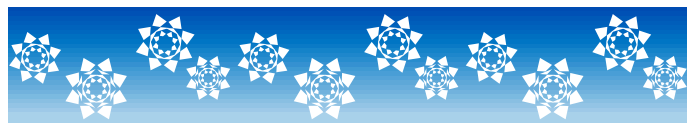


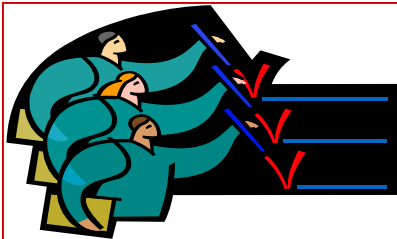
The AIM Center and the PACER Center are delighted to share with you **two new publications for families** explaining AIM and how they may benefit students with disabilities.

- ◆ **Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM): A Technical Guide for Families and Advocates** provides background information on AIM provisions in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and gives a thorough description of the decision making process for AIM.
- ◆ **Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM): Basics for Families** is an introductory booklet, written in plain language that outlines the four steps of the AIM decision-making process.

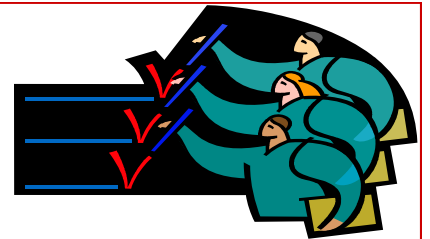
Although written for families, both publications contain information that would be useful for advocates, educators, and other stakeholders. The AIM Basics for Families booklet will soon be available in Spanish.

The publications can be downloaded at no cost from the AIM Center (aim.cast.org/learn/aim4families) or PACER Center (pacer.org/publications/stc/asp) websites. Additional print copies can also be ordered through PACER Center by calling (952) 838-9000 or completing the publication order form found at pacer.org/publications/orderform.pdf. The Technical Guide is available for \$3 or \$2.50 for orders of 10 or more copies. The Basics for Families costs \$2 or \$1.50 each for 10 or more copies.





CHECK IT OUT!



ALL WE SEE IS POSSIBILITY

Watch online here: http://support.perkins.org/site/MessageViewer?em_id=12561.0&printer_friendly=1

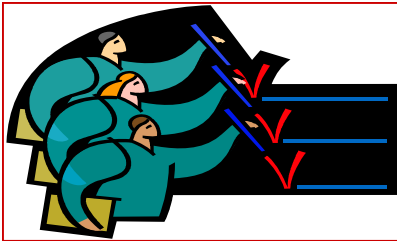
Perkins Training & Educational Resources Program presents

Issues in Social Skills & Sex Education

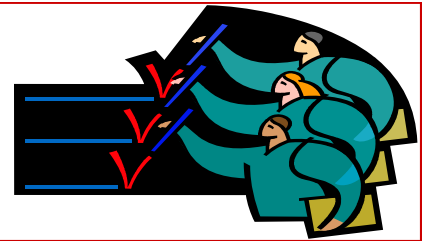
In this webcast, Tom Miller talks about Social Skills and Sex Education for Children and Youth who have sensory impairments. Tom Miller has worked in the field of education of children who are blind, deafblind or with multiple disabilities since 1974. He is currently the Education Director of the Educational: Early Intervention and School Age Services (Birth-22). Over the course of his professional life, Tom has had a great deal of involvement in the development and implementation of social/sex education programs and consults and lectures both nationally and internationally on this topic.

The chapters in this webcast include: 1. Introduction, 2. The Early Development of Social Skills, 3. Modeling Behavior for Children Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Deafblind, 4. The Importance of Development of a Sexual Identity, 5. Sexuality and Social Development, 6. Teaching Self-Protection, 7. Challenges.





CHECK IT OUT!



ALL WE SEE IS POSSIBILITY

Trouble seeing this message? View it online.

Watch online here: http://support.perkins.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Webcasts_Nondriving_Strategies

Perkins Training & Educational Resources Program presents

Non-Driving Strategies for Youth Who Are Visually Impaired

This month's webcast features Dr. Penny Rosenblum on the topic of "Non-Driving Strategies for Youth Who Are Visually Impaired." Dr. Rosenblum is an Associate Professor of Practice in the Department of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies at the University of Arizona. She prepares teachers to work with children with visual impairments (TVIs) and currently coordinates a project to prepare TVIs for the state of Nevada. As a person with low vision Dr. Rosenblum is able to share first-hand information with future teachers about the impact of a visual impairment on the lives of children and adults. She is especially interested in the social aspects of having a disability and in how best to prepare teachers to meet both the academic and social needs of children.

The chapters included in this webcast are as follows: 1. Introduction, 2. Early Development of Navigation Skills, 3. Social Skills and the Successful Non-Driver, 4. Low Vision Aids, 5. Strategies and Resources, 6. Planning and Outlook.





colorado connections

- ☞ There are lots of folks to thank for the success of the recent 2011 CDE Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment - so here goes! First, a huge thank you to our three fabulous speakers: **Brian Gould, Marilyn Gense, and Jay Gense**. Thanks for **Drs. Kay Ferrell and Silvia Torres Correa** for their time the first night to explain / recruit for the Auditory Description of Enhanced Images Study. Thanks to **Barbara Adams, Nancy Cozart, and Sarah Sonnier** for assisting with the registration table. Thanks to all of you who attended and will apply the information with your students and share the information with parents and other service providers. Finally a huge thank you to **Anna Langegger** back at CDE for EVERYTHING she did to organize the training materials, name tags, certificates, hotel detail, etc. etc. etc. There are many details to organize, confirm, and host a successful conference - and Anna is an amazing teammate.
- ☞ Hats off to the **Paula LaBossiere, Elaine Brown, Edie Smith, Peg Collins, Carol Jordan, and Debbie Mendoza** for earning braille renewal clock hours. Thanks to proctors **Julie Wetzstein** and **Lucia Hasty**.
- ☞ On October 25th, **Brent Batron**, Youth Services Coordinator at the Colorado Center for the Blind, and his wife Ena welcomed Noah and Roman into the world. They are identical twins and are doing very well. .
- ☞ Congratulations to **Bonnie Snyder** and **Dr. Sudhanshu Semwal** for their “Creating a Community Partnership” presentation at the regional AER presentation in Cleveland, OH. Also hats off to **Lucia Hasty** for her presentation on “Stunning Tactile Graphics with Phoenix and Firebird.”
- ☞ “On the Road Again Kudos” to **Tanni Anthony, Nancy Cozart, and Sarah Sonnier** for their December 5-6, 2011 trip to the National Braille Press in Boston for the annual preview of braille TCAP tests. This two day trip will be reviewed in the January WHOT edition.
- ☞ A final thank you a high-praise tribute to **Laura Freppel**, the Assistant Director of the Exceptional Student Services Unit. Laura is retiring at the end of December and will be dearly missed. Laura represents all that is valued in leadership: vision, integrity, honesty, objective and supportive direction, superior knowledge of federal and state laws for students with disabilities, a terrific sense of humor, teamwork with colleagues, and above all, commitment to doing the right thing for students and their families. Laura—your work has made a positive difference and will be long lasting. We say, “Thank you, thank you!”

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