

IPVI INSIGHTS

Connecting & Supporting Families Whose Children are Visually Impaired, Including Those with Additional Disabilities

**December
2011**



**THE CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE
& IPVI
INVITE YOU TO A**

**HOLIDAY PARTY FOR TODDLERS
& SMALL CHILDREN**
(Children from birth through 8 years)

At
THE CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE
1850 W. Roosevelt Road

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17

11:30 A.M. - 2:30 P.M.

**Featuring Santa Claus, IPVI Elves,
Holiday Carols, Food, Arts/Crafts,
Holiday Presents**

**Birth to three families, IPVI
members welcome**

**(Thank you IPVI, Randolph Sheppard
Vendors, Lions Club)**

**R.S.V.P. Mary Zabelski -
312/997-3675**

**La Chicago Lighthouse & IPVI
Invita a usted y su familia**

A la fiesta de los niños
(Niños entre recién nacidos a los ocho años)

A
A la Chicago Lighthouse
1850 W. Roosevelt Road

Sábado, Diciembre 17

11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

**Santa Claus, IPVI Elves, Música de
Navidad, Comida, erts, regalos
de Navidad**

**Las familias de nacimiento a los tres
años, IPVI miembros son bienvenidos**

**Por favor si va asistir llamar a
Mary Zabelski -
(312) 997-3675**

**(Gracias IPVI, Randolph Sheppard
Vendedoras, Lions Club)**

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Information to All

Bill Bielawski, IPVI President

Even though IPVI conducts periodic parent training sessions and family events throughout the year, we believe the best way to get information to all members is through this newsletter. The last newsletter we mailed to everyone was in July. I know you all have enjoyed reading monthly **IPVI Insights** over the years, but right now we cannot afford to print hundreds of copies each month.

We sent newsletters to all our members, even those who have not paid their dues for a while. You can check your dues status by looking at your address label on the back cover. Our \$15 per year dues almost exactly covers the printing cost of 12 newsletters. If every one of our members paid their dues each year, we could resume sending out monthly newsletters.

We do put a new issue of **IPVI Insights** on www.ipvi.org every month, but I wonder how many of you read the electronic copy? We announce upcoming events on our website, on facebook, and via direct emails. Unfortunately, we do not have email addresses for most of our members.

So check out www.ipvi.org and "Sign On" so we get your updated information. Follow us on facebook: [Illinois-Association-for-Parents-of-Children-with-Visual-Impairments](https://www.facebook.com/Illinois-Association-for-Parents-of-Children-with-Visual-Impairments). Email us at ipvi@ipvi.org. The dues renewal form is inside the back cover.

MS. VIC'S VOLLEYS
Victoria Juskie, IPVI Treasurer

VOLLEY I

Since our last publication, we welcome the following families, individuals, and/or organizations who became members:

Sandra Fracone, Chicago
Kristin Puryear, Lake Bluff

VOLLEY II

Well, we knew that it was coming and it's arrived. Our firstborn child is now 15, and in Illinois that means "Driver's Ed." It's funny, if you have a visually impaired child, the State still makes him/her take the course even if s/he most likely won't be driving. Ouch! That tends to hurt the child to the core if someone hasn't noticed. I know up until this time, we really didn't broach the topic of driving with our legally blind son because we felt he'd bring it up when he wanted to talk about it. (Okay, a bit cowardly but we're only human.)

Over the years there would be conversations among our children about the type of car they'd love to drive/own, i.e. a Corvette or Porsche. They'd see a bright yellow or red sports car and it would increase the chatter again. Even Matt would talk generally about what type of muscle car he'd like but we never really pushed it. Then sophomore year came and he was faced with taking Driver's Ed. We talked to him about it then. We said that it was our opinion it would be good for him to know the rules of the road in that some day they may be able to help him drive. We said this because we believed that either by a medical operation or by some optical device, he would be able to drive some time in the future.

Well, lo and behold, these words have come

**SHARING THE VISION,
PARENT TO PARENT**

Let's have a dialogue. Do you have a question? One of us may have an answer or at least a suggestion. Submit questions and responses for the IPVI Newsletter to Pam Stern, NAPVI Region 3 Representative:

pamstern3@gmail.com

We're *making a list*, but we don't want to be *checking it twice*—we want to find out what's *nice*. Please suggest gifts for visually impaired children.

My 6 month old loves toys that light up or that make squeaking or music sounds, like **Fisher Price "Sing-Along Stage"**. When she was 2-5months she loved toys with large black and white patterns. I believe Lamaze makes good ones, and possibly Tiny Love; both can be found at Babies R Us.

My 2-1/2 year old likes small toys (crayons, blocks, balls) he can hold up close and examine and roll around in his hands. He likes toys that make noises, music, and light up. Anything colorful he can look at. He likes to swing, climb, and play in the water.

Modeling clay - the kind that doesn't harden, Hot Wheels cars, action figures, video games, guitar, music, computer.

The American Printing House for the Blind has tons of unique items. The National Federation of the Blind is selling coins commemorating the birth of Louis Braille. These will only be sold up till Dec. 18. Flag House sells adapted volley

(Continued on page 5)

true with regards to an optical device. To give a little background detail, when Matt was golfing this year, his dad, Ken, would help spot the ball. However, Ken has pseudo colobomas (unusually shaped pupils which don't dilate) and doesn't see well once the ball is over 150 feet away. Ken bought some automatically focusing binoculars and was able to better tend to spotting the ball. This got Ken to thinking that maybe these binoculars could help Matt. Matt tried them and was amazed at how much more he could see when he looked into them.

Ken then got the idea maybe there is some kind of apparatus that could help Matt see in the distance better; and so, he did some Internet research. Hence, their visit to Spectrios Institute for Low Vision occurred. At Spectrios, Matt met John D. Coalter, O.D, who is the only licensed ophthalmologist in Illinois who can prescribe bioptics. Bioptics is a device mounted onto a pair of glasses, which in essence puts a binocular directly onto one of the lenses of these glasses. This then allowed Matt to see distances with vision acuity of about 20/40. Amazingly, this has qualified Matt to begin the process of getting his learning permit because he will be able to see well enough to drive. Currently, it may only be during daylight hours, but the chance to go through the training course and attempt to be licensed has put a new skip in Matt's step. This in essence levels the playing field for him.

Let's face it, having the ability to drive gives a man or woman independence. S/he can decide when and where to go some place. Given this ability, even if a person decides not to drive frequently, it still gives one an inherent confidence and self-esteem. As an added bonus, with these on, Matt is able to see his teacher's face and the board without his PCT. This makes him very happy because they are less obtrusive and appear to be as effective.

We will keep you updated on the training process that takes about four months to go through once one is an approved candidate. One gets approved by being examined and reviewed by the doctor, demonstrating certain aptitudes, etc. Be warned though, it's also a bit pricey about \$850 to \$1,100 for the devices which may be cost prohibitive for many. But what this means to our family is immeasurable. It is just another stepping stone for Matt that makes him feel normal and typical. We're just so thankful that such technology exists and are suggesting others with low vision in our readership area may be helped. Spectrios Institute is at the old Deicke Center. It's located at 219 E. Cole Avenue, Wheaton, IL 60187. Their number is 630-690-7115. If this is something that may be suited to your family, give them a call.

So my tip of the day is to parents holding their child who has been diagnosed with low vision, do not accept everything the doctor tells you as a prognosis for your child. All he knows is what he's read in a book, and he is reciting it. Every child's different and no one knows for sure what's going to happen. Sure many low vision issues may be cut and dry but many are not. If the doctor says that your child may not read a newspaper, don't necessarily believe it. If he says that your child may not drive, there again, he may be mistaken. Have faith in God and continue to find out about all the potential opportunities that are out there for your child. This kind of hope is extremely uplifting and exhilarating. After all we parents of children with low vision have been through, it's nice to have something positive to look forward to which can potentially help our child. So never give up hope. Besides now that I've taught Matt how to pump gas, guess who gets to go outside in the yucky weather?

VOLLEY III

Happy Holidays to all!



(Continued from page 3) - *Sharing the Vision: Parent to Parent*

balls etc. The National Braille Press has excellent print/Braille books. We have many of these. I have always wanted to buy my son a Monopoly Braille game but all the money is in pounds since it's from the UK. And, I firmly believe every blind person and parent should read the Blind Doctor/the Jacob Bolotin Story. I can't comprehend why he isn't as well known as Helen Keller. Finally, many DVD movies can be purchased from Descriptive Video Services. The verbal descriptions are excellent and non-obtrusive.

I was thinking of a shape sorter for young ones, especially if it plays a sound back. Helps with hand manipulation and shape recognition.

I think the Geo Safari Taking Globe would be a wonderful gift for older children. It has lights and sound effects and quizzes built in. Doreen Frappier, President Missouri NAPVI Chapter (MOPVI)

Gifts for older kids get to be tougher and tougher, other than technology. One of the best gifts we ever gave our son was a tactile world map, US map and state map. You can either buy it already done or take a regular laminated map from the book store and use hot glue and wicky sticks to indicate the different kinds of boundaries – we used hot glue for the land-water boundaries and wicky sticks for the political boundaries and Braille labels for country names. We put the map on the wall in the staircase so it was easy for him to reach all of it. He won his school's geography bee in 5th grade! We traveled to Europe a year later and did the same thing with some of the European country maps, and then he went to Costa Rica on a class trip and we did the same thing again. Doing your own gives

you the chance to put in interesting things without having too much information, which many commercially prepared Braille maps seem to have – it gets way too confusing. It IS a little time consuming, though!

Gwen Botting—President, Michigan chapter of NAPVI (MPVI)

Julie Urban, NAPVI V.P.: Any book from National Braille Press. Braille Christmas Cards; for young children: puzzles; stringing beads; braille legos.

The Talking Parrot \$12.95

Item# 7031620 www.maxiaids.com

"I Repeat Whatever You Say"

Encourages speech, beak moves and wings flap, colorful and soft to the touch.

Lite Brite, by Hasbro \$9.99

<http://www.hasbro.com/litebrite/>

Brightly colored pegs light up when placed on the black pegboard.

Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids, by Carol McCloud, Print/Braille edition, \$9.95

November 2009 Book Club Selection, National Braille Press <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/BC0911-BUCKET.html>

It reminds kids that they have the ability to "fill someone up" by being or saying something nice, or just the opposite.

Pig-E-Bank \$17.99

www.toysrus.com (on other sites as well)

When you place a coin in the bank, he will tell you what you have deposited - then he'll shake, rattle and ask for more! Press his nose and watch his mouth drop open to release the coins! Pig E Bank is a great tool to teach kids to recognize

coins and count money while saving their pennies.

Electronic Talking USA Puzzle \$32.99
<http://www.shopping.com/-usa+talking+puzzle>

Once a piece placed in the correct location, this map tells the state name, capital, and nickname. It also teaches the Pledge of Allegiance and America the Beautiful.

Crayola Total Tools Audio Ruler - Talking Ruler Measure up to 1 foot

- Clear audio announcement of distance measured in female voice
- Measures in eighth-inch increments, up to one foot
- Disappearing ink shows what you measured, then fades away
- Great for kids, Seniors or for those who are Blind or Low Vision
- Easy to use at school or at home

3D Paint Pens, Five-Pack \$4.95
Item Number: 2512
<http://www.braillebookstore.com/>

Smencils \$12.00 for 10
<http://www.smencils.com/>
Pencils made out of recycled materials with the added benefit of having a variety of scents. 1 each of Bubble Gum, Cinnamon, Tropical Blast, Grape, Cotton Candy, Very Berry, Black Cherry, Orange, Watermelon and Rootbeer.

Raised-Line Drawing Board \$14.95
Item Number: 2514. Make Tactile Pictures with a Regular Pen and Paper
<http://www.braillebookstore.com/>

Hoop Jams Basketball Game with Slam Dunk Activated Sounds \$19.95
Item#: 404202. www.maxiaids.com

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<http://www.braillebookstore.com/>

Hoop Jams Basketball Game with Slam Dunk Activated Sounds \$19.95

Item#: 404202. www.maxiaids.com

Hang the backboard over a door or on a wastebasket. Get a slam-dunk and hear the crowd roar with excitement! Sound is produced by backboard; ball makes no sounds. Low vision or blind players can substitute their own sound-making ball or purchase one from us separately.

Bell Soccer Ball Large (for \$14.95), or Small (for \$9.95) Item Number: 2915
<http://www.braillebookstore.com/>

Bell Football Large (for \$14.95), or Small (for \$9.95) Item Number: 2916
<http://www.braillebookstore.com/>

Bell Basketball \$14.95 Item Number: 2917
<http://www.braillebookstore.com/>

The Audio Dart Master

<http://audiodartmaster.com>

Fully accessible talking dart board. Every aspect of the game is announced through recorded speech. All menus and option menus are spoken too.

Grizzly Gulch and Chillingham \$63.90 for both <http://www.bavisoft.com/>
Software and video games for the visually impaired.

Shades of Doom (\$35.00)
<http://www.gmagames.com/sod.html> A revolutionary Window's-based game for the visually impaired. The game is self-voicing, and so no screen reader is required to play.

OTHER TOY WEBSITES

- <http://www.familyconnect.org/parentsites.asp?DocumentID=4523>
- www.afb.org/toyguide.asp

- **Toys "R" Us Guide for Differently-Abled Kids.** <http://www.toysrus.com/shop/index.jsp?categoryId=3261680>
- <http://www.ableplay.org/>
- <http://www.tsbvi.edu/Outreach/seehear/summer99/games.htm>
- www.fredshead.info/2007/11/basic-toys-for-blind-preschoolers.html
- www.roppard.org/toys_for_visually_impaired_independent_explorer.php
- **AudioGames.net** Video games on the internet that are either entirely sound based or designed for blind players. Some of these games are free and some require subscriptions, but the list of games is so long you're sure to find something that fits your needs.
- www.wonderbaby.org/search-topics/toys.html
- **National Braille Press Children's Braille Book Club.** <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/cbbc/index.html>

The Black Book of Colors by Memema Cottin and Rosana Faria. http://www.amazon.com/Black-Book-Colors-Memena-Cottin/dp/0888998732/ref=sr_1_ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1254361816&sr=1-1 With entirely black pages and a bold white text, this is not your typical color book. Meant to be experienced with the fingers instead of the eyes, this extraordinary book allows sighted readers to experience colors the way blind people do: through the other senses. The text, in both print and Braille, presents colors through touch (yellow is "as soft as a baby chick's feathers"), taste (red "as sweet as watermelon"), smell ("green smells like grass

that's just been cut"), and sound (brown "crunches...like fall leaves"). Faria's distinctive illustrations present black shapes embossed on a black background for readers to feel instead of see. One page even described a rainbow. A guide to the Braille alphabet appears at the end of the book.

Also:

<http://www.braillebookstore.com/view.php?T=Braille+Alphabet+Blocks>

<http://www.braillebookstore.com/view.php?T=Braille+Math+Blocks>

<http://www.braillebookstore.com/view.php?T=Learning+Time+Clock>

Next Month's Question

Let's continue to discuss experiences with Standardized Test accommodations, and for those interested in this topic, please research and ask contacts if more is known about the following: What is the status of any action pending against these testing organizations? Has any attempt to charge them with discrimination been attempted? On what basis is this allowed to continue? Is this a situation calling for a class action law suit from all areas of the disability community?



Newsletter entries will be published maintaining the anonymity of all unless otherwise approved.

ASK M@



Hey guys, I hope everyone is doing well. Thanks once again for all the great questions at the ipviaskm@gmail.com, as always I appreciate them.

This month I would like to talk to you about self-advocating for yourself. I would like you to think about a question. Have you ever been in a situation where you couldn't do something or understand something because you couldn't see it? In this situation, did you want to ask for help but were just too shy or ashamed to ask for it? I have a sneaky feeling if you are reading this, you probably have, simply because just about every visually impaired individual is a tad self-conscious about it every now and again. I know I am, so I feel you. The bigger question is, "Yes, this has happened and somewhat frequently, but what can I do to minimize this as much as possible?" Well, I will answer that for you.

Let's start out with the younger individuals that may experience this, most definitely a lot, in school. I for one have to consciously work at self-advocating in school. I understand it is a

difficult thing to do, especially around all of your peers. The best way to handle ANYTHING you can't see is just raise your hand and ask your teacher. Now, I understand for some this may be just impossible because of personal reasons. So there can be alternatives. You could always wait until after class to ask your teacher for something you couldn't see. This sometimes though may not be the best solution. Also, you could ask your teacher for a handout of the overhead projector's information or a copy of whatever she wrote on the board.

Now, how about if it is in the middle of an in-class project? You could just simply approach your teacher's desk and ask. This could also be used for other situations as well. And guess what, if you do any of these, you are self-advocating for yourself, a great skill to have for school and the rest of your life.

Now let's move on to "The rest of your life" part of that. Here are a few examples. For the first one, you're in the city and you can't read what subway stop you're entering. Well, there are millions of people in Chicago, right? The easiest thing to do rather than straining to see it or guessing is to just ask someone by saying, for example, "Excuse me, Miss, what stop is this?" She answers you with the stop's name. Now, I know you're thinking, "but then she may think badly of me and be confused as to why I needed to ask." But really, we should all use logic in this situation. First off, who cares? You now know where you're going, most importantly, right? Second, I seriously doubt she would really concern herself with those thoughts. She probably has a busy life and is thinking about where she is going or what she needs to do. So there should be no worries with asking for help directly.

In this second situation, your boss prints a handout for a presentation and you're not able to read it. You just simply have to ask to either

have the print blown up or have it read to you. The personnel at your company should be aware of your vision issue and should have done this prior to the meeting. But everyone makes mistakes, and would you like to keep quiet and potentially mess up in an important meeting to run the risk of losing your job? I don't think so!!! So just advocate for yourself and ask.

Now, of course, it's time for my monthly quote. There is only one this month but it is a truly good example of the importance of being your own self-advocate:

"The best way to become a good advocate is by exposure," by Pat Howey

What this is saying is very simple, although this quote was used in a different context and it can mean different things. Basically, if you do not expose the problem that you have to someone that can help you, how can anyone help? So, my advice is for you to ask for help, and by doing so, that's advocating. Secondly, by practicing asking for help, you expose yourself to various situations. So I just want everyone to do everything you can to advocate for yourself. Just make a conscious effort each time, and soon it will be second nature.

Well, until next time, so long.

M@



Choosing Toys for Your Child

Hearing and Vision Connections

Just in
time for
the
Holidays



How do you buy toys for your child with vision or hearing loss? What do you say when relatives ask

for gift ideas? What toys will your child enjoy? Which ones are developmentally appropriate and stimulating?

We asked early intervention specialists who work with babies and toddlers

throughout Illinois for their suggestions and ideas. Some of their favorites are highlighted on Page 9. Surprisingly, many of their ideas are toys we all know and love—toys we've used with our children who are typically-developing.

Remember that no toy will be successful and appropriate for every child. As you review these suggestions, consider your own child's interests, strengths, weaknesses, and developmental needs. Your child's developmental therapist should be able to guide you in selecting the right toys for your little one.

Use the fine motor development chart as a guide for buying toys. Find your child's current developmental level (which may or may not match their age). Look at the next developmental milestone. Look for toys that will develop those upcoming skills.

0-3 Months

- Hands most often remain closed
- Has grasp reflex (grasps objects involuntarily if placed in palm)

2-4 Months

- Reaches for ("swipes at") objects inaccurately

3-3½ Months

- Clasps hands together often

3½-4 Months

- Begins purposeful, visually directed reaching

3-7 Months

- Can hold small objects in hand

4-8 Months

- Can transfer objects from one hand to the other
- Can pick up cube/medium sized object easily

8-10 Months

- Develops accurate forward and side reach

5-9 Months

- “Rakes” or “scoops” small objects to pick them up (i.e. using fingers/palm/whole hand to scoop up Cheerios, raisins, etc.

7-9 Months

- Intentionally able to drop/release objects (get ready for the “watch-me-drop-this-watch-mommy/daddy-pick-it-up-AGAIN” game!

7-12 Months

- Able to pick up small objects using thumb and finger/fingers

10 Months

- Pokes and/or points with index finger

12-18 Months

- Holds crayon with whole hand, thumb up

2 Years

- Holds crayon with thumb and all fingers, forearm turned so thumb is pointing down
- Puts on shoes, socks, and shorts; takes off shoes and socks
- Can use a spoon by himself, keeping it upright
- Can draw and copy a vertical line

2½-3 Years

- Strings large beads
- Snips paper with scissors
- Rolls clay/play dough into “snake”
- Can draw and copy a horizontal line



Animal play sets are good for animal names, matching, pretend play and imitation skills. If the toys make the animal sounds, it can be especially beneficial for a child with adequate hearing.

Peek a Boo blocks can do so many things—stack, rattle, talk about what is inside, etc.



School bus sets can be used for conversations such as talking about the people, where they are going, working on prepositions, etc. and can be used to prepare children for transition to school programs and riding the bus.



Holiday Giveaways!



It's that time of year again—time to start thinking about presents. Writing our holiday gift list can be fun, but can also sometimes be a challenge, especially if we're trying to find just the right gift for a child with a visual impairment.

If your baby is blind, you probably know what they like or don't like, but it can still be difficult to find appropriate toys at the mall or department store. And if you're shopping for a child you don't know as well, like a niece or nephew, you may be feeling completely overwhelmed.

Consider this your rescue! I've been talking to people all over the web who create toys, books and other products for blind babies and children and I've asked them to donate some of their best toys for this year's Holiday Giveaway. We have a wonderful collection of toys this year, and even if you don't win, this list can serve as the perfect shopping list!

So check out our **14 Giveaways** below and enter as many as you like. Entries can either be help@wonderbaby.org or left as comments on the individual giveaway pages. All giveaways will end on December 12th.

1. **Perkins Panda Giveaway**

The Perkins Panda Early Literacy Program is a wonderful compilation of materials designed to help you instill a love of books and reading in your child through a set of fun toys and stories. The kit comes complete with three print/braille picture books, three audio cassettes, three activity guides, and a story box.



2. **BigBear PizzaBox Video Game Giveaway**

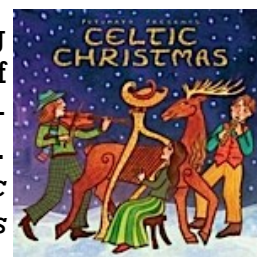
We recently discovered an amazing collection of video games designed specifically for blind preschoolers. The PizzaGames for Children collection of video games are produced by 7-128 Software. They come complete with a built in self-voicing "GameVoice" as well as subtitles. The games are simple and designed for pre-



schoolers and they're fully accessible.

3. Christmas Music Giveaway

Do you love holiday music and Christmas carols as much as I do? Do you sing along to all the classics and play them non-stop at home? Then this collection of children's Christmas music would be perfect for you and your family! I've collected my three favorite children's holiday CDs and bundled them together. Make Christmas special with these three Christmas CDs: Putumayo's *Celtic Christmas*, Ben Rudnick & Friends' *It's Santa Claus*, and Phil Cooke's *Christmas Time is Coming*.



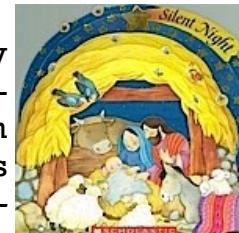
4. Puzzle Game Giveaway

Who doesn't love a good game? We're giving away two awesome puzzle games that are entirely accessible: the Memory Caps Game and the Slide, Twist 'n Solve Puzzle! The Memory Caps Game is a large wooden board with indented spaces where you can mix up the geometric shapes then hide them under bright red caps. The Slide Puzzle is a classic match-up game where you have to slide the pieces around until you've made a picture, but in this case the picture is in 3-D so you can feel it too.



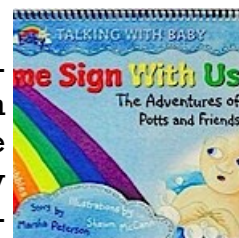
5. Christmas Book Giveaway

Seedlings is giving away three adorable Christmas board books to one lucky winner! Print/braille board books are a wonderful addition to your child's library. They're sturdy, a great way to introduce braille to a young child, and fun to share with other family members, like sighted siblings or grandparents. This collection includes *Silent Night*, *Biscuit's Pet & Play Christmas*, and *Christmas Angel*.



6. Sign Language Book Giveaway

The best way to teach a baby sign language is to start simply and keep the conversation important and relevant. Begin by learning words that have to do with your normal every-day routines, like feeding and bathing, and incorporate signs into your daily schedule. Make the signs with your baby, help your baby make the signs with you, and above all keep it fun! This is the idea behind Marsha Peterson's book *Come Sign With Us: The Adventures of Potts and Friends*.



7. Chanukah Giveaway

Have you heard of Mama Doni? She plays outrageously cool and funky music for Jewish children. We're giving away a copy of her hilariously fun Chanukah CD, *Chanukah Fever*. We're also giving away a copy of the book *The Borrowed Hanukkah Latkes* from National Braille Press in print and braille.



8. Magic Cube Giveaway

The Munchkin Mozart Magic Cube is one of our favorite toys. Each side of the cube represents an instrument in an orchestra: a flute, a piano, a French horn, a harp, or a violin. Press the top button (with a picture of the full orchestra) to get the song playing (a classical piece by Mozart). Press the flute and suddenly the flute stops playing... press the piano and the piano is silenced. Pressing the instruments a second time will get them to come back on.



9. Tumzee Giveaway

You know babies are supposed to sleep on their backs, but did you know that it's important that they get some time playing on their tummies, too? The Tumzee is designed to help babies lie in a prone position comfortably during play time. It's sort of like propping your baby over the edge of a pillow, but with more support and leg positioners. It's really a brilliant idea and I wish we had had one when my little guy was a baby!



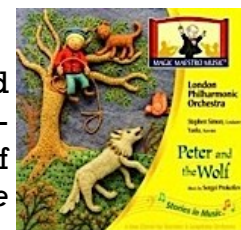
10. Tactile Toy & Book Giveaway

We love the Chunky Shapes Puzzle from NBP. It's just like the shapes puzzle you can get at your local toy store with big colorful hearts and stars, but this one also comes with braille labels so you can introduce both the shapes and braille to your little one. We're also giving away NBP's tactile Noah's Ark Set. This set comes with the print-braille picture book *Noah's Ark* by Jerry Pinkney, a print-braille *Fun Facts About Noah's Ark* book, and twelve delightful tactile illustrations depicting Noah's animals, the ark, and the flood.



11. Music Stories Giveaway

Maestro Classics has taken some of your favorite stories and classical songs and put them together on a wonderful collection of CDs. And they did this all for children, so they keep the story fun and entertaining. We're giving away a copy of *Peter and the Wolf*, *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*, and *The Tortoise and the Hare*.



12. Rib-It-Ball Giveaway

The Rib-It-Ball has "ribs" that make it easy to grab from just about any direction, even for little hands. Plus the ribs crinkle, which makes the ball fun to listen to, as well. The ball is also very light weight and easy to pick up and throw (even though it's pretty big at 18") and those crinkles make a great sound when it hits the ground! And did you notice that the colors are black, white, and red? Perfect for children with low vision!



13. DidiPop and Jimmies Giveaway

Looking for some fun music to spice up your children's music collection? Look no further! We're giving away two DidiPop CDs, *Everyday Adventures* and *DidiPop Goes to Hawai'i*, and the newest CD from The Jimmies, *Practically Ridiculous*. These three CDs will keep you going for a while!



14. Sudoku Touch Giveaway

Do you know someone who is a sudoku master? Are you looking for an accessible holiday gift that will get them excited and challenge their skills? Look no further! Sudoku Touch is a sudoku game everyone can play! It's perfect for blind, low vision and sighted players.



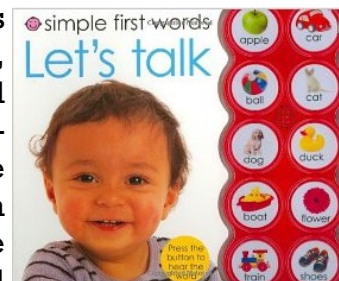
Go to wonderbaby.org for more details.



Dixie Miller, Developmental Interventionist, VIPS-CK

“Simple First Words Let’s Talk” is

a board book with large, real photos of the words apple, car, ball, cat, dog, duck, boat, flower, train, and shoes. There are only two large pictures per page until the last page where all ten pictures are shown at a medium size. On the far side of the book are all ten pictures on small buttons that say the words when pushed. Go to <http://www.priddybooks.com>.



I'm always looking for balls that light up and finally found some in the Special Needs catalog, <http://www.specialneedstoys.com>. There is the stro-boing ball that costs \$10.00. This ball is great for working on following the movement of rolling objects and visual tracking skills.

Barbara Kelley, VIPS-Louisville Preschool Teacher

I have selected toys for preschoolers from Target. Target currently has a line of toys/activities from **“Learning Resources”** including:

- Rainbow Color Cones with different colored scoops of ice cream (looks very real!), 16.99, and
- Sorting Shapes Cupcakes with shapes cut out of the bottom that you can tactually match \$15.99.

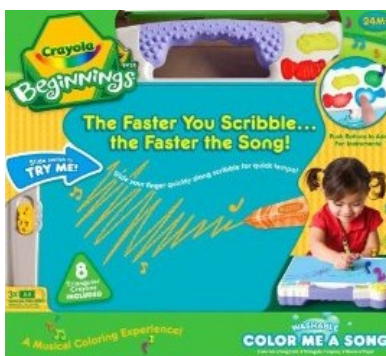


Kids can pretend play with these items as well as work on concepts (counting, matching, naming colors, shapes, etc.). May find cheaper through different educational websites.

Melissa Evers, Developmental Interventionist, VIPS-Louisville



One of the toys I am recommending this year is **“Follow Me Fiona”** or **“Follow Me Fred”** by Tiny Love. They are soft toy dogs that bark and play musical tunes when moving. Fiona is pink and purple and Fred is yellow with primary colors. They have an accordion type middle and the speed can be adjusted. This toy teaches cause and effect and helps develop crawling skills as well as listening and locating skills. The toys can be placed in circular mode before the child is crawling to encourage tracking, reaching skills, and attention skills. It is recommended for 6 months and up and costs \$16.00 at Walmart.



Another toy I am recommending is Crayola Beginnings **“Color Me a Song.”** This is a toy that combines music and scribbling/writing/drawing. As the child draws faster the tempo of the music increases. There are four types of music; swing, salsa, country, and rock. There are 4 buttons to push to add instruments: trumpet, drum, piano, and guitar. This toy comes with 8 washable triangular crayons with a storage bin for the crayons under the 8½ x 11 inch drawing surface. It has a clip to hold paper in place and comes with 3 sheets of plain white paper. A color sheet would work well with the clip. This toy will help develop fine motor skills and can also develop emerging writing and drawing skills. It is portable so it can be taken wherever the child goes. Recommended for 2 years and up. \$19.54 at Walmart.

Margaret Vinsel, Developmental Interventionist, VIPS-Louisville

My suggestion for a toy is actually not a toy that I own. But I wish I did!!! It is the **“Pop Tunes Big Rocker Keyboard”** from Little Tikes. The keys are very easy to activate and it has a light that flashes to the beat of the music. (Note: this toy may not be good for children with seizures.) The best part is that it plays modern music that parents like as well as the children. There are 5 kid-friendly versions of the following songs: “ABC” - Jackson 5; “Love Shack” - B-52s; “Hot Hot Hot” - Buster Poindexter; “Allstar” - Smashmouth; “Wide Open Spaces” - Dixie Chicks. It is now on sale on the Little Tikes website (<http://www.littletikes.com>) for \$9.99.



There are a series of books called **“Seek and Slide”** books. They are for children who are able to look for details in a picture. One page has a large picture and the next page has 4 sliding pictures that show one item that is featured in the larger picture. It is a great way for children to look for specific items within a visually cluttered picture. There are several themes: “In the Garden”; “In the

Jungle”; “On the Farm”; and “In the Sea”. Go to www.amazon.com.

(The following recommendation is reprinted from Parent to Parent, Fall, 2010, published by KSB Family Support Program.)

Mitch Dahmke, Family Support Specialist, KY School for the Blind

From plushtalkornaments.com: PlushTalk Ornaments are talking plush stuffed Christmas themed toys designed to be played with individually or attached to the soft and cushy 24" Trimming Tree. PlushTalk Ornaments were designed so that children may have their own interactive and safe Christmas tree and ornaments. Your Children will love the interesting tactile features of each PlushTalk Ornaments character. Each ornament has a unique voice and expression that exemplifies its own personality.



Find out how the PlushTalk Ornaments helped save Christmas by reading the poem titled Santa Finds His Way.

Reprinted from Visability November/December 2010, 1906 Goldsmith Lane, Louisville, KY 40218, 1-888-636-8477, info@vips.org, www.vips.org.



ReadBooks! Because Braille Matters is a national braille literacy program to encourage

families to read books together at the earliest age and to promote braille literacy.

National Braille Press, along with Seedlings Braille Books for Children, is distributing attractive braille book bags to families with blind and visually impaired children, ages birth to seven, across the U.S. and Canada. The distribution process is a collaborative effort with educators and early intervention professionals. **Note:** Limited to one braille book bag per blind child.

Please go to <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/programs/readbooks/request.html> to bill our your form to receive the **FREE** material.

MISCELLANEOUS

Braille Readers Are Leaders Contest November 1, 2011 - January 4, 2012

The National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute, the National Association to Promote the Use of Braille (NAPUB), and the National Organization of Parents of Blind Children (NOPBC) are pleased to announce the 29th annual Braille Readers Are Leaders contest for students grades K-12. This contest encourages children around the country to be proud of their ability to read Braille and continually work to improve their skills. As in previous years students will read as many Braille pages as they can in two months (November 1, 2011, through January 4, 2012) to compete for ribbons, cash prizes, and an all-expenses-paid trip to the 2012 NFB national convention in Dallas, Texas.

For the third year NAPUB and the NFB Jernigan Institute are also offering a contest for mature Braille readers. Adults will compete for cash prizes, na-

tional recognition, and bragging rights!

Teams of two to five participants are welcome to compete in both the K-12 and adult contests again this year. Registration begins October 1, 2011. Form your teams, get some interesting reading material, and warm up your fingers! For detailed information about the K-12 and adult contests please visit www.nfb.org/BRAL.

in Sterling Heights, Michigan on Saturday, April 28, 2012 from 8:00 a.m. to at least 3:00 p.m. This event will be open, free of charge, to any child who is visually impaired and their accompanying family.

Age Groups

All ages (birth to 26)
Parents of children with visual impairments

Interest Categories

Recreation
Science/nature

Location:

Sterling Inn Hotel
Sterling Heights
Phone Number: 800-788-2020



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!

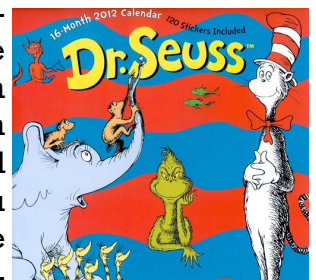
Watch the new promo video to [learn more about the contest and view other product videos now at \[www.aph.org/contest\]\(http://www.aph.org/contest\)](#).

2012 Dr. Seuss Wall Calendar

Print/Braille Edition, \$13.99. All ages! It's the return of a perennial NBP favorite!

Throughout his life, Dr. Seuss had two goals—to make us laugh, and to make us think. He said, "I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells...And that enables you to laugh at life's realities."

Our 2012 print/braille calendar includes twelve scenes and quotes from Dr. Seuss's books, each providing laughter and insight to help keep you inspired throughout the year. The calendar features the Cat in the Hat, a Fox in Sox, Horton, the Grinch, and eight more well-loved scenes from Dr. Seuss's imagination.



Sensory Safari

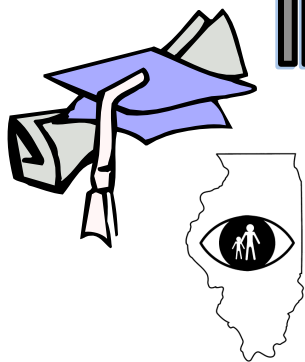
Posted by: [Association for Retinopathy of Prematurity and Related Diseases](#)

Date: 04/28/2012

Time: 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

ROPARD is pleased to announce that it will host a Sensory Safari at the Sterling Inn Hotel

(Continued on page 20)



IPVI's Matthew Benedict Juskie Scholarship Fund

For students who are blind or visually impaired

Any individual intending to continue his/her education at a college, university or trade school and is interested in being considered for the MBSJF, must meet the following criteria: Illinois resident, blind or visually impaired, undergraduate or graduate student, and an IPVI member.

The candidate's application is processed free of charge. The student must mail or fax a written request to receive a copy of the application from IPVI. Then the student must complete the MBSJF Application Form, provide 3 completed Reference Forms, submit medical records or a letter from the vision specialist confirming the condition, and mail them to IPVI. The applicant may attach a 1-page resume of clubs, offices held, or any other pertinent information concerning his/her activity record.

The IPVI Board of Directors will review all scholarship applications and select the winners. IPVI reserves the right to announce such awards in its newsletters and marketing materials.

The MBSJF is funded completely from tax-deductible donations from individuals, companies and corporations who support IPVI's goals. Any individuals or groups wishing to donate to this fund, please forward your tax-deductible donations to IPVI. Thank you for your continued support of IPVI.



To request a scholarship application, please contact the Scholarship Program Coordinator, Vicki Juskie at: 815-464-6162 or vajuskie@aol.com

(Continued from page 18) - 2012 Dr. Seuss Wall Calendar

This wall calendar is 12"x12" (hanging on the wall it's 12" wide and 24" tall). The braille is included on clear plastic labels that go right over the print pages. And as always, our calendar features a Special Bonus—a sheet of sixty full-color stickers of Dr. Seuss's more famous characters to mark birthdays, appointments, and other important days.

Order very soon—the calendar always sells out!

Age Groups

Infants and Toddlers
Preschoolers
Grade Schoolers
Teenagers
All ages (birth to 26)
Parents of children with visual impairments

Interest Categories

Daily living skills training
Reading activities

Contact: Customer Service Dept.
National Braille Press
Phone: 800-548-7323 ext. 520
Email: orders@nbp.org
URL: [http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/2012 SEUSS.html](http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/2012_SEUSS.html)

CONFERENCES

Illinois AER Vision Conference

February 16-17, 2012

Hyatt Regency Woodfield, Schaumburg, IL



The planning for the 2012 Annual Illinois AER Vision Conference is underway!

Our theme this year is "United in Vision". As a professional community we are "United in Vision" to provide services to our students and clients that are cutting edge, researched based, and of premium quality. Amy Lund and the Program Committee will be meeting in September to develop this year's program. We invite you to share your vision, knowledge, expertise and research with all of us by submitting a proposal. "Call for Papers" will be accepted until September 9, 2011.

Registration for exhibitors is now being accepted. If you did not receive the registration form in the mail you may access the information on the website.

Conference registration for attendees will be on our website at the end of September.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at dfinn@thenia.org.

See you in February!

Diane Finn
Illinois AER Conference Chair

VISIONS2012
THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE FOUNDATION FIGHTING BLINDNESS
JUNE 28 - JULY 1, 2012 | HYATT REGENCY MINNEAPOLIS, MN

The Foundation Fighting Blindness is excited to announce that VISIONS, our national conference for individuals and families affected by retinal diseases, will return June 28 – July 1, 2012 at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis! We received an overwhelmingly positive response from those who attended the 2011 conference, and we are striving to make VISIONS 2012 even better.

The conference will feature valuable sessions geared specifically toward individuals affected by retinal degenerative diseases. Science

and information sessions will focus on the latest advancements in research, new and exciting treatment options, current and upcoming clinical trials, and practical skills for living and coping with vision loss. In addition, you will have the chance to ask some of the world's best retinal researchers and clinicians your own questions in "The Doctor Is In" sessions.

VISIONS 2012 also offers you the opportunity to meet and network with individuals from around the country, and even the world, who are affected by similar diseases. And you can discover the latest low vision products, services and resources from the vendors in our Exhibit Hall.

No other conference offers so much in one weekend. Join us at VISIONS 2012, where you can learn, share, experience and hope. This conference is not to be missed – register today!

What's New in 2012

You asked, we've answered! Since VISIONS is all about you, our guests, we've added some features based on past attendee feedback. Here's what's new in 2012:

- Extended Exhibit Hall Hours
- Beginner & Advanced Level Research Sessions
- Sessions for Adolescents & Young Adults
- More Networking Sessions
- Closing Research Session on Sunday Morning
- Mall of America Bus Trip

Learn more about these exciting new features on the [VISIONS 2012](#) website and in our future e-blasts!

Foundation Fighting Blindness

7168 Columbia Gateway Drive, Suite 100
Columbia, MD 21046
800-683-5555

TRAINING SESSIONS

FRCD DECEMBER 2011 TRAININGS

Sessions

(10:00 AM-1:00 PM)

20 E. Jackson Blvd. Room 300
Chicago, IL 60604

Phone Trainings

12/1 **Dispute Resolution Phone Training**

12/7 **Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy
(Destrezas para una Abogacia Eficaz
De Parte de los Pad**

(For your convenience we are holding 1 hour training sessions over the phone)
(12:00 Noon-1:00 PM)

12/3 **Six Principles of IDEA**

12/7 **(Spanish in Office Workshop) Special
Education Rights Training**

12/10 **Six Principles of IDEA**

12/14 **(Spanish in Office Workshop) IEP
Training**

You must register in advance in order to get your materials in the mail.

Please call us at **312-939-3513**

or

You may register online at:

www.frcd.org

To view the training calendar go to **www.frcd.org** and click on Events/Training-Upcoming Events. To register for FRCD's Upcoming Trainings, contact us by phone at 312-939-3513, Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm, or drop us an email at info@frcd.org.

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PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH
VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS (NAPVI)
HILTON/PERKINS
PROGRAM AND (IN PART) FROM A
GRANT FROM THE FAMILY RE-
SOURCE CENTER ON DISABILITIES**



Join **IPVI** or renew your membership today!

The *Illinois Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments* is a state-wide, non-profit organization that enables parents to find information and resources for their children who are blind or visually impaired, including those with additional disabilities.

Your IPVI membership dues or generous contributions help to support all of our ongoing efforts:

- Regular communications which include: workshops, conferences, training seminars, legislative issues, organizational announcements, products, and advice about raising a child who is visually impaired.
- Offers several \$500 college scholarships each year.
- Publishes a resource catalog which includes anything and everything to do with visual impairment.
- Conducts training and support sessions where parents share experiences and ideas.
- Holds fun outings adapted for children with visual impairments at athletic, cultural, educational, and entertainment settings.
- Represents parents of children with visual impairments at conferences, public hearings, and on committees.

What does IPVI do?

- Promotes and provides information through meetings, correspondence, publications, etc., which will help parents meet the special needs of their children with visual impairments.
- Facilitates the sharing of experiences and concerns in order to provide emotional support and relief from feelings of isolation for parents and their families.
- Creates a climate of opportunity for children who are blind in the home, school, and society.
- Fosters communication and coordination of services among federal, state, and local agencies and organizations involved with providing services to people who are visually impaired.
- Advocates on a statewide level for services to children who are visually impaired and their families.
- Keeps members informed about current proposals and actions which impact on children with visual impairments and their families.

Check one:

Parent/Guardian Membership: \$15 per year.

Child(ren)'s Names: _____

Birthdate(s) of my visually impaired child(ren): _____

My child(ren)'s eye condition: _____

I give my permission to release my name to other parents.

Group/Agency Membership \$50 per year.

Extended Family/Friend Assoc. Membership \$15/year.

Medical Specialist \$50 per year.

Scholarship Fund \$10.00

Donation: \$ _____ (tax deductible)

New Membership

Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) - _____

Email: _____

Please enclose this form along with your payment by check to:

IPVI • P.O.Box 2947 • Naperville, IL 60567-2947

Have questions or need more information?

**Call us at
1-877-411-IPVI (4784)**

**Illinois Association for Parents of
Children with Visual Impairments**
P. O. Box 2947
Naperville, IL 60567-2947

**FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND
or PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**THE TOP LINE... of your address
label indicates whether your dues
are "Paid" or if they are "Due."
Please send your annual dues in
each year.**

IPVI CALENDAR

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| ▶ Dec. 17 | Chicago Lighthouse/IPVI Holiday Party | Chicago |
| ▶ Feb. 16-17 | Illinois AER Vision Conference 2012 | Schaumburg |
| ▶ April 28 | Sensory Safari (ROPARD) | Michigan |
| ▶ June 28-
July 1 | VISIONS 2012 | Minneapolis |

Please call
1-877-411-IPVI
for any questions, concerns,
or comments that IPVI can
help you with.

**Newsletter Deadline for
JANUARY is DECEMBER 10th**



**Check Out
www.ipvi.org**

Calendar of Events!
News and Updates!
Useful Links to Web Sites!
And more...