

IPVI INSIGHTS



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

FEBUARY 2018

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Filiberto Almendarez III

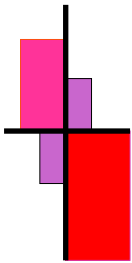


Family: Where life begins and love never ends.

As elections are nearing, I say thank you for the privilege and honor to serve as President of IPVI and to welcome any who may consider running for the position or any other board position. First, to my IPVI family. Thank you for the beautiful moments that are memories in my heart. To the parents who graciously shared their family's life struggles and success. I am grateful. I have tried hard to remember everyone by first name, but our size and my age seems to win. Also, I cherish knowing your child/children and their progress from shyness to walking to communicating. To our wonderful children. Your smiles have been an inspiration and have made my heart smile. Please remain the same. "Let your smile change the world, but don't let the world change your smile". Thank you for being a part of my life and remember, Your only limit is You. Secondly, our Annual meeting is around the corner and so are elections. We would enjoy your attendance at the meeting and possibly consider a board position. If, you are interested, no need to wait, please relate and we can communicate the process and any requirements. More information will follow.

"Together we make a family"

Take Care and hope to see you at our Annual Meeting.





Inside This Issue:

President's Report	1
Early Education: Parents as Teachers	2
Family Connect	3
New Diagnosis? ...	3
The Importance of Relationships	3
Our Role in Defining Our Kids	3
Advocacy Without Apology	3
How Does a VI Child/Teen Travel in Cold, Snow & Ice	4
College Success @ Perkins	5
Wonder Baby	5
What Does Valentine's Day Mean to You?	6
DARE2TRI Play for All	7
DHS Conferences for Illinois Parents...	8
DHS Conferencias Para Padres de Illinois de Niños...	9
STARNET Early Child Today Conference	10
MOPD Work Incentive Planning & Assistive Staff	10
IPVI Board of Directors	11
Family is Love	11
IPVI Membership Dues	12
IPVI Calendar of Events	13



Early Education: Parents as Teachers

As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher from infancy through the preschool years. Just about all your interactions—playing, talking, putting on clothes, feeding—are natural teaching experiences for you and learning opportunities for your child. In your role as teacher, keep in mind that:

- ▶ Every child, whether visually impaired or not, is a learner.
- ▶ The family is the most significant influence in the life of a young child.
- ▶ Children have different learning styles and, therefore, effective teaching approaches should be geared to their individual needs.

What makes you a natural teacher?

- ▶ You know your child better than anyone else does and have a better idea of what he or she is ready to learn.
- ▶ You spend more time with your child than anyone else does. Therefore you're able to take advantage of the many ordinary events—things that happen throughout the day in the normal course of family life—that are opportunities to teach your child something.
- ▶ You give your child toys and common, everyday objects to help him or her learn in natural situations that can be applied to other situations outside the home.
- ▶ You provide opportunities for your child to practice what he or she has learned and a chance to experience the world under your guidance.
- ▶ You act as a role model. By starting early, you teach your child behaviors and good habits that will last a lifetime.
- ▶ You involve your child in family life so that friends and relatives learn how to interact with your visually impaired child and he

(Continued on Page 4)

REPRINTED FROM
FAMILY CONNECT WEBSITE



New Diagnosis? The Most Common Questions Asked by Parents of Children with Visual Impairments

by Shannon Carollo

You're here because your child has recently been diagnosed with an eye condition. You likely weren't at all prepared for the emotional impact of the diagnosis, you certainly can't foresee coping with vision loss, and you don't understand what to do next. You feel consumed with questions; lost at sea. **READ MORE AT: www.familyconnect.org** and click on above article's name.



The Importance of Relationships

by Emily Coleman

We know friendships build self-esteem and offer a sense of belonging that can be hard to find. There are actually additional benefits that we cannot ignore for our kids who are blind and may have additional disabilities. I know it's hard to imagine, but their relationships with kids may also be the key to employment.

READ MORE AT: www.familyconnect.org and click on above article's name.

Our Role in Defining Our Kids

by Emily Coleman



I was recently at the American Printing House for the Blind Annual Meeting and had a discussion with educators about the role of parents in helping others understand our kids. I was sharing my opinion (as usual) about how parents have to take the lead on this to make others understand our children outside of their labels. **READ MORE AT: www.familyconnect.org** and click on above article's name.

Advocacy Without Apology

by Emily Coleman

As a parent of a child who is blind with additional disabilities, I feel like apologizing a lot. I'm telling strangers "I'm sorry" because my son might touch them or their things in passing. I might apologize if he calls out or sings loudly in quiet settings. I might even apologize to family and friends when we can't attend events because sometimes it's just too hard. **READ MORE AT: www.familyconnect.org** and click on above article's name.





How Does a Visually Impaired Child or Teen Travel in the Cold, Snow, and Ice?

by Shannon Carollo

I can hear it now—Frozen's beloved Anna grasping her stiff, emerald dress and murmuring, "cold, cold, cold, cold, cold" as she tiptoes through the snow. Then there are the famous Dalmatians trudging through knee-deep snow, "Mama, my ears are cold and my nose is cold." Disney does a fine job of depicting the distress of traveling in wintry weather when unprepared. So, how do we elude those scenarios with our children who are blind or visually impaired? How does one prepare for winter weather orientation and mobility? **READ MORE AT: www.familyconnect.org** and click on above article's name.

We Continue to Support Each Other, Our FamilyConnect Community

You can connect with other parents of babies, children, teens, and adults who are blind or visually impaired by joining the FamilyConnect community. You will be able to:

- Request e-mail alerts about events in your area or new articles relating to your interests
- Follow our blogs
- Add to discussions on the message boards and get e-mail alerts whenever there is a new message, post, or reply

Sincerely,

The FamilyConnect Team

(Continued from Page 2) - Early Education: Parents as Teachers

or she learns how to act with others.

Visually impaired children learn by touching, listening, smelling, tasting, moving, and using whatever vision they have. You teach your child by talking, touching, and playing during natural interaction times. You are also teaching when you give your child toys and ordinary household objects that vary in texture, weight, smell, sound, and color. The more sensory experiences you provide—experiences that *have* your child use his or her senses and learn how to obtain information through them—both one at a time and simultaneously, during *every-day* routines and special family occasions, the better. Your creative, on-the-spot teaching is an essential part of your child's education.

Early intervention services can help you expand your natural teaching skills to help your toddler or preschooler be ready for more formal learning experiences in school. But do not underestimate the *value* of your own everyday, natural activities with your child. *Every* moment you spend with your child is a teaching moment. It might be playing, or talking, or running errands, or just being—but you are teaching your child just the same.

Reprinted from K. A. Ferrell, *Reach Out and Teach: Meeting the Training Needs of Parents of Visually and Multiply Handicapped Young Children* (New York: American Foundation for the Blind, 1985), pp.10-11.

October 27, 2017

Dear IPVI:

I am reaching out to let you and other families know that we are now accepting applications for the 2018-2019 session of College Success @ Perkins. I have enclosed some brochures about the program, and an application can be found online at Perkins.org/College.

For students and families where college is on the horizon, it is an exciting time. But, it can also be a challenging transition – academically, socially and emotionally – for any student heading to college. And the stakes can be even higher for students who are blind or visually impaired.

With the right approach, a solid plan and the right resources, a successful college experience is within reach.

With that in mind, I'm excited to tell you about College Success @ Perkins, a selective, nine-month residential program for blind or visually impaired high school graduates who are either college-bound or who have spent time in college and want to hone their skills and return to college prepared for success.

The program is at the nationally regarded Perkins School for the Blind campus in Watertown, Massachusetts, only 20 minutes from downtown Boston. The program is open to students looking to **take charge of their future and create the college experience they've always wanted.**

College Success @ Perkins prepares students for **success in college, career and life.** It was designed with an emphasis on:


- **Staying ahead:** Students will continue their academic success and start the college experience the moment they walk on campus – taking college courses for credit, exploring careers at top companies, living in a dorm and becoming accustomed to daily living routines.
- **Getting immersed in college life:** Students will get the true college experience – both on-campus and off. They'll join clubs, work on projects with sororities and fraternities, and attend concerts, plays, games and more.
- **Growing academically – and personally:** This is an experience *for* the student, driven *by* the student. In addition to core classes, there will be a wide selection of fun elective courses and seminars. The program will be tailored to incorporate each student's needs and interests – whether it's starting a radio show, staying physically fit, mastering public transportation to check out what Boston has to offer, or simply socializing with like-minded friends.

There are a variety of financing options for qualified students. For more information, please reach out directly to your state vocational or vision rehabilitation agency, and to our admissions team at 617-972-7573 or CollegeSuccess@perkins.org. Please feel free to reach out with any questions. We look forward to hearing from you!

Best Regards,



Laura Northridge | 617.972.7757 | Laura.Northridge@Perkins.org





“DONUT FORGET” YOUR VALENTINES PRINTABLE BRAILLE CARDS



EASY DIY HEART CUPCAKE TOPPERS



Accessible Valentine's Crafts
for Kids who are Blind



VALENTINE'S PLAY DOUGH

BRAILLE VALENTINE'S PRINTABLES



What Does Valentine's Day Mean To You?

By Amber Bobnar

To me it's about crafts, textures, tastes and smells. What a great opportunity to introduce your child to new crafts, maybe textured play dough and of course cookies and chocolates! Making Valentine's cards for those we love is a fun way to let our friends and families know that we care, and it's so easy to help your child get involved, enjoy new experiences and even add braille whenever possible! **READ MORE** at: **WonderBaby.org**



VALENTINE SPONGE PAINTING

SHAKE IT UP HEARTS



FELT HEART CRAFT SET

BRAILLE “LOVE” COOKIES



VALENTINES HEART BOUQUET



JEWELED HEART SUNCATCHERS

EACH CRAFT LISTED ABOVE HAS INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO MAKE THEM ON THE WonderBaby.com WEBSITE

VALENTINE WHITE DIPPED PRETZEL RODS





We take fun seriously.

Join us at Play for All!

You're invited to a one-of-a-kind event at the Chicago Children's Museum. Play for All gives kids and families the opportunity to try adaptive sports, like adaptive biking, wheelchair racing, roller sled hockey, adaptive judo, and accessible yoga. There will also be a prosthetic display for families to see, touch, and feel. Don't miss the fun!

February 10, 9am-12:00pm

Chicago Children's Museum

Open to everyone

(with or without a member of the family with a disability)

FREE for families who have a member of the family with a disability

Important details: To receive free entry, pre-registration is required and attendees must arrive before 10am. Stay as long as you'd like. The museum opens to the public at 10am and anyone can come at that time. All museum exhibits will be open.

For more information, visit www.dare2tri.org



You're Invited

Conferences for Illinois Parents of Children with Vision Loss

Parents of children ages birth through twenty-one are encouraged to join us for in-depth discussions of useful topics. Learn from experts in the field as well as from fellow parents.

The Conference Program

- **Technology**
Technology is forever changing as is Assistive Technology. Learn more about low tech and high tech supports for visual impairment.
- **Social/Emotional**
This session will discuss social/emotional issues specific to families and children with vision loss. It may include issues such as bullying, making friends, impact on families, acceptance of adaptive equipment, etc.
- **Special Needs Planning**
Come learn and discuss some issues that you might have questions on. What is Guardianship? Is it right for my child? What other issues might I need to think about as my child turns 18. (We hope parents of children of all ages will benefit from this discussion---not just parents of older children.)
- **Panel of Parents**
Several parents of children with Visual Impairments will be led by a moderator to discuss topics such as family dynamics, advocacy, social/emotional issues and/or things that work for their family and things that have not worked.

(Sessions are subject to change without notice)

Southern Illinois Vision Conference
Saturday, March 03, 2018
Mt. Vernon Primary Center
401 N 30th Street
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

Northern Illinois Vision Conference
Saturday, April 21, 2018
SASED Administration Center
2900 Ogden Ave.
Lisle, IL 60532

Time: 9:00 Check-in, 9:30 – 3:15 Conference Program

Planning committee: Delta Gamma Center for Children with Visual Impairments; Northwestern Illinois Association; Rockford Public Schools; Four Rivers Special Ed District, The School Association for Special Education in DuPage County (SASED); Crystal Lake Elementary District 47; parents of children with vision impairment; and the Illinois School for the Visually Impaired.



Estás Invitado

Conferencias Para Padres de Illinois de Niños con Pérdida de Visión

Se alienta a los padres de niños desde el nacimiento hasta los veintiún años a que se unan a nosotros para debatir en profundidad sobre temas útiles. Aprende de expertos en el campo y de otros padres.

El programa de la conferencia

- **Tecnología**
La tecnología está cambiando para siempre, al igual que la Tecnología de Asistencia. Obtenga más información sobre los soportes de baja tecnología y alta tecnología para la discapacidad visual.
- **Social/Emocional**
Esta sesión discutirá temas sociales / emocionales específicos para familias y niños con pérdida de visión. Puede incluir problemas tales como intimidación, hacer amigos, impacto en las familias, aceptación de equipos de adaptación, etc.
- **Planificación de Necesidades Especiales**
Ven a aprender y discutir algunos problemas sobre los que podrías tener preguntas. ¿Qué es la tutela? ¿Está bien para mi hijo? ¿Qué otros asuntos podría tener que pensar cuando mi hijo cumpla 18 años (esperamos que los padres de niños de todas las edades se beneficien de esta discusión, no solo los padres de niños mayores).
- **Panel de Padres**
Varios padres de niños con impedimentos visuales serán dirigidos por un moderador para discutir temas como dinámicas familiares, defensa, problemas sociales / emocionales y / o cosas que funcionan para su familia y cosas que no han funcionado.

(Las sesiones están sujetas a cambios sin previo aviso)

Conferencia de la visión del sur de Illinois
Sábado, 03 de marzo de 2018
Mt. Vernon Primary Center
401 N 30th Street
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

Conferencia Visión del Norte de Illinois
Sábado, 21 de Abril de 2018
SASED Administration Center
2900 Ogden Ave.
Lisle, IL 60532

Hora: 9:00 Check-in, 9:30 – 3:15 Programa de la Conferencia

Comité de planificación: Delta Gamma Center para Niños con Discapacidades Visuales; Asociación del noroeste de Illinois; Las escuelas públicas de Rockford; Four Rivers Special Ed District, la Asociación Escolar de Educación Especial en el condado de DuPage (SASED); Distrito Elemental 47 de Crystal Lake; padres de niños con discapacidad visual; y la escuela para discapacitados visuales de Illinois.



***Early Childhood Today Conference
March 7, 2018***

STAR NET Region VI, Lewis University College of Education and the Illinois Early Intervention Training Program will hold their eleventh annual Early Childhood Today Conference at the Lewis University Romeoville Campus on March 7, 2018. This conference is for parents, caregivers and professionals who shape the lives of children ages birth to 5 years old.

Registration fee only \$35

Includes Continental Breakfast

**Six Hours of Professional Development
Credit Provided**

If you have any questions please contact our office at starnet@swccase.org or at 708-342-5370.

Registration available in January of 2018.

Thank You!

STAR NET Region VI
6020 West 151st Street
Oak Forest, Illinois
60452708-342-5370

STAR NET | (708) 342-5370 |
starnet@swccase.org |



Work Incentive Planning & Assistive Staff

**Save the Date
March 17, 2018
10:00 am - 1:30 pm**

The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities' Employment Services Unit SSA Work Incentive Planning & Assistive Staff and collaborating Community Program Partners, which include city, state, federal agencies, case managers, counselors, job developer & employers will work with young adults to:

- Improve job readiness job search
- Resume writing skills
- Accessing adult services

**Location:
2102 West Ogden Avenue
Chicago, IL 60612**

**Register by calling: (312)746-5743
Fax: (312)746-5749
Ticket to work help line: (866)968-7842**

**Counseling to parents & students to understand the impact SSI and SSDI benefits may have on education and work will be offered during this time.*

IPVI

P.O. Box 316634, Chicago, IL 60631

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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: \$20 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 \$20/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 316634 • Chicago, IL 60631

Have questions or need more information?

**Call us at
1-773-882-1331**

**Illinois Association for Parents of
Children with Visual Impairments**
P. O. Box 316634
Chicago, IL 60631

IPVI CALENDAR

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------|
| ▶ February 10 | Chicago Lighthouse & IPVI Families “Play For All” | Chicago |
| ▶ February 10 | <i>DARE2TRI</i> Play for All! | Chicago |
| ▶ March 7 | STARNET Early Childhood Today Conference | Oak Forest |
| ▶ March 17 | Work Incentive Planning & Assistive Staff | Chicago |
| ▶ March 3 | Conferences for Illinois Parents of Children With | Mt. Vernon |
| ▶ April 21 | Vision Loss | Lisle |
| ▶ 03 de marzo | Conferencias Para Padres de Illinois de Niños con | Mt. Vernon |
| ▶ 21 de Abril | Pérdida de Visión | Lisle |

Please call
1-773-882-1331
for any questions, concerns,
or comments that IPVI can
help you with.

**Newsletter Deadline for
March 2018 is February 15 2018**



**Check Out
www.ipvi.org**

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