

CONSULTANTS'

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SD School for the Blind
and Visually Impaired

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Editor: Riki Nitz



SDSBVI Has a NEW LOOK!

SDSBVI staff and students opened the 2008-2009 school year Monday morning, August 25th, with a ribbon cutting and grand entrance for the newly remodeled and completed front door. As reported in the Fall 2007 Consultant Corner, a delivery truck hit the front canopy of the school during the last week of school on May 21, 2007. Repairs have been ongoing for over a year, but we are proud to now be displaying a NEW LOOK!

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The NEW LOOK at SDSBVI



BEFORE the May 2007 Accident



AFTER the May 2007 Accident



FOCUS ON SUCCESS III

Everyone is welcome! Individuals who are blind or visually impaired, parents, family members, students, teachers, professionals in education, rehabilitation and independent living will all benefit from participating in *Focus on Success III*.

The program will address options for education, transition/vocational rehabilitation, and adult services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

WHEN: Tuesday, September 30, through Thursday, October 2, 2008

WHERE: Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Convention Center, Sioux Falls

Pre-registration fees of \$50.00 for individuals, students, and parents, and \$100.00 for professionals must be post-marked on or before **August 30th, 2008**. After August 30th, registration fees will increase \$25.00.

Limited stipends will be available to those needing assistance with cost of attending the conference.

For more information on registration forms, stipend request forms, and the program and presenters, go to <http://dhs.sd.gov/sbvi/fos2008.aspx> or contact any of the following agencies:

- SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
605-626-2580
Toll Free: 888-275-3814
- Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired
605-773-4644
Toll Free: 800-265-9684
- The Braille and Talking Book Library
605-773-3131
Toll Free: 800-423-6665

Books Featuring Characters with Blindness and Visual Impairment

Jenny's Magic Wand by Helen and Bill Hermann

Grades K-4

Jenny worries about going to a public school after attending a school for children who are blind.

Tangerine by Edward Bloor

Grades 5-7

Twelve-year-old Paul, who lives in the shadow of his football hero brother Erik, fights for the right to play soccer despite his near blindness and slowly begins to remember the incident that damaged his eyesight.

No Finish Line: My Life As I See It by Marla Runyan and Sally Jenkins

Grades 7-12

Marla Runyan, the first legally blind athlete to compete in the Olympic Games, shares her story from diagnosis with Stargardt's disease at age nine through her career in track and field.



APH Materials—Recreation and Leisure

<http://www.aph.org>

WEB CHASE

Web Chase is an originally designed board game by APH that is intended to develop important tactile skills within a fun, recreational context. As players navigate their hungry spiders through an insect-laden web, they learn to trace various raised lines, identify point symbols, and discriminate texture and shapes of various prey.

Other concepts and skills developed include visual and tactual scanning, directionality, one-to-one correspondence, turn taking, counting, reading, sorting/organizing, problem solving, strategic planning, interpreting legends/keys, symbolic understanding, and following directions. *Web Chase's* combined visual and tactile presentation makes it accessible to all players regardless of visual ability. It is a game of luck and skill and can be tailored for players' abilities.

Recommended ages: 5 years and up



SCATTERED CROWNS

Scattered Crowns is a fun, versatile board game that encourages young children, especially those with visual impairments and blindness, to develop tactile skills. As players search for crowns with specific attributes (band textures—smooth, rough, or striped; number of jewels—1, 2, or 3; number of points—3, 4, or 5), they will practice the skills of texture/shape/size discrimination, tactile memory, systematic searching, and spatial concepts.

Other concepts and skills practiced during game play include counting skills, turn taking, sorting/organizing, and social interaction skills.

Recommended ages: 5 years and up



These products are available from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) for purchase and can also be borrowed from your area Outreach Vision Consultant. For more information on these products or other APH products, please contact your area Outreach Vision Consultant.

WEB SITES with VIDEO CLIPS

The web sites listed below have some video clips for viewing that provide information and feature various scenarios involving children with visual impairments and/or families with a child with a visual impairment.

www.babymilagro.org/DVD

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qTiYA1WiY8>

http://www.ontruemedia.com/otm_site/view_shared?p=4d3829158be495ac31a6f5&skin_id=1703&utm_source=otm&utm_medium=text_url

CLASSROOM ADAPTATIONS FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Allow and provide flexible seating arrangements:
 - Lighting needs/issues
 - Time of day
 - Weather – sunny/cloudy
 - Amount of light coming in windows
 - Access to chalkboard/white board (allow student to move to the board)
- Provide extra storage space/area for materials:
 - Tape player/recorder
 - Braille
 - Large print books
 - Desktop lamps – gooseneck, adjustable arm, clip-on
 - Reading stands/slant boards
- Clean chalkboards/whiteboards frequently.
- Without other students present, allow the student with a visual impairment to explore the room to become familiar with the environment.

MATERIALS

- If the student cannot read age appropriate type (elementary – 14 Point type; high school – 10 Point type) but can read 18 Point type, provide large print materials.
- Provide typoscopes/straight edge markers/rulers to isolate lines or sections in texts or on papers and/or to maintain one's place.
- Allow and provide combinations of devices/materials:
 - Regular print
 - Large print
 - Magnifiers
 - Monocular/binocular telescopes
 - CCTV
 - Reading with print close to eyes
- Provide reading stands/slant boards to relieve neck and back fatigue.
- Writing materials:
 - Bold lined paper
 - Raised line paper
 - Black felt-tip pens
 - Non-glossy paper
 - Writing guides



If you keep doing things like you've always done them, what you'll get is what you've already got.

ABERDEEN AREA FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP / SD NAPVI

The SD NAPVI/Family Support group met several times this summer. A picnic in the playground area at the SDSBVI was held June 1st—lot of play time for the kids and great networking with the families. The children even got Superintendent Marje Kaiser wet while throwing water balls at her! Thanks to Lance and Krystal Stuwe for grilling the burgers and dogs.

At a meeting the end of June, Elaine Fritz presented to the group. Lots of great information was presented—and a great reminder to take time for “YOU”. Thanks Elaine for driving up from Baltic and letting everyone benefit from your experience!

Keith Bundy was our guest speaker for the July meeting. Keith spoke of his experiences growing up without vision and the importance of promoting independence. A ton of information was learned. We also learned a bit about some of the technology Keith is using. A big thank you to Keith also.

In August the group once again met at the Aberdeen Aquatic Center for a night of swimming and connecting with other families. Rhiannon gets the award for braving the yellow slide!

Focus on Success will be substituted for our September meeting. This event is being held in Sioux Falls, September 30-October 2, 2008. There are several sessions planned for parents, especially on Wednesday, October 1st. Following the day's events on Wednesday, families are invited to gather for a “meet and greet.”

If you would like more information about joining this group of parents, its activities, or becoming a member of SD NAPVI, contact Amy Scepaniak at 626-2580 or email her scepania@sdsbvi.northern.edu.

SIoux FALLS AREA FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Sunday, October 26, 2008
Sioux Falls

Indira Dillon and Julie Van Dover will be hosting a gathering in Sioux Falls for families of children with visual impairments.

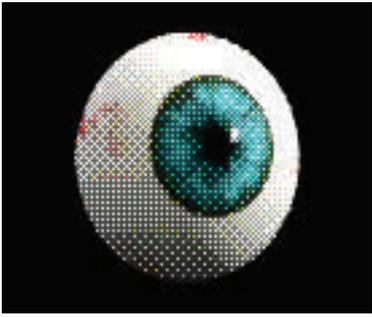
Sandy Ellenbolt from South Dakota Parent Connection will be speaking to the group, parents will be given an opportunity to network with one another, and a meal will be served.

For parents who often wonder if they are the only family with a child who has a visual impairment, this will be a great opportunity to talk with other families and discover that they are not alone.

Daycare will be available for children, so we would appreciate your RSVP by Friday, October 17, 2008. Please RSVP to Indira (995-8191) or Julie (626-2580) or by email at indira.dillon@sdsbvi.northern.edu or vandovej@sdsbvi.northern.edu.

The time and place are yet to be determined. Information about this will be coming out soon, but if you have any questions, you may contact either Indira or Julie.

We look forward to seeing you there!



FOCUS ON THE EYE

COLOBOMA

Description

A coloboma is a gap in part of the structures of the eye. This gap can be large or small and is normally in the bottom part of the eye. A coloboma is caused when a baby's eyes do not develop properly during pregnancy. The eyes develop anytime between the fourth and fifteenth week of pregnancy, though development is usually completed around eight weeks. This condition occurs in about 1 in 10,000 births.

Coloboma can affect one eye (unilateral) or both eyes (bilateral). Coloboma can affect a number of different parts of the eye. A coloboma can affect the iris, which is the colored part at the front of the eye. It can affect the lens, the part of the eye which helps focus light onto the retina. Coloboma can also affect the choroid, which is a thin network of blood vessels that help to keep the retina healthy. Finally, it can affect the retina at the back of the eye. Very rarely does coloboma affect the optic disc or the eyelid.

Effects on Vision

The effect coloboma has on vision depends a lot on which part of the eye is affected and how big the gap is. Normally the gap is at the bottom of the eye (where a 6 is on the face of a clock) and runs from the front to the back of the eye. Coloboma may affect only the front of the eye if most of the gap has sealed up. It may affect the eye from the front to the center and back if more of the gap has failed to close.

Most commonly, coloboma only affects the iris. Children with this type of coloboma often have fairly good vision. Their pupil may be shaped a bit like a keyhole. They may have some problems with bright lights because the iris may not work properly. Too much light entering the eye can cause discomfort and distort the image created. Measures can be taken to help protect a child from sunlight such as tinted glasses, sun hats, or sun blinds in cars.

If the coloboma goes further back into the eye, then the child may have more visual problems, especially if the retina is involved. If this has happened, then central vision may be affected. Central vision is used for detailed activities such as reading, writing, and close work or play. If this is the case, special support services for children with a visual impairment will be involved. Support services can help a child and his or her caregivers learn how to make the most of the vision the child has. They can provide information on development, play, education, and many other issues.

Coloboma may affect one eye more than the other. Children with coloboma may have other problems or syndromes which include coloboma, such as CHARGE.

Causes

Most cases of coloboma appear without any previous family history. In some cases, coloboma can be inherited. If a child is diagnosed with coloboma, it is advisable for the child's parents to have an eye examination. This is because coloboma can be present without causing any visual problems. If a coloboma is detected, a parent could explore inheritance patterns with a genetic counselor.

The genetic factor responsible for most cases of coloboma has not yet been identified.

Treatment

There is no treatment for coloboma at present. During early childhood, a child with coloboma should be monitored for the effects of the coloboma and for their eye health by an eye care specialist. Children who have coloboma can be more at risk of glaucoma (increased eye pressure) and retinal detachment. There are treatments for both of these conditions.

Children with coloboma may need glasses. Glasses cannot correct the vision problems caused by the coloboma. However, glasses can correct near-sightedness or far-sightedness which can help to correct the parts of vision that haven't been affected by coloboma.

Sometimes cosmetic contact lenses may be considered at a later stage. These can help to make the pupil look round rather than keyhole shaped.

Due to the light-sensitivity, sunglasses may also be suggested, as may some low vision aids and equipment to help a child make the most of their sight.

COLOBOMA

(Continued from Page 7)

Educational Implications

- ◆ Adaptation between light and dark environments
- ◆ Awareness of a field loss
- ◆ Some PE activities may be too fast paced and a delayed reaction time may be observed
- ◆ Eye fatigue may be an issue
- ◆ Copying information from a board may be an issue

Teaching Strategies

- ◆ Use of yellow acetate film
- ◆ Be aware of light sensitivity
- ◆ Use of direct lighting on material
- ◆ Preferential seating
- ◆ Utilize high color contrast
- ◆ Allow frequent breaks if necessary
- ◆ May need enlarged or large print
- ◆ May need to use magnification devices
- ◆ Provide classroom notes to the student before class begins



Source: www.rnib.org.

"What Parents Should Know..."

Representatives from several South Dakota agencies have developed a resource for parents entitled "What Parents Should Know...About Special Education in South Dakota." This manual describes in detail the various aspects of the Special Education process and current federal special education law. It is user-friendly and explains the laws and regulations in language that is easier to understand. It is divided into 13 sections, such as Assistive Technology, Evaluation/Re-evaluation, IEP Team/IEP Process, Transition Services, etc. Throughout the manual are "tip boxes" and sections discussing where SD laws may differ from federal law.

If you would like a copy of this manual, please contact your local area Outreach Vision Consultant.

"An Educator and Parent Primer on Special Education Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Definitions"

This booklet explains and defines the language of initials for common special education terms. To view this booklet, go to:

<http://doe.sd.gov/oess/specialed/news/Advisory/docs/AcronymPrimer2007JCkr.pdf>

If you would like a copy of this booklet, please contact your local area Outreach Vision Consultant.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Focus on Success III

Sioux Falls—September 30-October 2, 2008

National White Cane Day

October 15, 2008

Sioux Falls Area Parent Support

Sioux Falls—October 26, 2008

Outreach Forum

Vancouver WA—April/May 2009

AER Dakotas Chapter

Fargo SD—April/May 2009

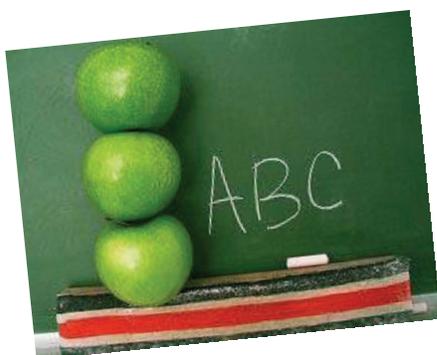
NAPVI's Connecting with Families 2009

International Conference

Costa Mesa CA—July 17-19, 2009

*"Some people are foolish enough
to imagine that wealth and power
and fame satisfy our hearts; but
they never do, unless they are
used to create and distribute hap-
piness in the world."*

Helen Keller



STUDENT CORNER

We welcome any and all special presentations, awards, writings, etc. achieved by our outreach students. If your student/child has such a contribution and would like to be featured in our Student Corner, please contact your area Outreach Vision Consultant or email the contribution directly to Riki Nitz, Editor, at riki.nitz@sdsbvi.northern.edu.

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