

E-CONNECTOR

News from Colorado Parents of Blind Children (CO-POBC)

Inside this issue:

- Devastated
- NFB Announces Summer Science Program
- Free Braille Books Now On Line
- Easter Eggs with Sound
- March Calendar



DEVASTATED

(Excerpt from an article by an anonymous contributor to Wonderbaby.org)

I hear that word a lot. "When we first discovered our son was blind we were devastated..." I understand that. I've experienced it myself. But it's funny how, now over two years after the so-called devastation, it's so hard to imagine that I ever felt that way. My son Ivan just seems so perfect and so full of potential and possibilities.

Probably because coloring was always a favorite activity for me as a child, I kept returning to the thought that he would never color in a coloring book. How could a blind child possibly have fun with colors?

Eventually I realized that I was really stuck in the world of can't, so I began trying to think more positively. I started to say to myself, "Ivan can do anything he wants to do!" He

can color, fly a kite, go to the movies, play sports, and whatever else he puts his mind to!

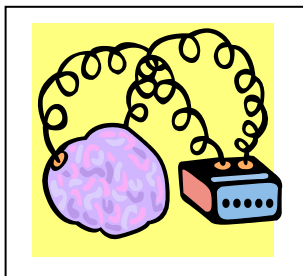
Activities like coloring and painting are good for Ivan because they strengthen his hands, encourage grasp, and facilitate wrist rotation. They're fun because there are more elements to coloring and painting than just the visual; crayons and paints, for example, have a distinct smell and feel.

Also, since Ivan is blind, we can experiment with different ways to make coloring and painting exciting for him: We can finger paint with pudding, then eat our art; we can draw with scented markers; we can place sandpaper under our drawing paper so that the crayon marks are raised; or we can make art with strings, buttons, curled lengths of paper, and other three-dimensional objects. Whatever we do, it will be beneficial because we will explore Ivan's other senses while encouraging him to participate in those "normal" childhood activities. And most importantly, it will be fun because we'll only do it if Ivan finds it enjoyable.

Editor's Note: Please feel free to contact us if you have an announcement you would like included in the newsletter or if you would like to add a friend or family member to the e-mail list. Direct all communications to: copobc@gmail.com, attention Julie Hunter, editor

I do believe that Ivan can do almost anything and that nearly any activity presents some sort of learning opportunity. The only way Ivan will learn about the world is through interacting with it. Of course, Ivan may not be interested in art at all - he may be more of an action kind of guy, and that's fine, too. We won't discourage him from running or riding a bike any more than we would discourage him from playing with paints and crayons!

Remember that your child is a child first. Don't think of your child as a blind or handicapped child. Their disability is an integral part of who they are but does not define who they are as a person. Some kids like to draw and others don't; some kids like to run and others don't. Let your child explore the world in their own unique way!



NFB ANNOUNCES NEW SCIENCE PROGRAM FOR YOUTH

The National Center for Blind Youth in Science (NCBYS), a program of the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute, is introducing an exciting science program for

students ages 7-11 and 14-18 called **NFB Project Innovation**.

The program will serve two age groups simultaneously. The first of these two groups will be comprised of 20 students in grades 3-6 (ages 7-11). This group, called **Junior Innovators**, will stay at the NFB Jernigan Institute for three days, July 25-29.** Each student will be required to attend with an adult chaperone. In this age group, students will interact with science professionals, blind mentors, and Senior Innovators to create a project reflecting their own personal interests and research. The projects will be exhibited at the "Innovators Expo."

The second group, the **Senior Innovators**, will be comprised of students in grades 9-12 (ages 14-18). The high school students, will participate in the science program and also model blindness skills, scientific investigation skills, and techniques to their younger counterparts (the Junior Innovators). Senior Innovators will also have the opportunity to exhibit at the Innovators Expo. The Senior Innovators will stay at the NFB Jernigan Institute for four days, July 24-29, 2012.** Ten blind students will be accepted into this group.

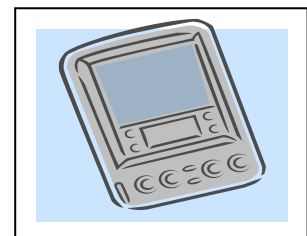
There will be a \$250 fee for each Junior Innovator/Chaperone pair and a \$250 fee for each Senior Innovator attending. Other expenses, such as the cost of travel,

room, board, and program materials, will be covered by the NFB Jernigan Institute for all students and student/chaperone pairs.

Apply now at www.blindscience.org. Applications are due by April 1, 2012. For more information on this exciting new program, please contact Abby Bispo at 410-659-9314, extension 2312 or by email at abispo@nfb.org

*Exact program dates differ based on grade level

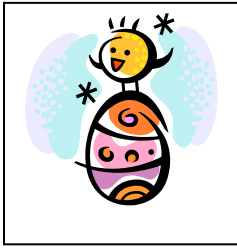
**Date range reflects travel time.



FREE BRAILLE BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Since 1997, the American Action Fund has provided popular and award-winning children's books, including titles from popular series, to blind children throughout the United States as well as to libraries and other organizations that serve blind children. The books have been and will continue to be distributed by mail, but now readers and libraries will also be able to download them from [the American Action Fund Web site](http://the.American.Action.Fund.Web.site). The BRF files are ready to be used on Braille notetakers

and other Braille-aware devices.



EASTER EGGS WITH SOUND

Talking Easter eggs are a great addition to any Easter egg hunt, for both sighted and blind children. They are also a great way to get visually impaired infants to reach out and touch things.

[Hide 'Em & Find 'Em Eggs](#) feature an on/off button and call out every four or five seconds, saying things like, "I'm over here!" or "Can you find me?" They keep calling until they are found and your child opens the egg. Inside the egg you'll find a little plastic chick or bunny that says, "Surprise! You found me!" And if you don't get to them in time, they will turn off automatically after thirty minutes.

These fun eggs are available on Amazon in either [single](#) or [4-packs](#). You can also find them at Wal-Mart, Target, and Rite Aid.

Beeping Eggs can be purchased from [Maxi Aids](#) for \$17.95 each.



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

March 6, 2012

NUGGETS SPORTS CAMP

When? 5:00-6:00 p.m.

What? Skill drills with some Nuggets players; autographs. All disabilities/All ages

Where? Meet at the Pepsi Center

RSVP to Brent Batron, CCB Youth Services Coordinator 303-778-1130, ext. 222 or bbatron@cocenter.org

March 7, 2012

What? AUDIO DESCRIBED PERFORMANCES OF "HOW I BECAME A PIRATE"



Where?

The Arvada Center Children's Theater
6901 Wadsworth Blvd.
Arvada, CO 80003
720-898-7200

What? The play, based on the book by Melinda Long, is the story of a boy named Jeremy

Jacob who is recruited by a pirate captain to help bury treasure. Jeremy thinks the pirate life is for him, but soon misses the simple things in life like being tucked in and kissed good night.

When? Wednesday, March 7 at 10:00 a.m. and noon.
General Admission tickets are \$8.00 and reserved tickets are \$10.00.

March 17, 2012



BLIND LINK

When? 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Where? Colorado Center for the Blind
2233 W. Sheppard Ave.
Littleton, CO 80120

BLIND LINK is a program of the Colorado Center for the Blind which matches kids with blind adult mentors.

RSVP to Brent Batron at 303-778-1130, extension 222, or by email: bbatron@cocenter.org.

March 24, 2012

What? Gymnastics, tumbling, balance beam, trampoline for all ages.

Where? Lakes Gymnastics
6105 West 44th Avenue
Wheat Ridge, CO

When? Noon to 2:00 p.m.

RSVP to Brent Batron at 303-778-1130, extension 222, or by email: bbatron@cocenter.org.