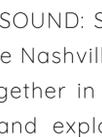
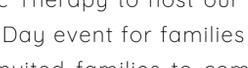


# BEST NEWS

Blind Early Services TN - Newsletter for Caregivers and Providers



## SAVE THE DATE FOR ANOTHER SOUND: SENSORY PLAY DAY!



This past Spring we partnered with Empower Music Therapy to host our first SOUND: Sensory Play Day event for families in the Nashville area. We invited families to come together in person to connect with one another and explore the Early Literacy Center at the new Tennessee Library and Archives, free music therapy sessions, and a variety of sensory activities including an instrument petting zoo, bead/necklace making activities and Braille LEGO brick station. The event was such a great success that we've decided to host another one this Fall, and we're so excited to announce that Autism Tennessee has joined our partnership. Joining forces with both Empower and Autism Tennessee allows our organizations to foster more family-to-family connections and offer sensory-based, therapeutic activities to even more children in Tennessee.

Join us September 17th from 9-11am at the Tennessee National Library and Archives for outdoor music and sensory play. We'll also have a calming, indoor sensory space to allow for a break or quiet time as needed. We expect this SOUND event to be even bigger and better than the last - please register in advance at the link below. Families of children ages 0-6 are all welcome - this is an inclusive event as always!

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JULY RELEASE  
**JULIA BOWMAN,**  
PARENT AND TVI  
BEST TOGETHER PODCAST

AUGUST 3  
6:30PM-7:30PM CT  
PARENT CONNECT  
VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUP  
MONTHLY MEETING

AUGUST 30  
7:00PM CT  
NFB TN PARENT DIVISION  
MEETING

SEPTEMBER 13-16  
PIGEON FORGE, TN  
CATT LEAF CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 17  
9:00AM -11:00AM CT  
SOUND: SENSORY  
PLAY DAY

## Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS) Extends Services for Families

Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS) currently serves eligible infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays from birth to age 3. Recently, Tennessee's Governor proposed extending TEIS services to allow children to access services past their 3rd birthday, which was approved by the Tennessee General Assembly in April. Once approved by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), families of children who are eligible for IDEA Part B services will have the choice to continue with TEIS Part C services until the start of the school year following their child's 4th birthday. This extension offers families an additional option to consider as they help their children develop and prepare for transition to school programs. Here are some of the frequently asked questions posted on the TEIS website and linked below is a more detailed document put out by TEIS called, "TEIS Extended Option: What Families Need to Know." If you are a BEST client family and have additional questions regarding the extended option and services through our agency, please reach out to your service provider directly.

- Who is eligible?
  - To be eligible for the TEIS Extended Option, a child must meet the following criteria:
    - Enrolled in TEIS prior to the age of 3
    - Eligible for special education services (Part B) in the local school district
    - Turn 3 on or after October 15, 2022
  - Once a child transitions to special education services in the school, they cannot return to TEIS services.
- Can a child be referred to TEIS after their 3rd birthday?
  - No, if a child is referred to TEIS after his or her 3rd birthday, the child will not be eligible to begin TEIS services. That child would work with their local school district to receive services.
  - If a family chooses to leave TEIS services after the child turns 3, that child cannot return to TEIS services.
- When will the extended option be implemented?
  - The implementation date for the Extended Option is October 15, 2022.
- Can a child receive services through TEIS (IFSP) and a school district (IEP) at the same time?
  - No, the child may only receive services on an IFSP OR an IEP.



## LEAF Conference to Be Held in September in Tennessee

The Center for Assistive Technology Training (CATT) provides assistive technology supports to states in the southeast region. CATT will be holding its first event in Tennessee, the Learning Experiences with Accessibility for Families (LEAF) Conference, on September 13-16, 2022 in Pigeon Forge, TN for families of children who are blind/visually impaired (ages preschool through 2nd grade) and deaf/hard of hearing (ages birth to 3). This conference is FREE of charge to participating families. The LEAF conference flyer is below as well as a link to apply to attend. Contact Kim Baker (baker.kimberly@aids.org) for more information or with any questions.



## BEST Launches Annual Parent Survey

Blind Early Services TN is always striving to provide the BEST services to children who have disabilities, and to their families. If you are a current BEST client family, this is your chance to tell us how we are doing. Based on your feedback we will know what is working, what needs improvement, and what we can do better for YOU. We will be sending this survey out annually in an effort to gather valuable information from you, the families we serve. Thank you for your participation -- it will only take a few moments of your time and helps us so much! Use the link below to respond.

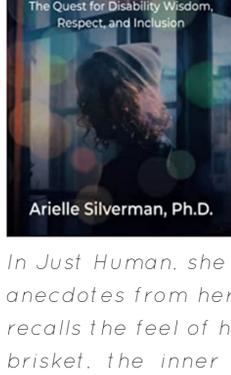
<https://forms.gle/iJtVc6wot6og25bD7>



## BEST READS

This month we're announcing a new newsletter section called BEST Reads. When we come across a new book that we love or has been recommended to us, we will share it with you, our readers. If you have any favorite books covering topics related to early intervention, disability, inclusion, blindness/low vision or other subjects our BEST readers might be interested in, please let us know by writing to info@blindearlyservices.org. We welcome both adult and children's book suggestions!

Our first book is Just Human: The Quest for Disability Wisdom, Respect and Inclusion by Dr. Arielle Silverman.



*Born without sight, Dr. Arielle Silverman has never missed the visual. Being blind never bothered her much but, as she grew, she discovered others saw her blindness very differently. Many people saw her as either helpless or inspirational, but rarely did they see her as just human, with the same capacities and desires as her peers. Arielle has spent a lifetime exploring ways to foster respect and inclusion, not only for blind people like her, but for all of us whose bodies or minds differ from the norm.*

*In Just Human, she reflects on her formative years and presents unique anecdotes from her life that carry teachable moments for all of us. She recalls the feel of her mother's embrace, the smell of her grandparents' brisket, the inner sensations of a preteen crush, the music on her wedding day, and scholarly lessons from her dissertation research. Her words paint pictures from her mind's eye: a vision of a world where we can radically accept ourselves and our fellow humans, while at the same time work to change systems of inequality. As she writes of the past and the present, Arielle looks toward the future, considering how we can build a more inclusive world for those who come after us.*

## WHAT WE'RE LOVING THIS MONTH!



Light up, floating bath toys are fun for any child and can be especially engaging for a child with CVI or other neurological vision impairments. This set, by Yeonha Toys, features four floating sea animals. They light up and change colors when touching water, then turn off when removed from the water. These are appropriate for ages 6 months and up. Link below to buy on Amazon. Don't forget to select BEST as your charity via Amazon Smile!