

BEST NEWS

Blind Early Services TN - Newsletter for Caregivers and Providers



NEW DOCUMENTARY SHEDS LIGHT ON THE LIFE OF PARENT CAREGIVERS

Unseen is a new documentary by filmmakers, Tom and Amanda Dyer, both of Nashville. The film follows Jess and Ryan Ronne, a blended family with eight children including one with profound disabilities. Highlighted in the film is the toll that full-time parent caregiving takes on a family's mental, physical and emotional well-being. Follow the Ronne family as they share their story of isolation, uncertainty, and taxing daily tasks - themes that ring true for many parents of children with disabilities and/or complex medical needs.

The goals of the film, per the filmmakers, are: to give an unfiltered glimpse into the lives of parent caregivers and their real challenges; to shed light on how difficult it can be to get support and solutions; and to establish strategic partnerships to enable real change. It is this last objective that led BEST to become a resource partner and spread the word about Unseen. We are an organization led by a team, and serving many families, who understand first-hand what the words parent caregiver mean and we want to highlight our commitment to doing all we can to support this community.

Join us THIS SUNDAY, September 25th at Brentwood Baptist Church for a screening of the film followed by a Q&A with the filmmakers. Friends of BEST receive 25% off with the code BESTN_25. Unseen has already received numerous awards including at the Los Angeles Film Awards, New York Film Awards and the Impact Doc Awards. You don't want to miss this film. Watch the trailer below.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER RELEASE
**GRIFFIN PINKOW
BEST TOGETHER
PODCAST**

SEPTEMBER 25
4:00PM CT
**UNSEEN DOCUMENTARY
SCREENING &
FILMMAKER Q&A
BRENTWOOD, TN**

SEPTEMBER 28
12:00PM CT
**BEST ADVOCATE IEP
TRAINING**

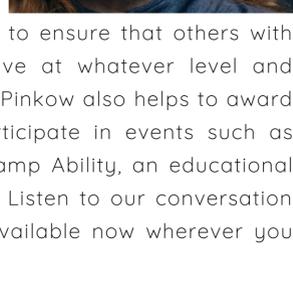
OCTOBER 5
6:30PM-7:30PM CT
**PARENT CONNECT
VIRTUAL SUPPORT
GROUP MONTHLY
MEETING**

OCTOBER 25
7:00PM CT
**NFB TN PARENT
DIVISION MEETING**

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING + FILMMAKER Q&A **Sunday, September 25 4:00 pm** **Brentwood, TN**
Brentwood Baptist Church

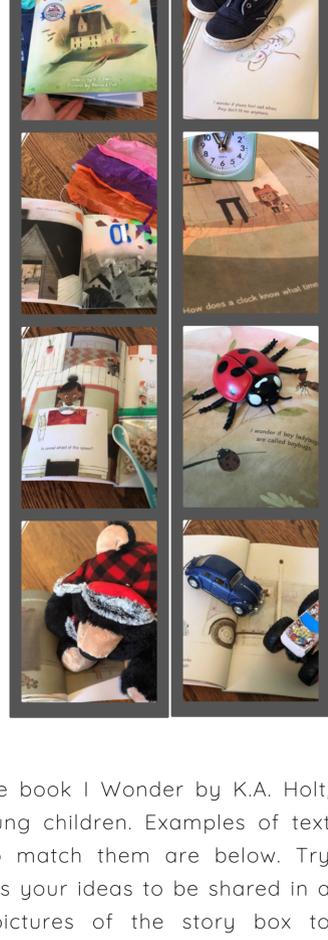
Listen Now to Griffin Pinkow on the BEST Together Podcast

Griffin Pinkow is the founder of the Foreseeable Future Foundation, a nonprofit organization that works with individuals and other organizations to enable those with blindness and low vision to live fulfilling lives through sports and recreation. Pinkow has run four marathons, competes on the cycling circuit at a national level, has competed in World Ultra Timed Trial Championships, and also snowboards. Pinkow also happens to be blind. Diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP), a retinal degenerative disease, at 11 years old, he is now almost completely blind. Pinkow believes that staying active is essential for his own physical, mental and emotional health and wants to ensure that others with vision impairment have the means to stay active at whatever level and amount they desire. As part of the mission of FFF, Pinkow also helps to award scholarships to individuals to allow them to participate in events such as marathons, triathlons, para cycling events and Camp Ability, an educational sports camp for children with vision impairments. Listen to our conversation with Griffin on this month's podcast episode -- available now wherever you stream podcasts.



BEST CRAFT CORNER

One of our favorite ways to encourage literacy and concept development among children with blindness or low vision is through story boxes. A story box is simply a container of items that correspond to items or ideas mentioned in a book you're reading with a child. For a child who has difficulty or an inability to look at the illustrations or pictures in a book, having a tangible item to explore tactually is essential to understanding the meaning of the words in the book. A story box can be made for any book and all it requires is some creativity! Important things to remember when introducing story box items are: to give the child plenty of time to touch and feel the object and/or to ask questions about it; to think beyond the words and look at the concepts or symbols that might be important to represent; try to use real objects whenever possible (example: a plastic tree is not the same concept as a real tree!); start small and work up to more lengthy or complex books/story boxes; and to involve friends and other family members - story boxes can be made and enjoyed by anyone!



We recently made a story box to go with the book I Wonder by K.A. Holt, which explores the active imagination of young children. Examples of text from the book and the objects gathered to match them are below. Try making a story box at home and share with us your ideas to be shared in a future newsletter issue! Email your ideas/pictures of the story box to info@blindearlyservices.org.

TEXT

- "What if the sun is really a kite."
- "Is cereal afraid of the spoon?"
- "I wonder if teddy bears ever cry."
- "I wonder if shoes feel sad when they don't fit me anymore."
- "How does a clock know what time it is?"
- "I wonder if boy ladybugs are boybugs."
- "I wonder if cars and trucks speak the same language."

ITEM

- small kite
- bag of cheerios and a spoon
- teddy bear
- shoes
- small clock
- plastic ladybug
- toy car and truck

Reminder! BEST Advocate Quarterly Training On September 28th

The BEST Advocate program has scheduled its next quarterly parent training session for September 28th at noon CT. Grab your lunch, hop online and join us! We know how overwhelming transitions can be and how many questions come with them. As you prepare for your child to age out of early intervention and into the school system or other environment, we invite you to join our training led by Disability Policy Advocate, attorney and parent, Erin Richardson. We will cover the IFSP to IEP process, program options specific to Tennessee including the new early intervention extension option, as well as a special section for parents of children with blindness or low vision. All parents of children in early intervention are welcome!

IEP Training
What happens after early intervention?

Grab your lunch and join us for our FREE quarterly parent training to discuss what happens after early intervention. Topics will include:

- The transition process (including the new TEIS extension, option) and how to prepare
- Basic laws and rights for you and your child
- IFSP versus IEP versus 504 Plan
- Pre-K program options in Tennessee
- Services available in Pre-K (with a special section for parents of children with a visual disability)

September 28th, 2022
12PM - 2PM CST
Online via Zoom

Erin Richardson
Policy Advocate & Director for ISM&T, Attorney, parent of a child with a disability

Allison Clougherty
Executive Director of Programs & Development for BEST Teacher of the Visually Impaired, parent of a child with a disability

Register Now!

BLIND EARLY SERVICES TN

Interested in Becoming a Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI)?

Vanderbilt University's Special Education: Visual Disabilities Program is actively seeking applicants for future cohorts and wants to answer any questions you may have about the program and its requirements as well as anything you want to know about the field of vision impairment. We encourage anyone who may have any level of interest in joining the profession to attend one of two information sessions being held this fall via Zoom. Register at the links below.

VANDERBILT Peabody College
Department of Special Education

VISUAL DISABILITIES VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSIONS, FALL 2022

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 4:00 PM CST, & THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 5:00 PM CST

Interested in becoming a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI)? Join us to learn about the Low Incidence Program Visual Disabilities Track, MeEd program. Hear student perspectives, understand admission requirements and get your questions answered!

HOSTED BY:

DR. RACHEL SCHLES - COORDINATOR & ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE, VISUAL DISABILITIES TRACK

MRS. KELLY LIMINA - ADMISSION COORDINATOR, DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

WHAT WE'RE LOVING THIS MONTH!



Pull, pop, and discover! The Tugl Cube by Fat Brain Toys allows little hands to grab, pull, push and pop. The visually simple and brightly colored toy allows children to work on fine motor skills, tactile learning and cause-and-effect. Inspire fascination, discovery, and calmness through sensory exploration. Available at the link below.