

SEPTEMBER 2025

VOL. 5, ISSUE 9



Best News

Blind Early Services TN - Newsletter for Caregivers and Providers

September Spotlight: Understanding CVI



Cortical (or Cerebral) Visual Impairment (CVI) is the *leading cause of childhood blindness and visual impairment*. CVI happens when the brain has trouble interpreting what the eyes see. It can look different for every child, but many experience things like:

- Strong color or light preferences
- Better response to movement
- Difficulty in busy or cluttered spaces

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

October 14 (1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EST)

Supporting Your Child with Friendships & Bullying Webinar

Part of the "Ask the TVI" Series by the Lighthouse Guild

Learn More and Register

- Delayed visual responses
- Trouble recognizing new objects or faces

The good news: with early recognition and consistent support, children with CVI can build new visual skills over time. Because of the brain's remarkable ability to adapt, strategies like simplifying the environment, using favorite colors, presenting objects in a preferred visual field, or reducing clutter can make a big difference. Families, providers, and educators working together can create the right conditions for progress, helping children participate more fully in daily life, learning, and play.

Ways to Learn & Take Action:

- Connect with other families: [CVI Now Parent Support Group](#).
- Share awareness this month with colleagues, teachers, and providers.
- Explore and learn more through the hub or resources and research gathered by Perkins School for the Blind by clicking the button below!

CVI Now

October 7 - 10 & October 14 - 17

Flip for Function Fall Mini Camp

Morning, Afternoon, & All-day Options Available for Middle TN families.

Explore Offerings Here

October 22 (11:30 AM - 12:30 PM CDT)

TN Early Intervention Family Focused Online Lunch & Learn

Topic to be announced

Scroll through the 2025 Family Focused Lunch & Learns to find the October 2025 Webinar Info

October 27 (6:00 PM - 8:00 PM EST)

Turquoise Trail at the Creative Discovery Museum for Chattanooga and surrounding area families

An accessible and sensory-friendly trick-or-treating event including non-food treats that brings Halloween magic to children of all abilities

Check this Webpage for Registration



Seasonal Sensory Fun

Explore the warm scents and textures of fall through fun, hands-on sensory play—great for all children, including those who are blind or visually impaired. This article shares simple, seasonal activities like **apple-scented playdough**, **apple stamping with scented paint**, **texture & taste exploration**, and a **fall sensory bin**. These play ideas help build fine motor skills, vocabulary, sensory awareness, and confidence—while also giving caregivers a cozy way to connect with children through touch, smell, and



creativity.

Explore the Activities Here!



Get Your BEST Fest Tickets Today!

BEST FEST 2025

Sponsored and Supported By



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The Lafferty Family



BEST Fest 2025 individual tickets and tables are available on the event webpage!

This annual celebration brings together families, friends, and supporters for an evening of connection, entertainment, and fundraising to support Tennessee children who are blind or visually impaired. From signed memorabilia to dinner date packages our auctions will have something for everyone!

Not able to attend, but know someone who might be interested in sponsoring or donating an auction item? Contact our Development Director, Denee Stewart Freeman at dstewartfreeman@blindearlyservices.org.

Join us in celebrating and supporting **BEST children and the families and providers who love them!**

Get Your Tickets Today



Protect Federal Braille Training Programs

On September 5, 2025, the U.S. Department of Education announced it will no longer fund national braille training programs. For the first time in decades, there will be **no federal support for specialized braille training** for children and adults who are blind or visually impaired.

Without federal support, there will be:

- Fewer resources for teachers of students with visual impairments
- Less professional development for vision rehabilitation therapists
- Limited training for new service providers
- Reduced innovation in braille technology and literacy programs



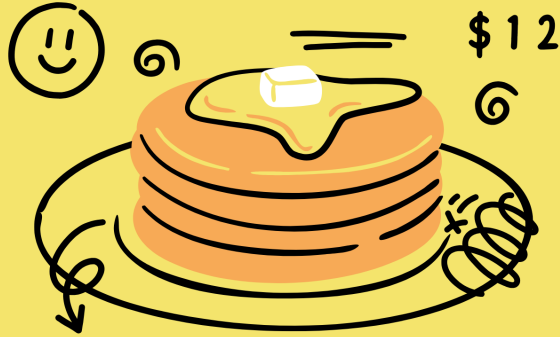
We are joining our colleagues at the **Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER)** to raise awareness and urge action. **Take action:** Call your U.S. Senators and ask them to support federal braille training—every child and adult who is blind or visually impaired deserves access to literacy, education, and independence.



Support the Donelson Lions Club at Their Pancake Breakfast!

Save the date for a fun and flavorful morning! The **Donelson Lions Club** is hosting a **pancake breakfast** on **Saturday, October 4th, from 8:00 to 11:00 AM** at **Pennington Fellowship Church** in the fellowship hall. Tickets are **\$12 per person**, with all proceeds supporting the Lions Club’s charitable programs in

FALL PANCAKE BREAKFAST



SATURDAY, OCT 4TH 2025

8AM - 11AM

DONELSON LIONS CLUB

2745 PENNINGTON BEND RD

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(DR.JOSHMOORE@GMAIL.COM)

the Donelson community.

The Lions Club is a global service organization committed to improving lives through community service, including programs focused on vision and hearing, youth initiatives, and local outreach. This breakfast is a great way to enjoy a tasty meal while supporting their mission.

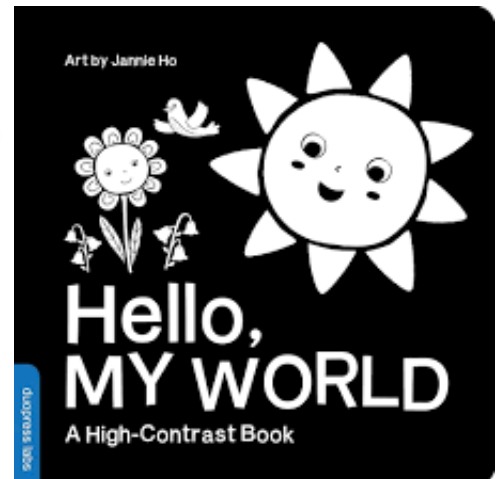
If you're not in the Middle Tennessee area, you can still get involved—look for your **local Lions Club** to find events and volunteer opportunities near you!



What We're Loving This Month | Our Favorite Replays



+ More Recommendations
from Wonder Baby



We're bringing back some of our top toy and resource recommendations that have been hits with CVI kiddos in the past. These familiar favorites are perfect for encouraging exploration, sensory engagement, and

developmental growth. Take another look at these tried-and-true picks!

About Us

BEST ensures that families are empowered and equipped to provide children with blindness or low vision their BEST start.

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