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Blind Early Services TN - Newsletter for Caregivers and Providers

Out of this World! Memories from Camp BEST 2026

Camp BEST was truly out of this world! Our little astronauts with vision loss and their caregivers spent the week exploring, connecting, and discovering through space-themed, hands-on sensory experiences. Each day brought new adventures—from tactile exploration of planets and stars to music, movement, crafts, and imaginative play designed to build confidence and curiosity.

With support from Flip for Function Gymnastics, Empower Music Therapy, and Move Inclusive Dance, campers experienced joyful opportunities to move, create, and connect.

A heartfelt thank you to the Nashville Predators Foundation, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, the Foreseeable Future Foundation, the Downtown Nashville Lions Club, and all our generous partners, donors, volunteers, and families for making Camp BEST possible.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

July 16 (6:00 PM - 8:00 PM)

Autism TN 7th Annual Sensory Friendly Pool Party

Tommy Garrott Aquatics Facility ([Register here](#))

August 21

TN Disability Mega-Conference by the Arc TN

in Murfreesboro, TN

[Stipend Application for Registration Fee & Hotel](#)

[Register here](#)



Share Your Feedback on Low Vision Technology

From our friends at American Printing House for the Blind...

Each year, APH selects one research focus area to guide future product development. This year's focus is Low Vision Technology—and we want to hear directly from the people who use it and support its use.

We look forward to hearing your feedback about what actually works, what's missing, and what needs improvement. Your experience matters—and it will shape what comes next! Questions? Contact Lee Huffman at: lhuffman@aph.org



Vision Professional Survey

Parent, Guardian, or Adult Consumer Survey

Celebrating DeafBlind Awareness Week

June 25–July 1 is DeafBlind Awareness Week, a time to recognize and celebrate individuals with combined hearing and vision loss. This year's theme, **"Connected by Touch: Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges,"** highlights the many ways people who are deafblind communicate, learn, and connect with the world through touch—including tactile sign language, braille, haptics, assistive technology, and everyday interactions.

At BEST, we're proud to support children and families with diverse needs and to celebrate the many ways every child learns, communicates, and experiences the world. This week is a reminder that accessible communication and meaningful connection help create communities where everyone belongs.



Explore DeafBlind Awareness Week

Cool Places to Learn & Play in Nashville

When the summer heat is in full swing, it's the perfect time to explore a



few cool, welcoming indoor spaces right here in Nashville.

At the Tennessee State Library and Archives, the Early Literacy Center offers a hands-on space designed for young learners to build early tactile and pre-braille skills. Children can explore engaging toys, tactile wall displays, and beginning braille and picture books that invite adults and children to read and learn together. It's a calm, air-conditioned environment where families can slow down, play, and support early literacy through touch and exploration.



Just next door, families can also visit the Tennessee State Museum's Children's Gallery, a free interactive space designed for children to play, discover, and learn through hands-on exploration. From imaginative play areas to sensory-rich exhibits, it's a great way for kids to stay engaged while staying out of the heat.

Together, these downtown spots make an easy summer outing—offering learning, play, and a refreshing break from the heat, all in a welcoming, no-cost setting for families.



What We're Loving This Month



This month, we're excited to highlight Fair Play Libraries and their Family Play Access Program, which helps families bring switch-adapted play into everyday life.

Switch-adapted toys are regular toys that have been modified so children can turn them on and off using a simple, large button—similar to a game show buzzer—instead of needing small or complex controls. This gives children with physical and visual disabilities a way to independently activate toys, explore cause-and-effect, and engage more fully in play.

The Family Play Access Program connects families with these resources so children can experience more accessible, meaningful play at home and in their daily routines.



[Click here to learn more and apply!](#)

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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