

E-CONNECTOR

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

Inside this issue:

- Letting Go
- Save the Date: NFBCO State Convention
- Sensational BlackBoard Workshop
- Free Braille/Print Books For Preschool Children
- September Calendar



From the Editor:

LETTING GO

The first days of school can be scary for kids and their parents. A kindergartener's mom recently expressed panic when leaving her daughter at the school. She was overwhelmed with worry about her child's safety and well being. Now, a few weeks later she is feeling much better. The TVI (teacher of the visually impaired) is doing her job, the classroom teacher is doing hers, and the child has settled in. So, why did this mom panic? Perhaps she had not done her "job" in letting go.

One of the hardest things for parents and family members of blind and visually impaired children is to let go. A parent's instinct is to shelter and protect

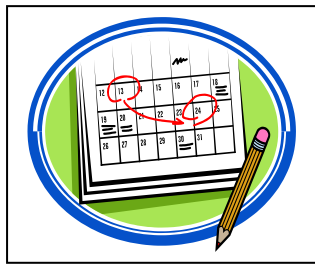
children from potential dangers. It's easier to hold their hands and keep them close than it is to watch them fumble. It's easier to do things for them than it is to go through the sometimes lengthy and frustrating process of teaching them to do something right. Parents must set the same expectations for their blind and visually impaired kids as they would for a sighted child...from the time they are born! That is a job with both challenges and great rewards (like a smooth transition on the first day of school). Kindergarteners should know more than their ABC's when they enter the classroom. They should have had some experience in exploring new environments with the encouragement of their parents and interacting with peers. Perhaps "kindergartener mom" would have felt better about leaving her child on that first day of school if she had been actively working to keep her child age- appropriately independent. The blind adults in the NFB who are our role models did not just suddenly achieve competency. They too had to go through the process of acquiring skills...with some

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

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<http://www.facebook.com/COPOBC>

bumps, bruises and frustration along the way. Parents have a big job and a big responsibility to help their blind and visually impaired children in this process. Letting go is tough, but it's a whole lot easier when age level skills and experiences have been incorporated into your child's life.



SAVE THE DATE!

NFB of COLORADO STATE CONVENTION

Mark your calendars! The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado (NFBCO) will hold its 58th annual state convention October 25-28, 2012, at the [Millenium Harvest House](#) hotel in Boulder. Colorado Parents of Blind Children (CO-POBC), a division of NFBCO, participates fully in the convention, offering seminars, workshops and activities for families. Convention activities will get underway on Thursday evening, October 25, with a chance to socialize and get into the NFB spirit. The Friday and Saturday morning sessions will have everyone seated together in the convention hall. Luncheons on Friday and Saturday will be followed by afternoon breakout

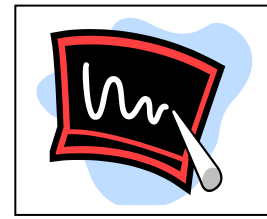
sessions for various divisions and interest groups. The theme for the CO-POBC sessions is "Fun, Friends and Fitting In". Stay tuned for more details in the October *e-Connector*.

The Saturday evening banquet is always a highlight of the weekend. The banquet keynote address will be given by the NFB national representative, Anil Lewis, NFB Director of Communications. The convention will conclude on Sunday at noon following a morning of substantive discussions plus a business meeting open to all.

Of course conventions are not all business. There will be some lively entertainment along the way, including a huge auction of hotel packages, restaurant certificates and more. But most of all the NFB State Convention is the place to meet others. You'll meet other parents, your kids will meet other blind and visually impaired kids, and we will all meet blind adults who have regular jobs and families and inspire us to see that life as a blind person can be as fulfilling and "normal" as any American life. So, come make some friends, laugh...and learn a thing or two!

*Check the NFBCO website, www.nfbco.org, for agenda updates and for information about convention registration and reserving hotel rooms.

Hotel reservations must be made by September 25th to receive the convention rate.)



SENSATIONAL BLACKBOARD WORKSHOP

Ann Cunningham, creator of the Sensational BlackBoard, is offering a workshop on how to put the Sensational BlackBoard to use.* Here is the invitation she sent out:

"All parents, grandparents and supporters of children who are blind or visually impaired, you are invited to a workshop introducing an easy way to make pictures accessible. This hour long workshop will give you a chance to try out a fast, easy and inexpensive way to make pictures, charts, graphs and diagrams accessible through touch. And you don't need to be an artist! If you can trace you have the skills to get important information into your child's hands. You are encouraged to bring your kids but you can also come and learn on your own. Please join us for a lively hour of fun activities. " There is no charge. Children are encouraged to attend with parents.

Date: Saturday, September 8

Time: 3:00-4:00 p.m.

(Following NFBCO North

Chapter meeting. Come at 1:00 p.m. if you'd like to attend the chapter meeting.)

Place: 10324 W. 62nd Ave. Arvada, CO 80004 (For questions about the location please call Michelle Chacon at [303-456-9000](tel:303-456-9000))

Register by sending an email listing those who will be attending and a contact phone number and email address to: ann@acunningham.com

Note: If we find that a larger meeting space is needed we will notify you by email of a change of location.

*(For an introduction to the Sensational BlackBoard see the [interview of Ann Cunningham](#) that appeared on Channel 9 News on Friday, May 4, 2012. Another helpful [youtube video](#) shows how to use the Sensational BlackBoard.)



FREE BRAILLE/PRINT BOOKS FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

(Reprinted from APH News, August, 2012)

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) has provided many Imagination Library books in a digital audio format

for young children who are blind and visually impaired. Now, five titles each year will also be available in print/Braille format. The titles selected from the current year's list of DPIL books published by Penguin Group, are those most appropriate to translate into Braille. Two hundred copies of each title will be made. The books will be provided free-of-charge to families.

This year's print/Braille titles include: *Old Bear and His Cub*, *A Mud Pie for Mother*, *My Lucky Day*, *Read to Tiger*, *Llama Llama Misses Mama*

Applications must be made by parents or guardians rather than schools. To read about the application process for the free books [visit the DPIL website](#).



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, September 8

What: Sensational Blackboard Workshop (See Article in this issue.)

Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m.
Where: 10324 W. 62nd Ave. Arvada, CO 80004

RSVP: ann@acunningham.com

Saturday, September 21

What: **BLIND LINK**
AGES: Kids under age 18

Time: 1:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Where: Colorado Center for the Blind—2233 W. Shepperd Ave. Littleton, CO 80120

DETAILS: BLIND LINK is a program of the Colorado Center for the Blind which matches kids with blind adult mentors. The kids and their mentors participate in exciting and challenging activities that help instill confidence, and a positive attitude about blindness. Youth Services Coordinator, Brent Batron, will match each child with a one-on-one blind mentor. Parents will participate in a group discussion while the kids are busy with a fun activity (still in the planning stages). For more information about BLIND LINK or to get your child connected with a mentor, contact Brent Batron at 303-778-1130, extension 222, or by email at bbatron@cocenter.org.

RSVP by September 13th

Saturday, September 22

Happy First Day of Autumn!

