

E-CONNECTOR



Notes and Notices from Colorado Parents of Blind Children (CO-POBC)



Dear Reader:

Please contact us if you have an announcement you would like to tack up on our bulletin board, or if you would like to add a friend or family member to the e-mail list. Direct all communications to: copobc.newsletter@gmail.com, attention Julie Hunter, editor.



TEENS AND TRANSITION

Transition was the topic of the Colorado Parents of Blind Children seminar held at the NFB of Colorado State Convention last weekend. Here are some points for parents to keep in mind when their blind/visually impaired child enters the teen years:

*Mastery of skills in travel, Braille, access technology, home chores and self care will be needed for independence after leaving the nest. In fact, research has shown that competency in Braille and the ability to travel independently in the community are predictors of future employment success. Maintain

high expectations in all these areas.

*Request that transition services begin as early as possible. Although IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) allows that transition services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) may begin at age 14, Colorado DVR has been telling students that they must wait until they are 17, or in some cases the second semester of their senior year! We have hope that this policy is going to change in 2016 when DVR will be moved to a different administrative entity--the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. Request a referral to DVR in the IEP when your child is 15 at the least. Then notify Dan Burke at the NFB of Colorado (303-778-1130) if your child is denied by DVR or indefinitely postponed so this problem can be addressed with real statistics.

*Social skills are extremely important. Encourage your teen to participate in community activities, sports, school clubs, church groups, scouts or other special interest groups.

*Having some work experience to report on a college application or when applying for the first real job is extremely beneficial. It doesn't have to be an actual paid job. Volunteer work, babysitting, or even a job shadowing experience will be a positive addition to the teen resume'. Does your teen have a special interest that might lead to a career? The NFB of Colorado will do its best to find a blind person working in that field who could answer questions about how they perform the job.



OUTDOOR ADVENTURE OPPORTUNITIES

No Barriers USA is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing people of all ability levels the support and tools necessary to overcome physical limitations and conquer their greatest challenges. Two exciting opportunities for fun and adventure are planned for youth in the summer of 2016.

Grand Canyon Sound Academy (July 24-August 4, 2016) Twenty teenagers, ages 15-19 who are blind/visually impaired or fully sighted will take part in a 12 day expedition to the heart of the Grand Canyon . The first three days will be spent camping on the rim of the canyon where they will build relationships, practice camping and hiking skills and conduct service projects. For the next 8 days the teens will raft the Colorado River learning about the sounds of nature and working on student driven projects with scientists from the National Park Service. In honor of the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, all participants will receive a scholarship equivalent to \$2,700! The cost for participants is \$300 plus travel to and from Phoenix, Arizona. The early application deadline is December 4, 2015. Don't delay...this program will fill up quickly! [Click here for the application form.](#)

The Summit

(June 23-26, 2015) For people with disabilities of all ages and their families. The Summit is a long weekend filled with hands-on clinics, product demonstrations, outdoor excursions, films, art, and more. In 2016 the event will take place at Copper Mountain. Action adventure clinics will offer many choices including

such things as kayaking, rock climbing, hiking, biking, horsemanship, archery and much more. Clinics in the arts will include painting, pottery and more. Healthy eating, meditation, yoga and inspirational speakers are also featured. Registration is not yet open, but you can be put on a listserv to receive updates by [clicking here](#). The cost for participation has not been announced, but based on past Summits can be expected to be in the neighborhood of \$200 per person.



BRILLE SMARTWATCH

A South Korean company has developed DOTS, a smartwatch with a four character moving Braille display. The DOTS Braille watch will display the time and additionally, when connected to an iPhone or Android device via Bluetooth, the watch will notify the wearer through vibration that a text message has been received. The message will be translated into Braille and automatically displayed on the watch face. Dials on the side of the watch allow the speed at which the dots refresh to be customized from very slow to very fast. Unlike standard refreshable Braille displays which read one

line at a time, the Braille dots actively pass by the user's fingers. The watch is scheduled to be released in December 2015 for a price of under \$300. For more information go to <http://fingerson.strikingly.com/>



AUDIO INFORMATION NETWORK OF COLORADO

AINC is a volunteer service that provides audio news, information and entertainment to the blind/visually-impaired and print-disabled community. Registered listeners can access audio programs online, through downloaded podcasts, on TV or over the phone. Programming of potential interest to children includes: Animal Kingdom, Children's Hour, Children's Mystery Show, Kid's Bookshelf, Travelin' Tales, Travelers in the Night and magazines such as *Ranger Rick*, *Cobblestones*, *Electricity Magazine*, *National Geographic Kids*, *Cricket Magazine* and more.

AINC provides pre-tuned digital receivers (Wifi required), speaker telephones and MP3 players upon request and free of charge. [click here](#) for more information or you can call 303-786-7777 or toll free at 877-443-2001.



THANKSGIVING CRAFT IDEA: CORN SHAKERS

Here's a multi-sensory craft project for kids.

Supplies:

1 Empty Pringles Chips Can
Bubble Wrap
Masking Tape
Red and Yellow Finger Paint
White Paper
Unpopped Popcorn
School Glue

Cut a piece of white paper that will wrap around the Pringles can. Cut a piece of bubble wrap somewhat larger than the paper and tape it to a table that has been protected with newspaper or plastic. Let the child dab and swirl paint on the bubble wrap. Press the white paper on the bubble wrap to pick up the dabs of paint. While the paint is drying on the paper, apply school-type glue to the outside of the Pringles can. Wrap the painted sheet of paper to the outside of the can. Place the corn kernels in a bowl. With hands or a measuring cup, let the child partially fill the can with corn kernels. Cover and shake!



NOVEMBER CALENDAR

****SATURDAY, November 13

Shark Dissection

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Shark Dissection with Arapahoe Community College at the Colorado Center for the Blind. We will work with Terry Harrison to once again provide the opportunity for blind and visually impaired students in middle school and high school to dissect a dogfish shark.

****SATURDAY, November 14

FAST Saturday

10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.

FAST Saturday stands for Fun Activities and Skills Training

We will preparing a small Thanksgiving dinner with all the fixings. Learn how to carve, how to mash potatoes, bake a pie and everything related to this fantastic and festive holiday!!!

The above activities will be held at the Colorado Center for the Blind, 2233 W. Shepperd Ave., Littleton , CO

RSVP to Brent Batron, 303-778-1130, ext. 222 or bbatron@cocenter.org.