

# VISION

"VISION" is the Official Publication of Parents of Vision Impaired (NZ) Inc.

**PVI's Whakatauaki/Proverb:**

*Kia hora te marino, Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana, Kia tere te karohirohi,  
I mua I to haerenga, Kia tau te rangimarie.*

*May the calm be wide spread, May the sea glisten like greenstone,  
May the shimmer of summer dance across your pathways, May you always find peace.*

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## Merry Christmas PVI whanau/families



**"Children with disabilities are like butterflies with a broken wing.**

**They are just as beautiful as all other children but they just need a little help to spread their wings."**

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## From Your National Office

Dear Parents,

Another year has nearly gone with Christmas upon us and the college children are on holiday already! No wonder we get stressed. It is certainly too long a break.....

Has 2011 been a good year for you? Every day above the ground is a good day for moi.....

Seriously though, we do understand many maybe suffering at this time of the year, many are out of work..... Survival is the name of the game..... Please spend your money wisely, invest in time with your children not money or things.....

Looking back , PVI has had another challenging year but one where we believe considerable progress has been made for us and our children.

### High Points:

- PVI is still here supporting and empowering parents and whanau. Many NGOs have disappeared of recent time....
- The new Homai campus school has been blessed, and is operating. Exterior work is almost completed, with the official opening to be in April 2012.
- PVI has been able to advocate for the successful retention of the Children's Spectacle subsidy. Though there are dark clouds on the horizon...We need to be vigilant.
- The PVI AGM has been and gone and our new Board is: Acting Chair-Ms Riripeti Paine, Treasurer-Mr Don Fairgray, Mrs Kim Lewin, Mr Grant Davies, Mrs Dionne Gilligan, Mr David Heather and Ms Judith Hyslop. There are 3 vacancies: 1Tangata Whenua, the Pacific Island and a 1 year of a 2 year term of the Northern South Island. Please contact if interested: Paul at 0800 312 019
- A huge vote of thanks to Mr Kevin Beaver our outgoing chair. Kevin served PVI well, over a period of considerable gain; well done my friend, well done.
- Our Whia, Kitty Tuari, has decided to step down from PVI to allow a younger parent to carry the torch.....Kitty you gave us Joe, then yourself we are indebted to you and the Tuari Whanau.... Kitty will remain our Whia and will assist PVI as and when appropriate.
- Welcome back to the PVI Board, Mr David Heather. David is one of the original parents who started PVI. To have David at the Board table is indeed our honour.....

Have a wonderful Christmas everyone.....

From Lyn and Paul.....



Introducing Kathleen, our office helper, who attends once a week for work experience from a local college. Have a great Christmas with your South African family, Kathleen!



**Balance:** Here is a scan of Daniella and Nikos is our local paper having made cupcakes for 'bake a difference' week. I read the article Pat wrote in the PVI magazine. I understand what she means. But for us this was a good opportunity for the students Daniella goes to school with to participate in an activity and help others too. Hopefully when these kids grow up they will be the ones that are helping others 'like Daniella' because of the relationship they have had with her.





# RNZFB new children's services programme for 2012

**Message from Teresa Bradfield,  
Executive Director,  
Direct Client Contact Services  
RNZFB**

On behalf of the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind (RNZFB), I would like to wish every parent, caregiver and child a peaceful and safe Christmas.

I would also like to update you on our plans for a busy and exciting New Year, with the introduction of our new children's service – **the Parent & Child Enrichment (PACE) programme**.

## **What is PACE?**

PACE is a programme designed to enable families to help their children who are blind, deafblind or vision impaired to develop vital short and long term living skills.

The PACE programme takes families through each stage of their child's development. It gives parents and caregivers the information and skills they need to help their child adapt and learn to be independent, in a gradual and age-appropriate way.

PACE brings together all the services currently provided by the RNZFB and adapts them into one coordinated programme, based on the principle that every child is an individual and every family is unique.

Through PACE we can support children and their families to access the necessary knowledge, opportunities, experiences and family/community support to give children and young people with a vision impairment the very best start possible.

The **PACE early years programme** provides living skills and disability support to enhance development and potential for children with severe visual impairments, up to school-age.



It offers direct teaching for your child as well as learning opportunities for parents, caregivers and whanau.

The **PACE youth service** is an employment, living skills, recreational and social development programme for young people aged six to 21. Through coordinated programmes, this service seeks to challenge the isolation and inactivity that many young people with vision impairment experience.

## **PACE goals**

The aim of the PACE programme is to ensure that by the time a student leaves school they have all the life skills they need to live, work and travel independently and to be an active member of their community.

For children with complex learning needs, the programme seeks to enable the student to reach their highest possible potential.

## **What does PACE offer?**

### **Family support**

The PACE family support team will work with you to give you the opportunity to share your experience, and support you throughout your child's early development, school years and post school.

### **Life skills**

Learning new skills is often more challenging when your child's vision is limited. Our PACE living skills team offers a comprehensive assessment for your child and provides information and guidance on how to maximise their natural ability to learn and develop, from birth until they start school.

Your child will be offered opportunities to develop their senses to compensate for their vision loss. They will learn techniques to make everyday tasks easier, including how to look after themselves and get around safely.

## RNZFB new children's services programme for 2012 (Cont.)

### Information

The PACE programme provides families with information on:

- **Finding:** services, products and service providers
- **Living:** to maximise your child's senses, daily tasks at home, getting around, looking after themselves, playing and recreation
- **Coping:** with challenges, how friends and family can help, personal stories and support networks
- **Learning:** about vision, eye conditions and treatments, eye doctors, self help, study and your rights

### Why is this programme so important?

We know that vision impairment can have a significant impact on all areas of a child's development. Those skills that other children may pick up incidentally, need to be deliberately introduced to a child with vision impairment.

By working with you and your child as early as possible, we can show you how to adapt, provide you with information and address your concerns

You will be able to engage in activities that support your child's development and which you can reinforce on a daily basis.

When your child leaves school we will be there to support, inform and offer your child the skills, services and support they need to move into adulthood.

### Next steps

We will be contacting parents and caregivers of our child members as we launch the PACE programme in each area.

For further information on the PACE programme or to access this service, please contact our **Children's Services team** on **0800 24 33 33** or visit:

**[www.rnzfb.org.nz](http://www.rnzfb.org.nz)**

Kind regards,

Teresa Bradfield  
**RNZFB**  
**Executive Director,**  
**Direct Client Contact**  
**Services**



### PVI Response:

On the surface PACE looks good, an early focus is always welcomed, however some questions do remain.....

**1:** What happens to service delivery once my child turns 5 and goes blind after that age? Who does the needs assessment and more importantly who provides the services.....

**2:** Where does BLENNZ and its services fit into this service. Is there a collaborative approach to services from these two providers? As parents we do not wish to have any gaps.....

**3:** As parents might well choose to become purchasers of services in the future, is this service meeting Blind and DeafBlind and Vision Impaired Children's and their Whānau's needs?

**4:** Orientation and Mobility for children aged 6-16 is provided by a contract from the Ministry of Education, the Review of Orientation and Mobility on pages 8-11 looks at this in more detail, how will O/M be delivered by BLENNZ in the future if BLENNZ is the service provider?

**5:** PVI would welcome an opportunity to talk with you as a parent to gauge your views. This could also include discussions in your community with RNZFB Children Service staff and BLENNZ staff. We are prepared to meet with you March—April next year when we will know more about the implementation of PACE.....More on this as it unfolds.



**A parent's email to PVI:** Arghhhh!!!! I am finding Daniel's lack of vision really frustrating as he is growing taller his field of vision is not growing with him - he is having so many nasty accidents and falls as a result he is not even safe in our own home now. I am finding this development heartbreaking.

**The all too often brutal reality....**



# Natural Authority of Families

**With great regularity, people with disabilities and their families will find themselves having to deal with professionals, bureaucrats and others in roles of authority.**

**Not uncommonly the authority figure tends to overshadow the authority of "small people". It helps sometimes to remember that families have a natural authority of their own which can go a long way to reducing this imbalance of power.**

**Families need to appreciate this natural authority and be willing to act on it.**

**What follows is a brief description of some of the common sources of authority that families can call on when they are acting in the interests of a family member.**

- The general public recognizes that families have the authority to be fully involved because they have greater responsibility for the well-being of their family members.
- Families know their family member the most fully and over the longest period of time.
- Therefore they have the authority that arises from long term observation, insight and personal relationships.
- Families typically care about or love their relatives more than would be true of others, however committed the others may be. Not only do families usually care more but they are also expected to care more.
- Families have to live with the long term consequences of service failures to a greater extent than any other party, except the person themselves.
- Families are granted considerable presence in the decision-making processes affecting their family members.
- The family is an authoritative witness to the performance of professionals and systems and may have special insight into events that take place.
- Family members bring to their role a wide range of talents and experiences which can give them additional authority on many matters. For example, a parent might also be an educator.
- Families are often best positioned to see how everything, in its entirety, adds up in a person's life. For this reason they can often see the incongruencies of different interventions.
- Family members are often free of the vested interests which call into question the credibility of other parties. Frequently family members are granted a degree of independence which highlights their credibility and purity of motive.

Michael Kendrick

Reprinted with permission from Spring 2000 - The Compass

PVI places much importance on the above values...They make so much sense as a parent when we read them. I personally take them with me and use them in a proactive manner where ever I can, such is my belief in them....

Paul.





## New Disability Commissioner — Paul Gibson

Paul Gibson did not set out to be involved in human rights. As a young man with impaired vision, brought up on a Taranaki dairy farm, he completed a physics degree at Victoria University in Wellington, but became involved in student and disability politics. On the way to completing a masters in public policy, he was student association president and helped drive a disability ginger group on campus that led to the university to examine ways to make its buildings and courses more accessible to all students.

He is a former president of the Disabled People's Assembly and was involved in the work of international NGOs advocating for the United Nations to adopt a Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

In his new role, he is charged with advocating for the rights of disabled people. "If we are measuring change, then there have been significant steps. The work of the 90s has resulted in a national disability strategy. There's new impetus, driven by the Disability Convention, to make sure New Zealanders with disabilities have equal opportunity to take part in all aspects of life and society."

However he noted that complaints to the Human Rights Commission on the grounds of disability, continued to be the largest single ground of complaint. "That's not good enough," he said, "It shows that for far too many people, there remain hurdles that exclude them from the lives they should be leading."

He said it would be a privilege and a responsibility to take on the role of Commissioner with responsibilities for disability issues, and he hoped that in another 30 years, the work he and the Commission would do would be gauged as having made a difference in the lives of 20 per cent of New Zealanders.

**The following is from the Human Rights — Disability Newsletter** [www.hrc.co.nz/newsletters/manahau/2011/12/](http://www.hrc.co.nz/newsletters/manahau/2011/12/)

The Halberg Trust, organisers of the annual Westpac Halberg Sports Awards for nearly 50 years, has just introduced a 'Disabled Sportsperson of the Year' category and the winner, like those from the existing 'Sportsman, Sportswoman and Team of the Year' categories will be eligible for the supreme Halberg award which is regarded as the highest annual sporting honour. The Trust says disabled athletes have always been able to gain selection in the other categories with paraplegic archer, Neroli Fairhall back in 1983, disabled alpine skier, Rachael Battersby, (2002) and disabled swimmer, Sophie Pascoe (2008 and 2009), making 'Sportswoman' category finalists, but the Trust decided it was time for the growing number of this country's disabled athletes to have their own category. Its Chief Executive, Steve Hall, says

an annual review undertaken this year identified significant support for an award for disabled athletes from key stakeholders including National Sports Organisations, Westpac Halberg Award winners and finalists, along with the media. He says the trust hopes this will ultimately enable it to help more disabled young people participate in sport. Classified disabled athletes and teams only are eligible for the 'Disabled Sportsperson of the Year' Award. Classification is an assessment process which groups athletes whose disability causes similar activity limitations in a particular sport in order to allow for meaningful competition. All Halberg award finalists will be announced at the beginning of January 2012.



Justice the 'guide dog in training' has successfully passed his 20 walk assessment and been formally accepted into formal training with a guide dog trainer. Justice's story began four years ago when Tauranga woman Laura Eitjes' holiday was cut short after being told her guide dog could not stay in her room. Laura, who has been legally blind since a teenager, had informed the owner about her guide dog when booking but found Rua's bed had been removed from the room on her second day. In spite of explaining her rights the matter wasn't settled and they had to go and stay elsewhere. This was a breach of the Human Rights Act and the matter was later settled when Laura received \$8000 compensation from the accommodation owner. She gave \$5000 of it to the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind's Guide Dog Services to help train a pup. Laura said the outcome showed justice had been served and the pup was duly called Justice. The latest training update says he is a willing and responsive boy with a subtle level of self-interest that if developed appropriately could be of use as a working dog. Justice loves his guiding equipment and readily puts his head through the harness, eager to head off on a walk. He has excellent route memory and positive indication to directions. The celeb K9 also has excellent home and social behaviour – although often uses his good looks to try to sneak upstairs when looking for company. He loves his toys and is great with children. Justice is in the early stages of training and those working with him hope he will continue to progress well as the responsibility and expectation of work increases throughout the training programme.



## BLENNZ Christchurch - November, 2012

Recently, I travelled to Christchurch particularly to thank the BLENNZ staff at Elmwood Primary School where they are based. On behalf of all the parents in Christchurch PVI shouted morning tea. Together with the PVI Regional Rep., Andrea Lamont, we entered bearing gifts from the “Merivale Cake Kitchen”...Decadent little treats were the order of the day, not a day to be worrying about a diet.....

Many of the BLENNZ staff's own homes have been affected by the earthquakes. Some have been living in alternative accommodation and continue to do so.

The Christchurch parents I have spoken to have all been in awe of the way the local BLENNZ team have continued to provide a service for our children under often horrendous circumstances.



It looked great and bright on the surface yet in the faces of the people I believed there was anger just below the surface. It was almost as if these brightly coloured containers were another reminder of just how much longer the locals are going to have to wait before a sense of normality returns.

I cannot imagine what it must be like living in Christchurch, but I sense it must be terribly frustrating by now. Just getting around is still problematic; waiting for the insurance companies to come through must be terribly frustrating. For me, it was a humbling experience.

The highlight was not the bright container shops but the Christmas themed window displays of “Ballantynes” a department store world famous in Christchurch. Childhood memories came flooding back. The scenes in the windows were accompanied by a narration of a Christmas storey over the speaker system so we outside could better enjoy the display. I witnessed children with eyes wide open as were their mouths in many instances, and the delight of parents and those of us who like to be children at heart. Up here in the North one does not see this sort of displays in windows, and we are the poorer for it....

Well done Ballantynes, well done Christchurch.....

This was also an opportunity to catch up, with what has been a very busy year and an opportunity to hear from the staff what was on top. We heard from some staff of the frustration of technology applications not being provided with the appropriate training budget to teach the learner how to use new equipment... If this is a national trend, PVI would like to know so we can raise this in Wellington.

We shared our work around the children's spectacle subsidy, in that we are desperately trying to maintain this most important subsidy. The budget allocated to Enable from the MoH — Disability Support Services is not matching the demand from parents. Our job is to maintain this subsidy and try to ensure the Government funding matches the demand and ensures that those currently accessing this subsidy continue to do so. Listen to me being all politically correct. What we really need is the investment in our children's eye health, and for this subsidy to be seen as an investment in our children - NOT A COST.....

After the visit to Elmwood, I was taken into what was once called the red district and shown the new shopping centre designed around containers....



Is this what Christmas is really about?





# Review of Developmental Orientation and Mobility Service Delivery

The purpose of the review was to provide the Ministry with ideas and options for how best to meet children's DOM needs within existing resource constraints. The Ministry wanted the review to consider the funding, management, service models and provision of DOM services as well as future workforce needs and implications. The needs of Māori, Pasifika and children with complex needs were also considered.

## Latest Updates November 2011

All stakeholders involved in developing the report agree that DOM skills are an integral part of the expanded core curriculum which allows blind and low vision students to access the regular curriculum and is the base of BLENNZ teaching and learning programmes.

The report suggests that the preferred service management option is to use BLENNZ and its national network to provide DOM services to school-age children. Special Education's national management team has supported that option.

The Ministry is suggesting a phased approach for BLENNZ to gradually build up a national service delivery model for DOM.

The BLENNZ Board of Trustees are open to discussions with the Ministry with a view to take over the provision of the services, depending on the outcome of these discussions

RNZFB has proposed a plan that will review all active programmes at each child's next IEP, continuing the programme where approved. It is envisaged that these plans will be complete within 18 months.

The RNZFB continues to focus on the enhancement of their early childhood, preschool, youth and adult services.

## Introduction to the Review of Developmental Orientation and Mobility Service Report

All stakeholders involved in producing the report have also had the opportunity to provide written feedback on the report and engage in workshops to discuss implications and ways forward.

There is ongoing work on designing and implementing a new model of service delivery for developmental Orientation and Mobility.

## Executive Summary

### Background

The Ministry of Education commissioned Cognition Education Ltd to review developmental orientation and mobility (DOM) services. DOM services teach children skills to travel independently and to move safely, confidently and well within their environments. DOM also includes teaching of concepts that underlie spatial reasoning, navigation and movement.

DOM skills are seen as critical to enabling blind and low vision students to fully access the curriculum and to participate fully in all aspects of life. They are essential to enabling an inclusive educational and societal context for people who are blind or low vision.

### Methodology

A sector advisory group supported the review by engaging closely with the process, providing information and ideas and reviewing options.

The review canvassed the international literature and explored the current service context within New Zealand.

Key informant interviews and an on-line survey were used to canvas views on current needs, existing service arrangements, funding arrangements, ideas to improve services, and models for future service provision. The information from the surveys was analysed and a separate report compiled that is appended in this review.

### Current Contracting and Service Provision

DOM services for school age children are funded by the Ministry through two main contracting arrangements. A national contract for children with moderate vision needs with a funding pool of \$88850 per year and four regional contracts for ORS verified blind and low vision students at \$173,000. ORS fund holding schools contract for DOM services for individual students.

The Ministry contract with BLENNZ for the moderate contract. BLENNZ then subcontract with RNZFB and Moving Forward to provide these services. RNZFB hold the ORS contracts.

RNZFB have had difficulty staffing and providing services in all parts of New Zealand. They have also raised concerns about the sustainability of these services. Where services are provided parents express satisfaction with the services received.

**Perspectives on Current Services** Perspectives on current services were gathered from key informants. The concerns identified in this review include:

- Lack of clarity in respect of funding mechanisms and how resources were determined and allocated.
- Lack of information on DOM needs of children with vision impairments.
- Little information on the DOM needs of children in special and fundholder schools.



# Review of Developmental Orientation and Mobility Service Delivery (cont.)

## Perspectives on Current Services cont:

- Strong sector perceptions that children's DOM needs were poorly met
- The importance of children's DOM needs not well understood within the education sector
- Lack of integration between DOM services and the Expanded Core Curriculum
- Variable links between home and school in respect of DOM services
- Few opportunities for training of parents and other support people
- Historical and bureaucratic contracting practices as opposed to needs based service contracting
- Variable access to services depending on geographical location
- Inconsistent models of DOM practice
- Workforce issues including inability to attract and retain skilled DOM staff by providers.

## Service Delivery Ideas and Options

Options for future service provision have been identified and ideas presented on funding, service management, best practice models, ways to strengthen the workforce, meet the needs of Māori and Pasifika, and ensure smooth transitions from early childhood to school and from school to post school environments.

Future service delivery models will need to be:

- Funded so they are sustainable
- Well managed to ensure maximum return for funding
- Based on international best practice adapted to our New Zealand context
- Staffed with well trained, efficient and effective professionals who are competent in developmental orientation and mobility training, understand child development and learning and have the ability to work with Māori, Pasifika and within diverse contexts
- Well integrated into educational contexts and wrap around the student/family
- Child and family/whānau needs and outcomes driven
  - Focused on children's early years and whole of life needs to establish strong learning foundations.

## Funding

Funding streams need to be fully identified and an efficient mechanism for distributing the funding determined. Clarifying the funding requires:

- Determining the ORS specialist resources that blind and low vision students attract and the proportion that should be directed toward DOM services
- Determining the needs and the level of funding available to support students with moderate needs.
- Once funding streams are clearly identified, the Ministry needs to determine service funding mechanisms that:

Streamlining funding processes to maximise the amount going into service provision

Allow service priorities and decisions to be made as close to the student as possible.

The range of possible funding and contracting options for consideration by the Ministry include:

- **Pooled funding** -All DOM specialist service funding (ORS and moderate contract) is pooled by the Ministry who provide/contract directly to providers for DOM services.

## Review of Developmental Orientation and Mobility Service Delivery (cont.)

- **Individual Funding Packages** - ORS specialist service funding for students who are blind or low vision is notionally allocated to each student and decisions on the use of the funded resource made by teachers, specialists and parents through an IEP process. In this option the moderate funding contract would remain as a separate contract.
- **All Specialist Vision Resources Fundheld by one provider** - All specialist service funding for all ORS funded vision impaired students and the moderate contract are contracted to one fundholder. **This is the preferred funding option.**

### Service management

A range of service management options were identified. The preferred service management option was for BLENNZ to provide all DOM services through its Visual Resource Centres. This option would transfer all specialist resource allocated to DOM services to BLENNZ who would then provide/contract all services to school based children through its existing network of visual resource centres.

Other options canvassed included:

- **RNZFB provides all DOM services** – The Ministry contracts with RNZFB for DOM services for students who receive ORS or have moderate needs. This would remove the current subcontracting arrangement through BLENNZ for moderate students.
- **Special Education provides DOM services** - Special Education expands its specialist service base to include DOM services. Other fundholders contract to provide DOM services for the students for whom they fundhold.
- **Independent DOM practitioners** contract to BLENNZ, the Ministry and schools to provide services. This model would involve a network of private practitioners contracting out their services for a fee to SE, BLENNZ and fundholder schools

### Strengthening DOM Practice Models

There are currently a range of different practice models for providing DOM services. Best practice approaches that build on international best practice and are appropriate within the New Zealand context need to be identified and developed. Practice models will need to reinforce the roles of family, paraprofessionals and teachers. Ways for DOMs to skill share with these key people could maximise students' outcomes. DOM practitioners have a role to play in developing information and support materials for parents, teachers and paraprofessionals. Developing on-line resources and self-help tools for students and families could also enhance future DOM service provision.

### Strengthening the Workforce

Strengthening the profession will require determination of:

- The professional training requirements and status of the DOM specialist and possible paraprofessional support roles. This will require clarification of the skills needed for both the specialist DOM role and supporting paraprofessional DOM roles. Possible tiered training options could then be developed. These could include: post graduate training through the Specialist Teachers Diploma; achieving NZQA credits through an apprenticeship model; undertaking training through Renwick Centre in Sydney.
- The ongoing professional development and support of DOM practitioners including consideration of DOM practitioner networks and national practice advisors.
- Employment conditions (salary, working context, access to professional development, teaming arrangements) including clarifying roles, qualifications and employment expectations.





## Review of Developmental Orientation and Mobility Service Delivery (cont.)

### Meeting the Needs of Māori

A well functioning DOM service would meet the needs of Māori students/whānau. Stakeholder feedback suggests that a well functioning DOM service would take a holistic, integrated approach working closely and appropriately with all families.

Options need to be explored to encourage Māori to consider undertaking DOM training. Other options include future service delivery that builds strong links with Ngāti Kāpo (Māori health and disability advocacy organisation). Other considerations are to provide scholarship options to Māori teachers to support them to undertake specialist education training of which DOM training could be a component. Establishing paraprofessional training avenues that lead to accreditation of skills in DOM implementation could also increase Māori staffing numbers.

### Meeting the Needs of Pasifika Families

Finding out more about service engagement is required prior to decisions being made on what changes might need to be put in place. Given the relatively small number of students, it is likely that strategies that ensure all DOMs have the attitudes, values, knowledge and skills to work across diverse cultural context will be more feasible than attempting to develop ethnic specific service options.

### Transitions from Early Childhood Education to School

Currently, DOM service for young children prior to their going to school are funded by the Ministry of Health and provided by RNZFB.

Once children begin school it is perceived that there is less funding and flexibility in the use of the funds. Transitions are too important to be left to chance and work needs to be done to ensure that there are effective transition processes in place for all children.

The Ministry of Education will need to engage the Ministry of Health in communicating any changes to school based services so that policies across both agencies enhance transitions.

### Transitions from School to Post School Environments

Currently RNZFB and a range of other providers are contracted to support transitions from school to work or other education. There is a lack of clarity as to where DOM services feature in these arrangements with a number of organisations working in this context. There is a view that some vision impaired students do not have adequate consideration given to the DOM needs at this crucial point with the consequence that this could impede their independence. The Ministry may need to liaise with other funders in this domain to work through transition issues and concerns.

### Provision of Information and Support

Greater consideration needs to be given to training and supporting parents, paraprofessionals, teachers and other educational staff in DOM techniques so that children receive higher levels of ongoing support and encouragement in developing orientation and mobility skills. Increased use of online learning communities and activities could greatly influence the understanding of DOM competencies and their importance to children's overall development.

### Policy Implications

The review has highlighted a number of areas that have policy implications. These include a range of policy decisions in respect of the way funding is determined and allocated. Pooling current ORS and moderate contracts will require Ministerial approval as will any changes to fundholding arrangements for children who are verified for ORS as a result of the vision criteria. Policy work to determine consistent service models, frameworks and standards will also be required.

The training qualifications required for an individual to provide services and mechanisms for future funding and provision of training will have policy implications.



## Research Project

**Evaluating social support for infants and young children with developmental disabilities and their families to inform future policy and practice in Japan and New Zealand. An international questionnaire.**

Research team: Judith Duncan and Garry Hornby (University of Canterbury), Atsushi Nanakida (University of Hiroshima, Japan), and Gota Matsumi (University of Kagawa, Japan).

You are invited to participate in this international research project by completing a questionnaire. We are hoping to hear from mothers and fathers from families where there are children under five-years of age with developmental delays.

We are asking parents to answer questions around receiving adequate health care, educational, and community support to foster their children's development and enable meaningful participation of their family/Whānau in society. Within the current global economic crisis families are increasingly called upon to support their own members and to rely on community rather than governmental support systems. Through this research we hope to gather insights into what families can manage, and what help and support they need when they have preschoolers with developmental disabilities. We have specific questions targeted at these areas within the questionnaire.

The questionnaire is anonymous, and you will not be identified as a participant.

If you have further questions or require more information contact Judith Duncan (Phone: 027-3304595/ email: [judith.duncan@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:judith.duncan@canterbury.ac.nz)). She would be pleased to hear from you. More information will be supplied with the questionnaire.

### How to join this study:

1. Web link: The questionnaire can be filled out online at:  
<http://canterbury.qualtrics.com/SE/>
2. Email, ring or write to Judith Duncan and the questionnaire will be posted to you (let her know how many copies you would like if more than one parent would like to participate).

**Email:** [judith.duncan@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:judith.duncan@canterbury.ac.nz). Postal address: University of Canterbury College of Education, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch. **Phone:** 027-330-4595

Questionnaires can be received up until (30 December 2011). We look forward to hearing from you and having you participate in our international research project.

## Educational



Above: Our new BLENNZ Homai Campus school, note the interior designed for blind and Vision

A PVI Parent and Board Member has been accepted into the Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching. Our congratulations are extended to Dionne Gilligan of Wanganui. Dionne commences her studies in Feb. 2012. PVI wishes you well.....

Kia ora koutou,

Registrations are in high demand for the **2012 International Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities conference on 4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> April in Hamilton.**

To avoid disappointment in workshop selections and places go to [www.positivepath.co.nz](http://www.positivepath.co.nz) and register at your earliest convenience!

Invoices can be generated for organisations / individuals who require this for payment processes

Any queries please contact us at:

[Registrations@positivepath.co.nz](mailto:Registrations@positivepath.co.nz)

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# BLENNZ Immersion Course Calendar for terms 1&2, 2012

1-4 <sup>th</sup> March:	<b>Low Vision+ 13+</b> Focus: Life Skills, social & physical - weekend course (Lesley)
6-9 <sup>th</sup> March:	<b>Techno Expo</b> for staff (Ruth & Steve)
20-22 <sup>nd</sup> March:	<b>Planning for Tertiary, Students in year 12+</b> , Lesley
27-30 <sup>th</sup> March:	<b>Careers -Students in yr 11&amp;12</b> (Ruth)
10-16 <sup>th</sup> April	<b>Performing Arts</b> (Ruth)
<b>Term Two</b>	
27-29 April:	<b>Low Vision 5-8 yrs</b> (Lesley)
11-13 May:	<b>Early Childhood - weekend</b> (Sharon)
22-25 May:	<b>Technology: Pacmate &amp; BrailleNote</b> (Ruth)
4-8 <sup>th</sup> June:	<b>Contingency course - yet to be determined</b> (Ruth)
15-17 <sup>th</sup> June:	<b>Low Vision with additional learning needs 13 years and above</b> (Lesley)
18-21 <sup>st</sup> June:	<b>Technology: JAWS 2 - for students who attended JAWS course in 2011</b> (Ruth)

Parent focused courses are normally those from 0-8years of age but not exclusive to this age-group. You will see there is a specific focus of the older learner for term 1 courses. This is to ensure our children have the skills necessary to compete at senior school level etc.

Term 2 a slightly younger focus, then a JAWS focus.....

These courses are brilliant for our children and us as parents...Our **FAILURE** to support these courses **IS NOT AN OPTION.....our children and we as parents gain so much.**

**Contact Ruth Wedde at** Immersion Course Co-ordinator BLENNZ [ruth.wedde@blennz.school.nz](mailto:ruth.wedde@blennz.school.nz)  
Ph: 027 466 7109

## Children's Spectacle Subsidy

### Spectacles Subsidy – Helping families with the costs of vision assessments and glasses for children under 16 years of age

Families with children under the age of 16 who have a Community Services or High Health Use Card are eligible for the subsidy. There are versions of this brochure available in a number of languages on the website.

<http://www.health.govt.nz/publications/subsidy-glasses-and-vision-tests-spectacles-subsidy>

Enclosed in this magazine is a copy of the Spectacle flyer, please ensure you use this subsidy if you hold a Community Services card or a High Health User card.....



**Once you have used it please write or ring your local politician advising them of how helpful this subsidy was..... It is very important that the politicians understand the value of this subsidy.....**

**Saying thankyou is also very important.**

**This is called positive advocacy!**



## Blind Dog and Guide dog seek home!



An animal shelter has been inundated with offers of help after it requested a home for a pair of Great Danes - one of which is blind, and totally dependent on the other.

Louise Campbell, the manager of Dogs Trust Shrewsbury, said that more than 200 people had responded to the call for help and possibly a new home since the shelter - near the Welsh town of Newport - went public about the dogs' plight a few days ago.

"It's been phenomenal," she said, adding that it is still too early to say if a suitable home can be found. Campbell said that 6-year-old Lily became reliant on Madison, 7, after a rare medical problem called entropion caused her eyelashes to grow into her eyeballs, leaving them so severely damaged that they had to be removed.

"Everything they do involves close contact, they check in with each other all the time," she said. "They have developed such a strong bond, they always know what the other is doing, so we wouldn't split them up, that would be quite unfair to both dogs."

Campbell said potential owners had previously just walked past the pair, "put off by the idea of having two large dogs, and - of course - one without eyes can be a bit shocking."



David Heather seen forefront of photo at the recent consumers consortium meeting held in Wellington 3rd December 2011. David attended as a PVI Board representative as he was recently voted back onto the PVI Board after some years enjoying life..... David an original founding member of PVI and still an active PVI parent will no doubt enjoy and add value to his new found PVI governance role.....

Welcome back David Heather.....





## Websites and Info

**www.pvi.org.nz** This is our website under reconstruction  
**www.blennz.school.nz** The new BLENNZ website, take a look, well worth the effort!

**www.kapomaori.com** The official website of Ngati Kapo Aotearoa Inc

**www.abcnz.org.nz** The largest Blind Consumer group in N.Z. An excellent website.

**www.humanware.com** Excellent products available for both Low Vision and Blind users.

**www.pacificvision.org.nz** This website has links to many international providers of Low Vision aids.

**www.biopticdriving.org** This website explains how some low vision people can gain extra vision by using bioptic lens that in some cases enables them to drive legally!

**www.aniridia.net:** Aniridia Foundation International.

**www.aniridia.org:** Aniridia support

**www.albinism.org.nz** New Zealand's website for those wishing to know more about Albinism.

**www.nzord.org.nz** This website has links to many international sites containing information concerning rare disorders. This site is the New Zealand link.

**www.rnzfb.org.nz** The website of the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind.

**www.quantech.com.au** This website has good info new Mountbatten training resources. Worth visiting if your child uses braille.

**www.tsbvi.edu** The Texas School for the Blind and Vision is a leading educational facility. Excellent information and links to other places.

**www.minedu.govt.nz** The official Ministry of Education website. Good information, easy to use.

**www.varietyclub.org.nz** The Variety Club may be able to provide financial assistance for children with special needs. I have found them most supportive and helpful in the past **09 522 3743**.

**www.parent2parent.org.nz** Parent 2 Parent is a nationwide support group of parents who have children with special needs.

**www.carers.net.nz** This is the official website of Carers NZ. This website has excellent information on a range of carers needs. They produce an excellent magazine called "Family Care". This magazine is free to all carers, just ring Sara at 09 406 0412 or email: info@carers.net.nz

**www.napvi.org** The National Association of Parents of Vision Impaired USA. Good website, note the section re parent matching.

**www.cpsociety.org.nz** NZ's Cerebral Palsy site an excellent website, very informative and easy to use.

**www.wrightslaw.com** An excellent website for tips on IEP's, it is USA based where laws are different, the tips and ideas are very similar though.

**www.zabonne.com** Zabonne's website hosted by Ivan Pivac, much information regarding blind and low vision aids, plus technology aids for children with additional disabilities.

**www.maparentsupport.com:** - a web site for parents to find support from others who have children with Microphthalmia Anophthalmia.

**www.familytimes.co.nz** a newspaper produced quarterly, ChCh and Auck based, well worth a read.

[www.parentsvoice.org.nz](http://www.parentsvoice.org.nz) and/ or 'like' Parents Voice on Facebook .

<http://www.health.govt.nz/publications/subsidy-glasses-and-vision-tests-spectacles-subsidy>

**RNZFB Holiday Home:** The RNZFB have one Holiday Home available to rent for members. Located in Tauranga at \$50.00 per night. For further information contact Karen at the Tauranga RNZFB Office between 9.00am and 12.00noon on **07 578 2376**.

**The Koru Care:** This charity is linked to Air N Z. They specialise in taking children with Special Needs to Disneyland/Gold Coast Australia. Contact **09 523 2456** to see if your child qualifies. There are also contacts at Wellington and Christchurch offices of Air New Zealand.

[www.yesdisability.org.nz](http://www.yesdisability.org.nz): Yes Disability Resource Centre in Albany. Note the Mothers support group known as Mum's @ Yes" Information Swap Network Group Meetings.

**A CD called "A Family Affair"**, available from **BLENNZ** Homai Campus, **09 2667109** it gives good information re the National Assessment Services available at BLENNZ.

**Pacific Vision:** email Barry at barry@pvi.co. excellent low vision equipment.

**Parents:** - Feel free to write to the following Members of Parliament **the good news (Positive Advocacy) or bad news concerning either your child's needs or yours as a parent!**

**Prime Minister:** pm@ministers.govt.nz

**Minister of Education:** Yet to be confirmed

**Minister of Disability Issues and Lead Minister of the Carers Strategy:** Yet to be confirmed

**Minister Maori & Assoc Min Education:** Yet to be confirmed

### **PVI Regional Support Vacancies:**

We need more parents to volunteer as Regional Representatives in the following areas: -

- Northland
- Sth Auckland
- Waikato
- Taranaki
- Manawatu
- Otago/pending
- Southland.

We need more parents acting as signposts to support other parents in your community. We wish to create teams within your own community hence sharing the workload. National Training is provided FREE normally 1 weekend per year. Support seminars will more than likely be provided in a community near where you live. If you have a little time to give and wish to further support us please contact **Paul: 0800 312 019**



