

# eVision April 2022

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Parents of Vision Impaired  
New Zealand Inc  
supported by Blind Low  
Vision New Zealand  
*(formerly The Blind Foundation)*



[pvi.org.nz](http://pvi.org.nz)  
[facebook.com/pvinz](https://facebook.com/pvinz)

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# NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



## KIA ORA AND WELCOME TO OUR FIRST EVISION OF 2022!

Above: 2020 PVI Conference activities.

We have a lovely eclectic collection of interesting bits and pieces for you this quarter. Put your feet up, grab a cuppa, and enjoy a good read!

# 2022 PVI CONFERENCE SAVE THE DATE



16-18 September, 2022, at the Distinction  
Hotel, Dunedin. Conference registration  
forms will be sent out in June.

# NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



**Above:** PVI Board members at their most recent meeting. From left to right, Kristina, Pascale, Nick, Stacey, Justine, Judith, Rebekah

## **TĒNĀ KOUTOU AND WELCOME TO MY FIRST EVISION REPORT FOR THE YEAR!**

There is much work to be done in 2022. As a team, we will be there to support our parent and whanau community as much as we can. As you have all heard before, they're challenging times navigating COVID and what it means for us all.

Since we last met via Zoom in November, there has been a lot of activity both internally and externally. Rebekah has employed an administration assistant certain to be a huge asset in the smooth running of our organisation and give Rebekah more time to concentrate on the work set in our strategic and business plans. Most importantly, we have been focused on gaining the funding to successfully run our organisation given BLVNZ's stance at the last round. I attended the on-line Annual General Meeting for RNZFB which certainly took a huge chunk out of my day. I reflected at the time the relief that our AGMs are not so drawn out.

Externally, we have been supporting parents and making submissions on the issue around IHC Inc making the decision to remove baths from their houses (under Accessible Properties), and those leased from Kāinga Ora. A number of our parents have family members using IDEA Services and it has been very stressful. I can only hope that IHC will see the error of their ways and make the right decision to reinstate taps and in some cases the baths to ensure that their service users have the right to choose.

With the disappointment of postponing our conference last year in Dunedin, I am pleased to advise that Rebekah has secured the same venue for 2022 and without any financial penalty for our cancellation. Great news!

I very much look forward to catching up with you all.  
Noho ora mai, Judith



# TRANSITION TO SCHOOL



Above: A group of children being walked to school.

**ONE OF OUR PVI PARENTS, CLARE BURTTON, HAS WRITTEN A HANDY LIST OF IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS TRANSITIONING THEIR BLIND, LOW VISION, DEAFBLIND, OR VISION IMPAIRED CHILD INTO SCHOOL. CLARE HAS RECENTLY SUCCESSFULLY BEEN THROUGH THIS PROCESS AND REFLECTS ON WHAT WORKED WELL FOR HER DAUGHTER IN THE HOPE THAT OTHER PARENTS WILL FIND THIS USEFUL TOO!**



## "SMALL THINGS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR EXAMPLE USING THE SAME HOOK EVERYDAY FOR THEIR BAG."

- Go for as many visits to school as you can to build confidence and familiarity with the school and teachers. Knowing who their main teacher, and teacher aide, are and getting to know them (and vice versa) before school starts makes a big difference.
- Your child may meet someone else during transition visits, and build an early relationship. Being familiar with some of the other children makes the first day/weeks a lot easier.
- Involve the teacher and teacher aide in helping other children understand your child's needs. This could be something like making a book about your child, and could be created in the same way the readers are (large font, braille, white space, clear single images). The book would include things like: I like swimming; I like my cat; My eyes work differently; I am learning braille; I need to wear dark glasses.
- Including other children in activities aimed to help. For example, maybe choose a friend to join in with the teacher aide in braille learning (just tactile games), this was a novelty for other kids and gave some insight into how your child's learning is different.
- Education for teachers is imperative, and a BLENNZ teacher facilitating a professional development session with all staff will help them understand your child's needs and challenges they might face at school, and those of any visually impaired child in general.
- Engage BLVNZ to conduct a full assessment of the school environment, with recommendations for adjustments to make the environment safer (for example, paint on poles, steps, blinds on large windows to reduce light).
- Small things that make a difference for example using the same hook everyday for their bag. In the cloak bay a hook would be allocated, with their name on it.
- Individual Education Plan (IEP) is important to do in those early months. Meeting with her teacher, teacher aide, SENCO and RTV was a good opportunity to reflect on the transition, discuss areas of focus/learning and give feedback/reminders on your child's needs e.g. using verbal queues so they feel included.

Continuing with the classroom theme, Veronica Lewis has contributed the following blog post to Perkins School for the Blind "Common Classroom Accommodations for Low Vision." Their blog includes references to large print, preferential seating, magnification devices, screen readers, and other assistive technologies.

[perkinselearning.org/technology/blog/common-classroom-accommodations-low-vision](https://perkinselearning.org/technology/blog/common-classroom-accommodations-low-vision)

# ROYAL NZ BALLET – AUDIO DESCRIBED PERFORMANCES



**Above:** A woman wearing ballet slippers, a blue evening gown, and a tiara.

**PARENTS OF VISION IMPAIRED NEW ZEALAND PROVIDE SPONSORSHIP FOR VISION IMPAIRED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO ATTEND BALLET PERFORMANCES FOR FREE AND TO ENJOY THE BALLET THROUGH THE AUDIO DESCRIPTION AND TOUCH TOUR. THIS SPONSORSHIP COMES FROM THE PAUL MANNING FUND.**

## **RNZB AUDIO DESCRIBED SCHOOL MATINEES – CINDERELLA**

**Wellington** - St James Theatre

Thursday 4 August

Performance - 12:30pm

Touch tour - 10am-11am

**Auckland** - Aotea Centre

Thursday 11 August

Performance - 12:30pm

Touch tour - 10am-11am

**Christchurch** - Isaac Theatre Royal

Friday 26 August

Performance - 12:30pm

Touch tour - 10am-11am

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AT AN AUDIO DESCRIBED PERFORMANCE**

Attending an audio described performance starts long before curtain up! Before the show, you'll attend a free Touch Tour during which you can walk through the set, touch key props and feel costumes to learn more about production as a whole. You'll also get an introduction to ballet terminology where an RNZB dance educator will explain key words alongside the shapes and quality of movement used in the show.

You will then attend the show wearing a headset which will allow audio describer Nicola Owen to broadcast live commentary of the performance. We have a limited number of receivers, so priority will be given to visually impaired students.

**To book, or for any enquiries please contact Pascale Parenteau, 021 678 521 or email [pascale@rnzb.org.nz](mailto:pascale@rnzb.org.nz)**



# COVID-19 & CHILDREN

## HANDY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS RE COVID-19 AND CHILDREN.

Designed so you can print a copy of this flyer and put it on your fridge. Scan the QR code when you need to know what to do when your child shows any signs of COVID-19.

Image displays a poster of information about how to care for those with COVID-19, how to use a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) and how to isolate at home. There is a QR Code to scan.

[Click the link for more kidshealth.org.nz/tags/covid-19](https://kidshealth.org.nz/tags/covid-19)

# COVID-19 & CHILDREN

Scan the QR code with your phone to view website content



## HOW TO care for a child with COVID-19

Why wearing  
masks and  
creating  
airflow helps



## HOW TO use a rapid antigen test (RAT)

Preparing for positive  
cases in your home

Resources for children

## HOW TO isolate with children at home



**KidsHealth**  
kidshealth.org.nz

KidsHealth is a partnership between the Paediatric Society of New Zealand and the Starship Foundation, supported by the Ministry of Health

# UPDATE: INQUIRY INTO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

## SUBMISSION UPDATE

**Right:** A primary-aged vision-impaired school student in a classroom. She is wearing a school uniform and using lemons, food colour and baking soda for STEM learning.

The Education and Workforce Committee has now completed its Inquiry into school attendance, which PVI submitted last year. The Committee has written a report which was presented to Parliament this afternoon and which makes 22 recommendations to the Government.

The recommendations of direct relevance to PVI - and which incorporate items that PVI submitted on - are as follows:

We are troubled that 37 percent of submitters mentioned that schools are not inclusive for disabled students, neurodiverse students, and students with learning support needs (including gifted students). We recognise that some students would otherwise attend school full time, but face barriers due to disability or neurodiversity.

19. We recommend that the Ministry of Education, in conjunction with the new Ministry for Disabled People, establish a mechanism for monitoring the number of students who do not regularly attend school full time because of their learning support needs.
20. We recommend that the Highest Needs Review proceed with a focus on increasing student attendance.
21. We recommend that the attendance strategy contain policies specifically targeted at increasing the attendance of students with learning support needs.

[parliament.nz/.../inquiry-into-school-attendance](https://parliament.nz/.../inquiry-into-school-attendance)





# ROBOT MOUSE



## ROBOT MOUSE

**Above right:** Code and Go Robot Mouse set - blue robot mouse with green tiles, task cards, and accessories.

**Perkins School for the Blind: Code and Go Robot Mouse.**

Designed for young kids, the APH Code and Go Robot Mouse introduces a coding robot to young students, promoting a positive, creative, and educational engagement with technology.

Click the link below to find out more about the new APH tactile graphics for the Code and Go Robot Mouse activity cards and tactile stickers to adhere to the arrow command cards.

[perkinselearning.org/.../code-and-go-robot...](https://perkinselearning.org/.../code-and-go-robot...)

# JSPEVI

## JOURNAL OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC EDUCATORS IN VISION IMPAIRMENT (JSPEVI)

Dr Elaine Glimour, from BLENNZ, has an article in the latest *SPEVI Journal* (Vol. 14). Her article explores how specialist teachers in New Zealand can adopt culturally responsive pedagogy to ensure that Indigenous culture is respected and connected to learning and curriculum. Her article includes an exploration of the BLENNZ Charter strategic goals, as well as a comprehensive glossary of Māori terms.

You can read the full article [atspevi.net/jspevi/](https://atspevi.net/jspevi/)

# THE PEARSON FUND

## DON'T FORGET APPLICATIONS TO THE PEARSON FUND FROM BLIND LOW VISION NZ ALLOWS GRANT SUBSIDIES TO CLIENTS FOR LOW VISION PRODUCTS.

**Below:** A talking watch. **Below right:** A child demonstrating using a blue KiddiKutter knife to cut a tomato.

To access your subsidy, you will need to get in touch with BLVNZ directly. This can be done in person at one of their offices, over the phone or via email.

You can phone 0800 24 33 33 or email [equipment.orders@blindlowvision.org.nz](mailto:orders@blindlowvision.org.nz) to place an order.

**Click the link for a list of office locations**  
[blindlowvision.org.nz/contact/locations/](https://blindlowvision.org.nz/contact/locations/)





# MOE RESEARCH: GUIDELINES ON USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

**LITMUS GROUP HAVE BEEN ASKED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO TALK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT HOW TO BEST SUPPORT THEM AND THEIR MATES TO FEEL SAFE, CALM, AND INCLUDED AT SCHOOL.**

**Right:** Two girls sitting on a concrete step, smiling and hugging.

They would like to meet with children and young people aged 10 to 18 years in schools and kura who have a learning support need (this includes any young person with a visual impairment!).

There are many ways children and young people can give feedback – one to one, in a small group or by email/survey. They will meet any accessibility needs.

You can find more information here: [litmus.co.nz/participate-in-research/](https://litmus.co.nz/participate-in-research/)

If you would like to take part or have a question, please text Roimata Hanchard 021 235 5326. They look forward to hearing from you.



# BRAILLE LETTER SONGS

**THE QUEENSLAND DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION'S STATEWIDE  
VISION IMPAIRMENT  
SERVICES TEAM IS PLEASED  
TO ANNOUNCE THAT THEIR  
BRAILLE LETTER SONGS ARE  
NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE.**

**Above:** Reading Braille with a bouquet of wild flowers.

The 26 Braille Letter Songs include the braille dot numbers and alphabetic word sign contractions for each letter of the English alphabet. Dot numbers are linked to consistent musical pitches to ensure that each song has a unique melody and to assist with the memorisation of each letter's braille formation.

Listen online here: [soundcloud.com/dete-4/sets/queensland-department-of-education-braille-letter-song/](https://soundcloud.com/dete-4/sets/queensland-department-of-education-braille-letter-song/)







# CUSTOMISE YOUR CANE DAY



**Above:** Group of people who are blind or low vision of all ages - some who used canes and some who did not attending Customise Your Cane Day at Awhina House in Parnell, Auckland.

**ON 4 APRIL WAS CUSTOMISE YOUR CANE DAY - ORGANISED BY @RETINANZ, AT AWHINA HOUSE IN PARNELL, AUCKLAND. THERE WAS A GREAT TURN-OUT OF PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR LOW VISION OF ALL AGES - SOME WHO USED CANES AND SOME WHO DID NOT.**

## **"WE SAW A LOT OF FAMILIAR FACES, SOME WHO CAME TO CUSTOMISE NEW CANES, SOME WHO JUST CAME TO HANG OUT – AND EQUALLY PLENTY OF NEW FACES TOO!"**

Over the day we chatted over some kai and got to know one another, had fantastic kōrero about our canes, what they mean to us, how they serve us and why we might/might not be using them. Of course, Retina NZ brought in some superstar artists to help give our canes a makeover – mostly with vinyl wraps, paints, and the odd piece of material. Everybody was pretty stoked with the results!

We saw a lot of familiar faces, some who came to customise new canes, some who just came to hang out – and equally plenty of new faces too!

When you come to a CYCD event, you're free to hang out and meet people at your own pace. When you feel ready, you can start the design process. The first step is to sit down, with a volunteer's assistance if required, and design your cane. How you want it to look, feel, and so on.

Retina NZ is intending to run Customise Your Cane Day regularly, so if you or someone you know might be interested you can drop them a line on 0800 569 849 or email them at [youth@retina.org.nz](mailto:youth@retina.org.nz).

# PVI STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025



## OUR MISSION

To provide a community of support for parents of a vision-impaired person

## OUR PURPOSE

- 1.1 To empower parents and whānau to support their blind, deafblind, and vision-impaired children.
- 1.2 To improve the health, welfare, education, and social opportunities of vision-impaired children.
- 1.3 To benefit the children and whānau of vision-impaired children within New Zealand.
- 1.4 To promote, develop and maintain a nationwide support network.
- 1.5 To promote and provide ongoing communication for parents and parent support groups of vision-impaired children.
- 1.6 To foster communication and co-ordination of services between PVI, agencies and other community groups.
- 1.7 To be proactive in all areas and concerns related to vision impaired children and their whānau/family.
- 1.8 To be beneficial to the wider community.



## OUR VALUES

- PVI believes that blind, low vision and visually impaired persons and their families have the right to the same dreams, opportunities, and safeguards as all other citizens.
- PVI believes that all people are unique and different, and that each is capable of great things.
- PVI believes that all communities can fully include all blind, low vision and visually impaired persons and their families.

## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We develop and grow to better meet the needs of our membership
- We recognise te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi as Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document.

**Left:** Boy having his hearing checked.  
**Right:** Girl covering one eye.

## STRATEGIC GOALS 2020-2025

1. PVI families lead interdependent, fulfilled lives, and realise their respective goals as parents, siblings, and vision-impaired persons.
2. PVI families are connected to each other and to wider community supports.
3. PVI builds collaborative networks and continues to foster positive working relationships with external organisations.
4. PVI is a future-focused organisation that is adaptive and responsive to relevant changes.

