

Resources for Students with Visual Impairments & Their Families

Braille

[Tips and Tools for Teaching Beginning Braille Skills](#) from Paths to Literacy provides families and teachers with ideas and activities for emergent braille readers including tactile discrimination, letter identification, book making, and games. [Paths to Literacy](#) has resources for families with children with visual impairments on many topics including braille, dual media, assistive technology, and orientation and mobility.

[Early Braille Literacy Practice Activities](#): These practice activities are adapted from Building on Patterns, the primary braille literacy program. These activities are appropriate for students who are learning letter identification, alphabetic contractions, strong contractions, and grade 1 braille words.

Older Elementary Braille Readers: The Braille Institute website has [Braille Challenge Practice Samples](#) from years 2012-2019. The samples are available as braille or word documents. The topics include braille speed & accuracy, spelling, proofreading, reading comprehension, and charts & graphs.

Paths to Literacy created a list of [56 Tactile Math Ideas](#). These ideas and suggestions for young students with visual impairments address early math skills and concepts by using hands-on exploration of real objects. Skills and concepts include counting, matching, sorting, categorizing, attributes, ordering, patterns and number lines.

Assistive Technology

Touch Typing: Touch typing allows students with visual impairments to type non-visually. [Typio Online](#) is an entirely audio accessible online typing practice program. Typio is currently offering free online subscriptions. [Typing.com](#) is a free online touch typing program. This program is most appropriate for students with low vision.

Braille Notetaker: For students using braille notetakers, practicing [touch commands](#) can improve their use of the device.

[Accessibility Features](#) on the iPad: iPads include many built in accessibility features for students with visual impairments including voiceover, zoom, font magnifier, speak screen, audio description, Siri, and display accommodations. Practicing [accessibility shortcuts](#) can maximize use of the device.

Accessible Books

For eligible students, [Bookshare](#), the accessible online library for students with print disabilities, allows students to download books in a variety of formats; print, braille, and audio. [Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library](#) provides free accessible books, newspapers and publications in braille, large print and digital audio formats. [The National Library Service](#) at the Library of Congress is a free braille and talking book library service for people with low vision, blindness that prevents them from reading or holding the printed page.

Expanded Core Curriculum

The expanded core curriculum includes assistive technology, career education, compensatory skills, independent living skills, orientation and mobility, self-determination, sensory efficiency, and social interaction skills. [Paths to Literacy](#) is hosting free virtual web classes on areas of the expanded core curriculum.

Daily living skills are best addressed within the context of meaningful routines. Time at home provides an opportunity to practice skills in the areas of eating, dressing, cleaning, personal hygiene, time and money management, and meal preparation. [Perkins' Elearning Site](#) has articles and presentations on techniques to assist children with visual impairments, including [this one](#) on mealtime skills (pouring, serving, using utensils, and cutting.)

Orientation & Mobility

For young children with visual impairments, playing outside is a great opportunity to practice and explore orientation and mobility skills and concepts. The Royal National Institute for Blind People (UK) created a fun resource for families called [Messy and Muddy: A Guide to Outdoor Play for Children with Visual Impairments](#).

[ObjectiveEd](#) is offering free access to their online library of orientation and mobility apps. These totally accessible games address orientation and mobility concepts like sensory efficiency, sound identification, sound categorization and memory, sound matching, grid concepts, audio location and movement cues.