# The BEE: Early Literacy and Movement for Young Blind Children

# NFB Braille Reading Pals Club & NFB Early Explorers

October 2015

## What’s Buzzing with the National Federation of the Blind?

## October is Meet the Blind Month, a busy time for members of the National Federation of the Blind. It is a chance for members in every state to help educate the public about the capabilities of blind people everywhere!

## Members read to children at libraries, write children's names in Braille, hand out Braille alphabet cards, participate in races and scavenger hunts, and take part in many other activities in their communities. Some of the activities may include using varying modes of transportation, which lets the public know that blind people can live the lives they want.

## The focus goes well beyond White Cane Safety Day, which is October 15th. So enjoy some Meet the Blind Month activities in your area, or do something with your family to show others that blindness is merely a characteristic and does not stop your child from living his or her life!

## Literacy Hints from the Hive

**Help Picture Books Come to Life:  
The Great Expectations Program from National Braille Press**

**By Melissa Riccobono**

**As a blind parent of three children (one sighted, two blind) I am always looking for great Braille books for all of us to read together.**

**Not only does the National Braille Press (NBP) offer a children’s Braille book club, they now offer three books, and many related activities, in their Great Expectations Program. The Great Expectations Program allows blind children and their families to enjoy reading a book together, and then provides tons of fun ways to continue the learning through active play, crafts, songs, jokes, writing activities, fun with food, and so much more.**

**The newest title in the Great Expectations Program is *Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes*. (This book is also the NBP September book club selection.) The book itself comes with a fun tactile surprise to get you started on your discovery journey. Then, for more fun and learning, visit**

[**http://www.greatexpectations.pub**](http://www.greatexpectations.pub) **and choose *Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes*. You will find tips for creating your own tactile mazes and maps, a craft project which will help your child learn to tie his or her shoes, a Pete the Cat song, all of the materials you will need for a Find Pete scavenger hunt, and more!**

**The other two books in this program are *Dragons Love Tacos* and *The Day the Crayons Quit*. All of these are extremely fun stories on their own, but with the suggested activities, they are even more fun and interactive.**

**This is one of the newer programs offered by NBP. They would love to hear from you and/or your child about the activities you enjoyed, or any book-related activities that you create to go along with these three stories. Please share your pictures, videos, and other comments using the contact information on the Great Expectations website. Also, please pass the word about this program to other parents and teachers. I am sure you will enjoy these books and activities as much as my children and I have, and if you are like us, you will be waiting anxiously for the next Great Expectations selection.**

## Travel Tales

## The weather is growing cooler in many parts of the country and leaves are beginning to fall from the trees. However, it is still a great time to travel outside and practice cane travel skills using both hands.

## Your child will always use her cane with one hand, usually her dominant hand, but it is a good idea to be able to use the cane with the other hand as well. There may come a time when your child will need to use her non-dominant hand while traveling. Your child may hurt the dominant hand, may be carrying something heavy in the other hand and need to switch for relief, or she may be walking with someone and must take their elbow with her dominant hand. It is always a good idea to have practiced cane travel with both hands, so that when the time comes she will have the skill to switch hands.

## Make learning this technique a game. It will feel uncomfortable and awkward for your child to travel this way at first, so while she is traveling in a familiar area, suddenly call out, "Switch!" and have her use her non-dominant hand until you call, "Switch!" again. She will need to remember to arc and alternate her feet the opposite way, since she is using the opposite hand.

## After some practice your child will be able to use her cane easily with either hand.

## A Taste of Honey

## Honesty: The Best Policy

## By Jennifer Wenzel

## My mom is a wonderful person, but if she has one fault, it is that she is too nice. She has trouble being brutally honest. When I ask her how something looks on me, she'll say, "That's, different." instead of, "Take that off! It doesn’t look right on you."

## I had to learn to read her subtle tone and language code since she can't seem to change the fact that she doesn’t want to hurt my feelings. I’ve tried to explain to her how important it is for her to be completely honest with me. So I'll try to outline it here for parents and others to understand.

## It's important to be honest with your child about clothing and makeup. There's no need to be hurtful, but honest answers will help save embarrassment later on.

## Your child needs to know if an outfit is in style, if the color looks good on her, and if the length is appropriate. She will be grateful if you make her aware that she's wearing too much blush, the lipstick is not the right shade for her, or if her eye shadow is barely noticeable.

## Being honest and straightforward is helpful. If you aren’t sure if something is in style, checking a magazine or taking notice of what the children at your child's school are wearing can be helpful.

## Honesty is also important when it comes to your child's skills. Every parent likes to brag about their child's accomplishments, and this is wonderful, but make sure it is tempered with reality. Try not to over inflate your child’s skills as it may give him/her a false sense of security.

## A final important area of honesty is with your child’s cleaning skills. It is a great idea to work with your child when you decide it is time to teach them to clean. Show your child exactly how you would like the job done. Make your child aware of your expectations. With high expectations come real effort and accomplishment!

## As the old saying goes, honesty really is the best policy. This honesty will help your child develop the skills and confidence she needs to be an independent adult.

## Buzzes and Tweets

Follow [@NFB\_Voice](https://nfb.org/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=3730&qid=568205) on Twitter to get news and information from the NFB.

Follow [@BrailleLiteracy](https://nfb.org/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=3731&qid=568205) on Twitter to get timely Braille news, information, and tips.

Like the [National Federation of the Blind on Facebook](https://nfb.org/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=3732&qid=568205) to stay current with all of the new things happening at the NFB Jernigan Institute.

## Books for Busy Bees

If you are looking to grow your child’s Braille library, check out the [Braille storybook resources webpage](https://nfb.org/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=3733&qid=568205) for information on free books, lending libraries, and Braille book retailers.

[**The NFB Braille Reading Pals Club**](https://nfb.org/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=3734&qid=568205) **and** [**NFB Early Explorers**](https://nfb.org/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=3735&qid=568205) programs are sponsored in part by the National Organization of Parents of Blind Children and the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults. For more information please contact:

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