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

# NFB Braille Reading Pals Club & NFB Early Explorers

March 2016

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

## March is a busy time for the National Federation of the Blind! Spring convention season is beginning; so many new and old NFB members, their friends, distinguished guests, and families have the chance to attend a convention in their state. This is an opportunity to continue the work of the National Federation of the Blind, as well as to discuss important state issues together.

## March is also a time to look forward to summer opportunities for your child as many states prepare for Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning (BELL) academy. This year there will be BELL academies in thirty states all over the country. These two week programs for children ages 4-12 are a wonderful way for students to gain more Braille skills, as well as a positive attitude about Braille. The program also affords the opportunity for children to gain confidence and independence as blind children by interacting with blind role models and peers.

## Literacy Hints from the Hive

## As the weather gets warmer and spring begins, I am reminded of music. Music and songs seem to go with spring, and songs go with literacy as well. A fun way to practice reading is to use song lyrics! Write some of your child's favorite songs in Braille. Have her practice reading them as you sing together. This will help build her speed and fluency with familiar words. Then, learn a new song together by Brailling words to a song that neither of you knows and singing it together. Have your child listen to a song and try to Braille the lyrics she hears. This is a great way to improve slate speed and accuracy. See which of you can get more lyrics right! You can put your songs together in a binder as a songbook to use again and again.

## Travel Tales

## As the snow melts in many parts of the country and as the weather gets warmer, it's a great chance for you and your child to travel outside. It's also a chance to practice cane travel in puddles. The cane can be a great indicator of a puddle as it is used in forward movement by your child. The tip will splash in the water and the cane pushes water from side to side to show how wide the puddle is. You can show your child how to use the cane to find out how long and wide the puddle extends so that he can jump or step over the puddle. Of course, sometimes it's fun to splash in the puddles. Just be sure your child knows which times are for fun in puddles and which times they need to stay dry. Using the cane to explore puddles is an important skill to have for knowledge and fun!

## A Taste of Honey

## With My Own Eyes: Jennica's Journey

## By Jan Ferguson

## Jennica Marie Ferguson was a child who became blind during her toddler years. Jennica died at age 18 from retinal blastoma. Her mother, Jan Ferguson, has written the story of her daughter's journey and the way she raised her blind child. It is a touching look at one family's experience with blindness, cancer, and the faith which has helped them through it all. It has wonderful advice for raising blind children. The book is available on Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/With-My-Own-Eyes-Jennicas/dp/1517104254>, and is an excellent read for any parent.

## 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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