**The Younger Years – A guide for parents and teachers**

For additional information on guidelines and age specific activities, there are a multitude of resources specifically on the Expanded Core Curriculum available at the Texas School for the Blind Website at <http://www.tsbvi.edu/REC2Web/> . In addition, there are a number of publications including articles professional journals such as in the *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness* and *Insight*. Also, please link to our list of resources and publications at <http://blind.msstate.edu/transition/tac/docs/20%20Resources%20and%20References.docx>. This page is still in the early stages of development and we invite you to come back often as information is added to it.

**A Few Tips**

* The student should learn to make decisions about life activities. This can include things like what to wear, what to eat, what to play, when to study, what movie to see, etc. The student learns the consequences of good and not so good decision-making and accepts responsibility for the results. This is a basic element of self-determination. All activities should be organized with growing levels of complexity based on the child’s development and abilities.
* Expose the student to a variety of careers explaining what people do in various jobs and what kind of educational requirements are necessary. Take the child to different work environments and explain what types of jobs are found there. This may be incidental or intentional leaning. There is an excellent article about possible family fieldtrips <http://blind.msstate.edu/transition/tac/docs/YY1%20Kendras%20Plunger.docx>.
* Give your child chores and a weekly or monthly allowance based on what they do. This helps to cement to idea of working for delayed gratification and that money needs to be earned.
* Begin early on to help your child imagine themselves as a worker. “What do you want to do when you grow up?” is a question that all children with visual impairments should be asked.
* Learn the skills and knowledge from the various areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum ( <http://blind.msstate.edu/transition/tac/docs/1-10a%20The%20Expanded%20Core%20Curriculum.doc> )including Braille, orientation & mobility skills, keyboarding and computer use, use of low vision aids, and electronic magnifications systems, assistive technology skills and listening skills for reading, as is appropriate for age and level of vision loss.
* If a student is interested in a career that includes college, it is very important that he or she keep up academically. The further behind one gets the more difficult it is to catch up. The student ill need to learn complex skills such as ordering textbooks, taking notes, writing library research papers, self-advocacy with faculty, and determining what is necessary to make classes fully accessible.

**Resources for Teachers and Parents**

CNIB. (2002). *Finding a New Path: Guidance for Parents of Young Children who are Visually Impaired or Blind.* The Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

Ferrell, K.A. (2011). *Reach Out and Teach*. NY: AFB Press.

Holbrook, M.C. (1996). *Children with Visual Impairments: A Parent’s Guide.* MD: Woodbine House.

LaVenture, S. (2007). *A Parent’s Guide to Special Education for Children with Visual Impairments.* NY: AFB Press.