**Support for Parents and Families of Children with Vision Impairment.**

**WHY ARE YOU GETTING THIS LEAFLET?**

**You may have questions and want to know what support is available for you and/or your child. This leaflet will guide you towards what is available both locally and nationally for you.**

**First steps.**

One of the best places to start with getting support is to contact your local Vision Impairment (VI) Education Service. Each local authority should be able to offer support from a Qualified Teacher of children with Vision Impairment (QTVI), and a Habilitation Specialist. These are professionals who can help support your child’s development from birth.

**Habilitation** will enable your child to move around safely inside and outside home, and teach daily living skills such as dressing, eating and meeting others.

Most **QTVI**s work in different settings. They can visit children at home, nursery, school or college to support them with learning and development, and social and communication skills.

It makes sense to contact the VI Education Service as soon as you can. Every local authority has a VI Education Service and the hospital eye clinic should refer you to one. If they haven’t, you can find yours at <https://wcb-ccd.org.uk/perspectif>. Select **Education** from the **service type** drop down menu, then choose your local authority.

**Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI).**

The Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI) can help you understand and talk about your child’s needs and support them through education and into early adulthood. There is a useful Parent Guide to the CFVI. It can be found at <https://media.rnib.org.uk/documents/CFVI_Parent_Guide_English.pdf>

**The kind of help you might find useful.**

**Your child’s sight condition.** We suggest that you find out about your child’s eye condition and how it affects them by contacting the organisations below. You will then better understand what your child can see and learn about possible treatments. You can also learn about the roles of health and social care workers who are there to help you.

**Help with reading and writing**. Low Vision Service Wales practitioners in many high street optometry / optician practices can help you make the most of your child’s sight by providing specialist visual aids and equipment such as magnifiers and lamps free of charge. Phone 01267 248793 or visit https://wcb-ccd.org.uk/perspectif/wales-eye-care-service.

**Emotional support.** You and your child may find you are struggling to cope with the diagnosis of sight loss. The organisations below offer a range of emotional wellbeing support, ranging from support groups to in-person support for you, your child and your family.

**Education.** Throughout the different stages of education, your child can receive different kinds of help to enable them to learn and reach their potential. Contact your local VI Education Service to obtain advice.

**Transitions.** Your child might need support to manage - and plan for - the changes between different stages in their life. These stages may be moving between schools, school to university, or school to employment. The organisations listed below can support you and your child in this area.

**Activities with family and friends.** There is help for your child get the most from hobbies, sports and friendships. You can connect with other parents and carers to share ideas and experiences. The organisations listed below can help you find suitable local activities for you and your child or welcome you to their online activities and groups.

**Independence.** Get support with mobility and daily living skills. This helps your child to grow safely and confidently.

**Employment.** There is support available to help young people gain jobs and to help them overcome disabling barriers when employed. The charities below will have specialist services to support you in this area.

**Grants**

There are some discretionary grants available from trust funds and charities to help with paying for specialist equipment or, perhaps, holidays and activities. Go to <https://wcb-ccd.org.uk/perspectif> and select **Grants** from the **Service Type** drop-down.

The organisations below also have dedicated services to advise and support you on grants and benefits which you and your child might be eligible for.

**Further advice and support can be found here:**

**Guide Line (Guide Dogs)**

0800 781 1444
www.guidedogs.org.uk/familysupport

**Access Unlimited (Royal Society for Blind Children)**

020 3198 0225

www.rsbc.org.uk/for-families/access-unlimited-wales/

**RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)**0303 123 9999

www.rnib.org.uk

**VICTA**

01908 240 831

www.victa.org.uk

**LOOK**

**07464 351 958**

www.look-uk.org

**You can find more organisations offering other kinds of support by searching at WCB Perspectif**wcb-ccd.org.uk/perspectif