

A Note from Our Staff

By Debbie Brown (DSB)

Thank you for carving out some time to read this newsletter. "Carve"...get it? We hope you will find the articles helpful as you raise your blind child/ren.

Is this your first time reading our newsletter? Maybe you need more information about how we serve blind/visually impaired children in Washington State. Perhaps you have ideas about future topics of interest. And, maybe you just want to chat about what's next for your child. If you haven't yet connected with DSB children's services, please contact our statewide consultants:

Janet George, 206.906.5530, serves Washington residents west of the Cascade Mountains.

Debbie Brown, 509.456.2933, serves residents east of the Cascade Mountains.

This newsletter features:

- ◆ Braille
- ◆ Save the Dates
- ◆ Holiday recipe
- ◆ Toys! Toys! Toys!
- ◆ Fun winter things to do
- ◆ Parent's Corner: **Collaboration**
- ◆ Message from DSB's Director
- ◆ IEP or 504 Plan?

A SCILS Experience

By Elijah McCalmont

This last summer I went to SCILS camp for the first time. The thing I liked the most about camp was going to Jack Straw and learning to tap dance. I like the tap dancing because I've never done it before and I liked hearing the rhythm of the taps. We also went on a sailboat during camp and it was so fun because we got to steer the wheel.



A publication of Department of Services for the Blind (DSB)'s Child and Family program to provide helpful information for the use of teachers, families, and others dedicated to the care and development of children who are blind or have visual impairments. Except where noted, articles are written by DSB staff.



I also met a friend at camp. I don't normally get to meet other visually impaired kids. I think it's a good experience at SCILS camp because you get to do things that sighted people do. I can't wait for next summer to go again!

SCILS – Summer Camp for Independent Living Skills – is a program for blind and vision impaired campers ages 9-13. Currently there are two locations where SCILS is held: In Spokane and in Seattle. Both camps focus on the Expanded Core Curriculum for example, self care skills, recreation activities, orientation and mobility, social skills, technology. Students practice the skills they have learned all school year.

In Spokane SCILS is a weekend camp with activities such as outings where the campers take public transportation to get to their destination. SCILS Seattle is a week long day camp where participants take part in a variety of activities including making lunches and snacks to take with them on their outings.

DSB hopes to sponsor more SCILS camps in other areas so watch for information.

What's All This About UEB?

In November 2012, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) voted to adopt Unified English Braille (UEB) as an official code for the United States. The motion reads as follows: "The official braille codes for the United States will be Unified English Braille, Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation, 1972 Revision and published updates; Music Braille Code, 1997; and The IPA Braille Code, 2008."

BANA has affirmed January 4, 2016 (Louis Braille's birthday) as the date by which most phases of the transition to UEB will be completed or plans for completion will be in place.

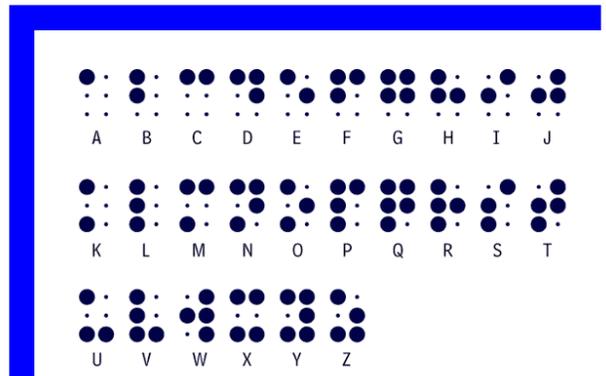
Reflections On Braille

By Janet George (DSB)

More than 41 years ago I was feeling very left out. My father had a "reading club" which met every Sunday morning. My brother would perch on the back of my father's wheelchair looking over his shoulder and my sister would sit in his lap. My place was always sitting on the half wall leaning over against his shoulder. He would help each of us to read the Sunday paper according to our then reading skills. But more and more I was being left out. More often than not, I could no longer see the print in order to read it. One day, in frustration I began to cry. My father saw my problem and suggested I ask my mother and uncle, both also vision impaired, to teach me braille. "Then," he said, "you can bring a story to read for us". And so I did. I spent the next 8 weeks learning the complete braille code as fast as I could. And, I was the proudest person that first Sunday I read to my family. NO, I cannot recall what that story was about, but I sure do remember how thrilled I felt to have rejoined the "reading club".

Since then I've used braille through all my schooling, right through to my master's degree. So much has changed. When in high school the only tools I had to access the general ed curriculum were: a reader (usually a family member, a classmate or a friend) a tape recorder – to record my classes or sometimes what was being read to me. A manual typewriter to produce my homework. My brailier, used mostly at home as it is so noisy and, for class notes, a slate and stylus.

Writing all that down made me smile, yes, so much has changed. Today as I sit here writing this article I have different tools to access information. A talking computer, a talking phone which I can even talk back to and ask to do things like send mail, texts, make a phone call do web searches. A scanner so I can read printed documents. But so much has also remained the same, my braille



writer, making lists I want to keep track of without having to lug around a computer or note taker, making labels for pantry goods, office files, books. My braille display which helps me to proof documents or emails I've written, verify information and spelling that my screen reader just doesn't seem to pronounce correctly or to use when I'm in a meeting to follow along in documents that have been handed out to the group.

When making presentations my notes are in braille. Yes. braille is still a very essential part of my life. I have learned that in spite of all the technology today, knowing and using braille has made me a more efficient student and employee. Besides, all my technology may fail me because of a power outage or low battery. Braille doesn't!

2015 DSB Employment Outcomes: A Note From The Director

Editor's Note: At DSB, we are often asked "what kinds of work can blind people do?" Just about anything you can accommodate.

Fall is the time when we look back at the year and celebrate the successes of all of our customers who completed their Vocational Rehabilitation programs and went to work in, or kept, good jobs. This year 169 individuals are now employed in competitive jobs with benefits. Three others gained independence as homemakers in order to free up a family member to go to work, for a total of 172 successes. This is not just about numbers, but about each person who is able to take charge of their life, support their family, pay taxes, and give back to their community.

The following is a partial list of jobs and employers for this year's specific successes. (The complete list is posted on our website www.dsb.wa.gov.) The list is always exciting because it illustrates in what an unlimited range of professions individuals who are blind or visually impaired succeed. It also shows the wide variety of employers who benefit from qualified employees who are blind or visually impaired.

It is interesting that out of this year's 172, three (3) are self-employment/ small business start-ups. Ninety-five (95) are new employment outcomes. Sixty-eight (68) are individuals who were able

Upcoming Events and Information:

Applications for DSB summer 2016 programs will be available in early January 2016. Please check our website for more information. Summer programs with age groups are:

Youth Employment Solutions (YES) Level 1

For ages 14-15, at Washington State School for the Blind in Vancouver, WA. Exact dates unknown, but traditionally this 10 day program starts the second Sunday of July.

Youth Employment Solutions (YES) Level 2

For age 16 through high school graduation, in Seattle WA. Six weeks of YES 2 traditionally runs the last week of June through the first Friday in August.

Bridge College Prep

For high school graduates through age 22, at Eastern Washington University in Cheney, WA. This five week program is scheduled for July 10 through August 12.

Summer Camp for Independent Living Skills (SCILS)

For students aged 9 through 13. Seattle SCILS is held the fourth week of July; and Spokane SCILS is the second weekend of August.

to the gain the skills, assistive technology, and confidence needed to keep their jobs. This includes two individuals, age 84, who now work competitively as an electrical engineer and an installation helper.

Job Title	Employer Name
Director of Business Development	2nd Sight BioScience
Software Test Engineer	AAA of Washington
Social Media & Content Marketer	Acronis
Content Quality Editor	Amazon
Registered Nurse	Auburn Medical Center
Engineer	Boeing
Child & Family Therapist	Children's Home Society of Washington
City Attorney	City of Mercer Island
Chiropractor Assistant	Collins Chiropractic
Interpreter	CTS LanguageLink
Security	FPK Security & Investigations
Assistant to the Coroner	Grays Harbor County Coroner's Office
Massage Therapist	Hand & Stone Massage & Facial Spa
Dispatcher	Helpful Hands
Electrical Engineer	Heritage Panelgraphics
Corporate Accounts Representative	Hertz
Software Engineer	Indeed, Inc.
Property Manager/Owner *	Inside Out Property Management
Sound Engineering Technician	Jack Straw Productions
Geologist	King County, Washington
Heavy Equipment Sales Representative	Kitsap Tractor & Equipment
Equine Instructor	Langley Equine Studies
Social Security Benefits Planner	NAMI Southwest Washington
Chief Executive Officer	Omnitech Design, Inc.
Occupational Therapist	Portland Public Schools
Special Education Teacher	Portland Public Schools
Probation/Day Reporting Monitor	Seattle Municipal Court
Cosmetologist *	Self Employed
Human Resources Manager	Walmart Stores, Inc.
Ferry Supervisor	Washington State Department of Transportation
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Review Judge	Washington State Employment Security Division
Professor of Biblical Studies	Whitworth University
Utility Worker	Yakima Legends Casino

Items marked with an asterisk (*) indicate self-employment.

#ToysLikeMe Shopping Guide

This article has been reprinted from WonderBaby. You can find the original article at <http://www.wonderbaby.org/articles/toylikeme-shopping-guide>

Tinker Bell with a cochlear implant? An American Girl Doll with a white cane? Barbie in a wheelchair? If you haven't seen these toys in your local toy store, don't worry, you're not missing anything. They just aren't there. Diversity in the toy industry really has improved quite a bit, but that diversity has yet to extend to disability. And why is that? As a community we realize how important it

is for our children to play with toys that represent their lives and their experiences, and yet we still ignore the millions of children growing up with a disability.

Well, the **#ToyLikeMe®** campaign aims to change that.

Co-founded by Rebecca Atkinson, the **#ToyLikeMe®** campaign has taken to social media (as well as traditional media) and raised the cry to include OUR kids in the toy box. And people are listening! Kids and parents are sharing the message and using the hashtag, media outlets are buzzing about the need for inclusion... and the toy industry is actually making some big changes!

If you want to get involved, you can follow **#ToyLikeMe®** on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. And look for Rebecca's articles on How to approach disability representation in toy design or her call to LEGO for more inclusive play sets.

There's still a long way to go, but as of this holiday season you actually do have a lot of options when it comes to toys representing disability. Check out our shopping list below to include in your holiday planning. We've found toys for kids who wear glasses, patches or hearing aids, toys for kids who use a white cane or have a service dog and toys for kids who use wheelchairs or walkers.



Toys for Kids Who Wear Glasses, Patches or Hearing Aids

Monster High Geek Shriek Ghoulia Yelps Doll

Monster High dolls are all the rage and a surprising number of them wear glasses! We like Ghoulia Yelps for her cool clothes, bright blue hair and of course her very stylish glasses.

Doc McStuffins Diagnose-a-Tosis Eye Doctor Set

Doc McStuffins has some really cool imagination play toys, but this one takes the cake. As a child who wears glasses, your little one is probably fairly familiar with the eye doctor. This kit can be a fun way to play out a visit before you go or even help familiarize family and friends with the process.



Doc McStuffins Bright Eyes Eye Doctor Play Set

Want to get a little more into your eye doctor play with dolls and patients? Then the Bright Eyes Eye Doctor set may be more to your liking. This is another Doc McStuffins play set (don't you just love them?), but designed for play with small figures.



Barbie Careers Eye Doctor Playset

If your child is more into Barbie, then the Barbie Eye Doctor set would be a great choice. I love this set because it's very realistic with the phoropter (yes I looked that up) and eye chart and the option to choose from four pairs of glasses when you're done. But my favorite part is that the doctor also wears glasses... because kids who wear glasses CAN grow up to be doctors!

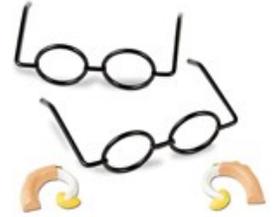


Hello Kitty Plush with Glasses

Everybody loves Hello Kitty, but some of us particularly love Hello Kitty in glasses! This is a full series of products, from the plush doll here, to notebooks, pencils, drinking glasses and plates to even a full sheet and comforter set.

Doll Hearing Aids and Eyeglasses

These hearing aids and glasses from Lakeshore Learning are designed to fit dolls 16" tall. You get two of each in the set, allowing you to customize your dolls to be more unique... and more like your child!



Lottie

Lottie dolls are designed to be positive role models for kids, which is why they strive to create dolls that empower children to be themselves. So of course it's no surprise that a number of their dolls come with glasses. And their dolls are so adorable too!

Makies

Makies are the dolls that you make! You can customize your doll's hair and eye color, clothes and accessories. The best part about Makies is that they are #ToyLikeMe approved with hearing aid, glasses and even white cane accessories. They'll even let you suggest your own customizations.



EyePower Kids Wear

EyePower Kids Wear makes the most adorable t-shirts and stickers for kids who wear glasses or patches. They make patching fun and glasses cool! They also carry **awareness t-shirts** that raise awareness about braille, retinoblastoma, glaucoma and more.

Glasses for American Girl Dolls

If you've got an American Girl Doll, then this could be the perfect accessory for you! This set includes four glasses that fit 18" American Girl Dolls and I love all the cool colors.

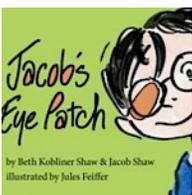
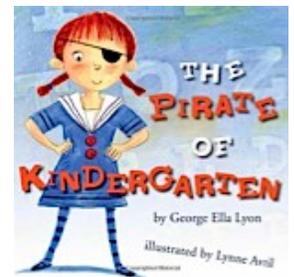


Plush Lamby Lambpants Patching Cuddle Toy

Lamby Lambpants is "spreading the happy and not the cranky" with his positive attitude about patching and life in general. This plush doll is part of a book series, so you can read about Lamby and all his adventures while snuggling the real thing.

The Pirate of Kindergarten

When you're patching it may feel like you're the only kid in the world wearing a patch. Thank goodness for books like this one that let kids know they aren't the only ones with a patch... and that patching can be really cool, too!



Jacob's Eye Patch

This is another great book about patching. Jacob is racing through his day trying to get to the store before it closes, but he has to stop to tell people about his patch. Most of the time he doesn't mind talking about his patch, but today he's in a hurry!

Toys for Kids Who Use White Canes or Have Service Dogs

Guide Dog, Harness and Cane

This guide dog and cane set from Lakeshore Learning is designed for 16" dolls and the plush dog is adorable. The German Shepherd is 9" tall and could actually be a fun toy even without a doll.





Service Dog Vest

The American Girl Service Dog Vest is designed for use with their **pet dog toys** (which you'd have to buy separately) and comes with a vest with handle, a training log to track progress, and a magnetic medal you can award your dog when he's completed his service training. You could also get him some **doggy treats** too!

Cane for American Girl Doll

This Etsy find is a gem! It's a scaled white cane for the 18" American Girl Doll and fits in her hand nicely. It looks like you can even ask for different style tips! It's also very reasonably priced.



Plush Working Puppy, Labrador Retriever

I love the handmade leather harness on this plush guide dog toy from Guide Dogs for the Blind. The puppy comes in white or black and can be used with a doll or just played with on its own. You can find a similar toy in the UK from **Guide Dogs for the Blind Association**.

Giant Road Jigsaw

Use this Giant Road Jigsaw puzzle to create a network of roads in your home for your toy cars to play on. The pieces can attach in any number of combinations, leaving the play up to your child's imagination. But the best part is that there are so many people walking on the sidewalk along the road and I see a man with a guide dog!

Toys for Kids Who Use Wheelchairs or Walkers



Barbie Becky Share a Smile Special Edition Doll

Barbie's friend Becky has a wheelchair and is also a paralympic champion and a school photographer. She can be a little hard to find, but there are usually one or two available through resellers on Amazon or Ebay.

American Girl Wheelchair

This is another great find for your American Girl doll (or any 18" doll). The red chair displays the recognizable American Girl logo and comes fully assembled. It even has brakes and little pockets for important American Girl accessories.



LEGO City Minifigure with Custom Wheelchair

Did you know you can find customized lego sets on Amazon? It's true! This simple set comes with a LEGO figure and a small wheelchair with two wheels.

Doll's Walker

The Pattycake Doll Company has a lot of really nice special needs accessories for dolls. This walker stands 7" tall and works best with dolls 11"-13" tall.



Walker and Accessory Bag

This walker from Lakeshore Learning measures 7.5" tall and comes with a little bag in the front for carrying your doll's accessories. It fits best with dolls 16" tall.



PARENTS CORNER

This article was submitted by one of our readers to share her experiences with other parents. If you have a story that you would like to share, please let us know

Collaboration On Many Different Levels

By Emily Coleman

My son, Eddie, was born 10 ½ years ago with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia. I learned quickly that I needed caring professionals to surround us and help us determine the best way to educate our son. I realized that without people who really knew blindness in our lives, we would be at a loss. From the beginning of his life, **collaboration** became not only important, but a lifeline. It also inspired me to get further involved in the field of blindness as an educator.

For the past few years, I've been working as a Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI) in Eastern Washington through the WA State School for the Blind's Outreach program. While working in multiple districts, I was able to **collaborate** closely with students, parents, and a variety of educators. As a parent of a child who is blind, I learned quickly that everyone brought something unique to the "table" when discussing Eddie. As a TVI, I learned that was true for all children who are blind/visually impaired (B/VI).

Last spring, I moved into the position of Outreach Director at the WA State School for the Blind (WSSB) and WA State Vision Consultant with WA Sensory Disability Services (WSDS). In this new role, I've been able to take **collaboration** to a whole new level. I've had the opportunity to work outside of my family, and my region, and learn from professionals around the state. It's been a fast-paced adventure that I've enjoyed every day.

When I agreed to take this new position, I had to really think about the role WSSB and WSDS play and how I can best serve their missions and the students who are B/VI in our state. I obviously don't know everything in regards to educating children who are blind...and I never will. As a parent, and as a teacher, I sought out the expertise of others and guidance through **collaboration**. This drive to **collaborate** to best serve kids is also shared by WSSB and WSDS, and so I knew that we were on the same page.

WSSB provides support to students via an on-campus program, but also supports students regionally via technology consultation, distant-education courses, online resources, professional development, contracted services, and more...including assistance with birth-through-3 services statewide. WSDS provides many of those same things, but also works in **collaboration** with the Deaf-Blind Project, Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss <http://www.cdhl.wa.gov>, WSSB, and other agencies, including DSB.

The combined knowledge and experience in WA State is substantial, and **collaborating** is an effective way to serve kids and move them towards greater independence. I invite you to reach out to me as a parent, educator, or consultant if you have questions or concerns regarding your own child or a student who is B/VI. Whenever possible, I'll be a gateway to other professionals and further expertise, through the act of **collaboration**.

Emily Coleman

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What is the difference between an IEP and a 504 Plan?

Date Updated: 8/25/2015

IEP Defined

The Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is a plan or program developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives specialized instruction and related services.

504 Plan Defined

The 504 Plan is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment.

Subtle but Important Differences

Not all students who have disabilities require specialized instruction. For students with disabilities who do require specialized instruction, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) [1] controls the procedural requirements, and an IEP is developed. The IDEA process is more involved than that of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act [2] and requires documentation of measurable growth. For students with disabilities who do not require specialized instruction but need the assurance that they will receive equal access to public education and services, a document is created to outline their specific accessibility requirements. Students with 504 Plans do not require specialized instruction, but, like the IEP, a 504 Plan should be updated annually to ensure that the student is receiving the most effective accommodations for his/her specific circumstances.

For more information, consult Interrelationship of IDEA and Section 504 [3].

CRAFTS, RECIPES, AND ACTIVITIES

Out With the Winter Blahs! In With the Winter Fun!

Outside the winds howl, the rains pound and the snow flutters down. Nobody really wants to be outside. It is too cold and yucky, but what to do? We've read the same books a thousand times already. Hmm! A perfect time to ... well, make something. After all grandma and all the rest are coming over. We could make something special to give as a gift or to decorate and, yes, we could even make something delicious to serve them when they get here. Read on, we have a few suggestions. Oh dear! Everybody will get messy, but with a little preparation messes will be easy to clean up, and everybody can help with clean-up so it doesn't fall to one person.

To avoid gooey, gluey sticky messes on the table, use an old cookie sheet as your workspace. This helps to keep supplies in a designated place so that they will be easy to find and lessens the glue mess on the table. An old shower curtain or something similar on the floor beneath the table would help to catch any fallen bits. These ideas can be used when

Resources for Families

Washington State Fathers' Network

- ◆ Blog / Website: <http://www.FathersNetwork.org>
- ◆ Twitter: @WSFN <http://www.twitter.com/WSFN>
- ◆ Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Washington-State-Fathers-Network-181197305235376/timeline/?ref=br_tf

FREE Story eBook

This is a FREE and cute story about Howard the Hedgehog and his first eye exam. You can download the book from Google Play, Amazon, and iTunes:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/howard-amazing-eye-exam/id1009362736?mt=13>

Cookbook For Blind Children

Stir it Up!: Recipes and techniques for young blind cooks

By: National Braille press
<http://www.nbp.org>

cooking as well. Spills from the process of measuring will fall onto the cookie sheet and or, onto the shower curtain again helping with clean-up.

Whatever kinds of crafts or dishes, you and your little ones create this holiday season, enjoy and show off. Children enjoy sharing their hard work with others.

Tissue Paper Suncatchers are an easier approach to suncatchers when you don't want to worry about the mess of paint and melted beads. And, all you need are a few supplies from the craft store. Cut identical thick outlines of any shape from two pieces of construction paper to serve as the frame of the area to be filled with tissue paper squares. Attach the frame to the contact paper, then have the children fill the sticky area inside the frame with colorful pieces of tissue paper. When finished, attach the second frame. Then just hang by a string in the window for everyone to enjoy!

Tactile Strategy: Use textured paper like glitter cardstock or other scrapbook paper to serve as the suncatcher's frame. Try crumpling some of the tissue paper squares so they feel wrinkled to the touch before sticking them on. Use small pieces of colored transparency sheets or confetti to add dimension and texture variations to the suncatcher.

Ice Balls: Fill balloons with water and food coloring then leave outside to freeze. Cut off the balloons and you've got these striking frozen balls which would show up so nicely against the white snow.

Sweet Potato Casserole

Ingredients:

2 16-ounce cans sweet potato drained and mashed (or cook and use fresh sweet potatoes)
1-1/2 cup mini marshmallows (divided into 1 cup and 1/2 cup portions)
1/4 cup butter, melted
1/4 cup orange juice
1/2 tsp cinnamon

Directions:

ASK A GROWNUP TO PREHEAT OVEN TO 350 DEGREES

In a large bowl, drain the sweet potatoes and mash with a fork until they are mostly smooth. Put your clean hands into the bowl to see if they are smooth. Add one cup marshmallows, 1/4 cup melted butter, 1/4 cup orange juice, and 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon. Gently mix them together with a wooden spoon. Pour the mixture into a 1-quart casserole dish. ASK A GROWNUP TO PUT THE DISH INTO THE OVEN, set the timer for 20-25 minutes. When the timer goes off ASK AN ADULT to take it out sprinkle the 1/2 cup marshmallows over the top. Ask an adult to return the dish to the oven. Set the timer for an additional 5-10 minutes longer. Ask an adult to take it out and turn off the oven. Let it cool for 5-10 minutes before serving.

Adapted from the Everything Kids cookbook. <http://www.everything.com>

With this popular holiday side dish, young chefs can learn the following cooking skills:

- ◆ Use a can opener
- ◆ Melt butter
- ◆ Think "equivalents"



- ◆ Drain liquids from a can
- ◆ Measure ingredients

Notes for the grownups helping your chef

- Using a can opener is a useful skill that can be safely taught at home. Always wash lids before opening.
- To help your young chef measure butter, Make 8 small slits over the paper measurements with a knife. Show the young chef how to count the notches, and then, to cut through, carefully, with a plastic table knife (NO SHARP KNIVES). Finally, peel off the paper.
- Teach equivalents: 1/4 cup butter is the same as half a stick.
- Melting butter in the microwave is a very quick process - usually less than 30 seconds - because butter has a low melting point. Every short block of microwaving (5- to 10- second intervals) changes the consistency of the butter, so check the progress regularly. You can always put it back for a few seconds longer.
- Sighted cooks generally use a see-through glass or plastic measuring cup for measuring liquids and then eyeball the level. It's easier for a blind cook to use dry measuring cups. When pouring liquids, work over a pie pan or cookie sheet to capture any spills. Pour the liquid into the cup with one hand while touching the rim of the measuring cup with the other hand. When you feel the liquid hit the top, stop. Some blind cooks transfer often-used liquids, such as vanilla or oil, into larger glass containers into which they can dip the measuring spoons.
- To measure spices, take the cover off so the young cook can explore the size and types of openings. For most spices, it should be possible to dip the measuring spoon directly into the can or bottle and level it off.

