



# The Nuts and Bolts of Student Low Vision

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SERVICE!

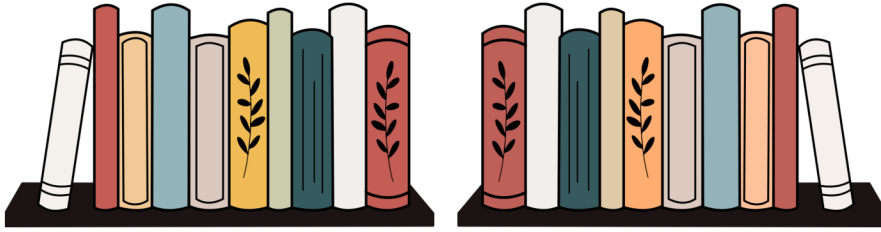


The Individualized, Ongoing Care of this Program has Been Truly Life-Changing for Generations of Students.

## What You Need to Know...

# What is Low Vision

Low vision is any visual impairment that cannot be corrected with medical treatment, surgery, or conventional lenses and that interferes with an individual's ability to perform daily activities.



## Common Types of Low Vision

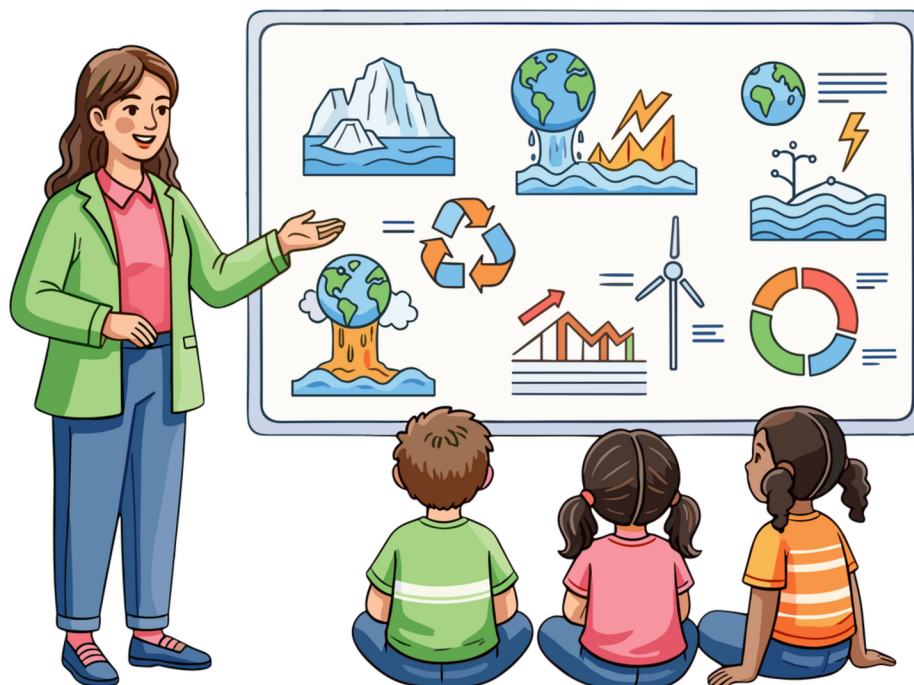
- **Loss of Central Vision** — The loss of central vision creates a blur or blind spot, but side (peripheral) vision remains intact. This makes it difficult to read, recognize faces, and distinguish most details in the distance. Mobility, however, is usually unaffected because side vision remains intact.
- **Loss of Peripheral (Side) Vision** — Loss of peripheral vision is typified by an inability to distinguish anything to one or both sides of the head, or anything directly above and/or below eye level. Central vision remains, making it possible to see directly ahead. Typically, loss of peripheral vision affects mobility and, if severe, can slow reading speed as a result of seeing only a few words at a time. This is sometimes referred to as “tunnel vision.”
- **Blurred Vision** — Blurred vision causes both near and far vision to appear out of focus, even with use of the best conventional spectacle correction.
- **Generalized Haze** — Generalized haze causes the sensation of a film or glare that may extend over the entire viewing field.
- **Extreme Light Sensitivity**— Extreme light sensitivity exists when standard levels of illumination overwhelm the visual system, producing a washed-out image and/or glare disability. People with extreme light sensitivity may suffer pain or discomfort from relatively normal levels of illumination.
- **Night Blindness** — Night blindness results in the inability to see outside at night under starlight or moonlight or in dimly light interior areas such as movie theaters or restaurants.
- ***Both extreme light sensitivity and night blindness qualify as low vision because they are permanent and uncorrectable.***

# Low Vision Conditions in Children

**These conditions require early, long-term specialized support.**

- **Retinal Diseases/Dystrophies:** These include Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP), Stargardt macular dystrophy, Leber congenital amaurosis, and Bardet-Biedl syndrome, which are genetic and cause progressive vision loss.
- **Cortical/Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI):** Brain-based damage affecting how visual information is processed, often stemming from premature birth or oxygen deprivation.
- **Optic Nerve Hypoplasia (ONH):** An underdeveloped optic nerve that cannot effectively transmit visual signals to the brain.
- **Albinism (Ocular or Oculocutaneous):** A genetic condition causing low melanin, which impairs retinal development, leading to low vision, nystagmus, and photophobia.
- **Usher Syndrome:** A genetic condition causing both hearing and vision loss.
- **Congenital Glaucoma/Cataracts:** While some treatments exist, advanced cases can cause irreversible damage to the optic nerve (glaucoma) or permanent vision impairment if not treated very early (cataracts).

**Roughly 80% of Learning is Visual, and Difficulties Seeing School Work or Social Cues Hinder Development and Participation.**

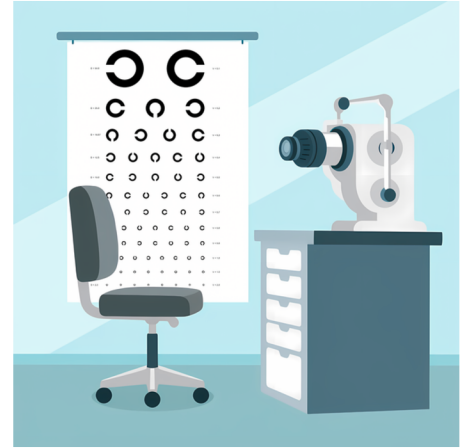


# What is 20/20 Vision (Normal Visual Acuity)

**Definition:** You can see clearly at 20 feet what a person with normal vision sees at 20 feet.

**Correction:** Any refractive error (nearsightedness/farsightedness) is fixed with glasses, contacts, or surgery to achieve this standard.

**Context:** While often considered "perfect," it just means "normal" acuity. Many people have 20/15 (better than average) or 20/30 (slightly worse) vision.



# What Acuity Level is Considered Low Vision

- **Mild/Moderate (20/70 - 20/160):** Noticeable difficulties in daily tasks.
- **Severe (20/200 or worse):** Often classified as legally blind, even with the best possible glasses.

# What is Low Vision Rehabilitation

**Low Vision Rehabilitation is like physical therapy with the objective of helping people with vision loss develop a toolbox of strategies to maintain independence and a sense of self-worth.**

**Our program focuses on helping student make the most of the vision they have. By using the latest in prescriptive devices, technology and occupational therapy we can help students develop a plan to achieve their goals.**



# Key Components to Low Vision Rehabilitation

## Rehabilitation is highly individualized based on personal goals



- **Evaluation:** A comprehensive assessment of functional vision (acuity, contrast, field) and how vision loss impacts daily life.  
**During the diagnostic exam, parents, students and teachers receive education about the student's diagnosis and tips to help the student succeed. Parents and students leave feeling encouraged and empowered.**
- **Assistive Devices:** Introduction to tools such as high-powered magnifiers, telescopes, video magnifiers, and lighting,

The low vision aids are often the only means by which students with vision loss can participate in classroom activities. Because the devices belong to the student they are also used for homework and other activities.



### **Glasses**

Specialized high-powered glasses. Often with transitions or tints to help manage glare to improve vision.



### **Sport Glasses**

Glasses that won't break when children play. Some students are afraid to participate in recess and gym because they are worried about breaking their glasses.



### **Fit-over Tinted Sunglasses**

A variety of tinted sunglasses can help students both inside and outside the classroom manage glare and other lighting issues.



### **Magnifier**

This device helps students complete their work. It is small and portable, great to use at home too!



### **Monocular**

Used to spot things on the board. This tool helps students see things in the distance.



### **Lighting**

Key strategies include maximizing natural light, reducing glare, using task lighting (500-1000 lux) for detailed work, and maintaining consistent, bright, and, if possible, dimmable lighting across living areas.

# What Would You DO?

If Your Child or Grandchild was Diagnosed with Low Vision and they were told there's NO Cure and they Would Likely...

NEVER Participate  
in a Sport or  
Activity!

NEVER  
Drive a Car!

NEVER Go To  
College!

NEVER Accomplish  
Their Dreams!

# Where Would You Go For Help?

**Low vision is permanent vision loss that cannot be corrected with the use of conventional eyeglasses, contact lenses, medication, or surgery.**

When faced with these challenges, our Student Low Vision team of vision doctors and professionals are there to create an Individualized Care Plan. This Individualized Care Plan is for students to learn new ways to achieve their goals while also trying to Preserve the Vision That Remains.

Our program address every aspect of how vision loss impacts each students everyday life, offering a full spectrum of care which includes the parents, teachers and vision doctors.

For nearly 50 years, the LIF Student Low Vision Program has had an unsurpassed reputation of improving children's lives.

**Thank You to our Lions throughout Illinois for your generous donations.**

**Lions Throughout Illinois Provide a Student with Low Vision a Chance to Excel in School, Society, Job Placement and in Their Future.**

# Key Components to Low Vision Rehabilitation



## Training & Strategies:

Occupational therapists and specialists train patients to use devices, increase contrast, manage lighting, and improve scanning techniques to navigate safely.

## Daily Living Skills:

Training for grooming, school work and activities, mobility, such as using a white cane.



## Environmental Modifications:

Adjustments in the home to reduce hazards, such as adding tactile markers, removing rugs, and improving lighting.

## Support & Counseling:

Addressing the emotional and psychological impact of vision loss.



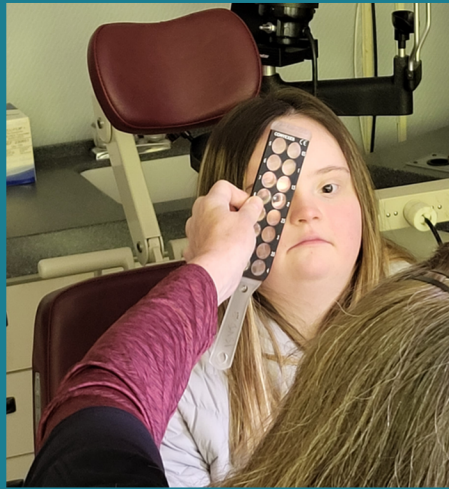
# Low Vision Can Lead to Isolation and Frustration

Research has shown that people with low vision tend to have more emotional difficulties, social/emotional issues isolation, low self-esteem, misbehavior, and physical challenges.



Low vision significantly affects children in school by creating academic struggles (reading, writing, focusing), often leading to frustration and academic gaps.

1976 - 2026



The Student Low Vision Program provides FREE comprehensive exams, vision equipment and continued support to students throughout their formative years of education.

This program began in 1976 with a partnership between Lions of Illinois Foundation and ISVI (The Illinois School for the Visually Impaired), creating the Jacksonville Clinic. In 1991, with the addition of several other vision partners, it became the expansive program it is today.

The Lions of Illinois Foundation now works in partnership with Spectrios Institute for Low Vision, the Illinois College of Optometry, and the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind.

# LIF Celebrates 50 Years of the Student Low Vision Program



Students who have undergone rehabilitation, however, have reported significant improvements in their functional abilities, a high rate of continued use of low vision devices, improvement in reading and distance vision, and general satisfaction with the quality of life.

Our Low Vision Clinic has provided specialized, comprehensive eye care to students who often face significant barriers in accessing low vision services within their local communities.



## Beyond Clinical Care

Each Clinic Supports Families in Understanding their Child's Ocular Conditions and how Vision Affects Learning, Independence, and Daily Life.

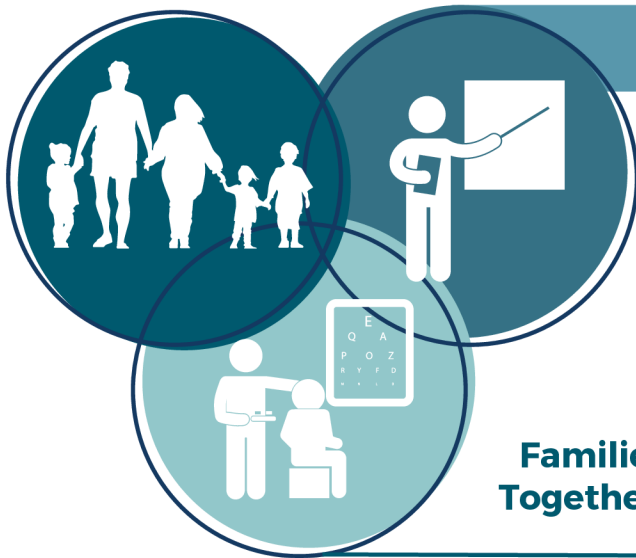
Each Clinic Supports Teachers By Providing the Teacher with a Detailed Report of How a Student's Vision Can be Improved for Learning.

# Each Child Deserves a Chance

Every District has students that are positively effected by this program. Let's continue to make a difference in the lives of those we've pledged to serve! We are Lions, WE SERVE.



**Your Donation of \$290 Helps Us Reach Our Goal of Assisting 300 Students in Illinois Annually!**



## What does your Donation Provide?

For a donation of just \$290 a child receives over \$1,000 worth of services which includes: a comprehensive visual exam, telescopic eyeglasses, prescribed optical tools, and devices. In addition, the team assists each child as they address their daily challenges of growing up with vision loss.

**Families, Teachers and the Low Vision Clinicians Work Together to Create a Plan to Help Each Student Succeed.**

**A donation of \$290 is appreciated but, please give what you can, every dollar gets us closer to our goal!**

## Other Ways To Contribute...

- Annual Charity Golf Classic (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in August)
- District BINGO BONANZA Events
- Annual Roar-In Charity Car Show North & South
- Monies from Recycling helps support Vision Services

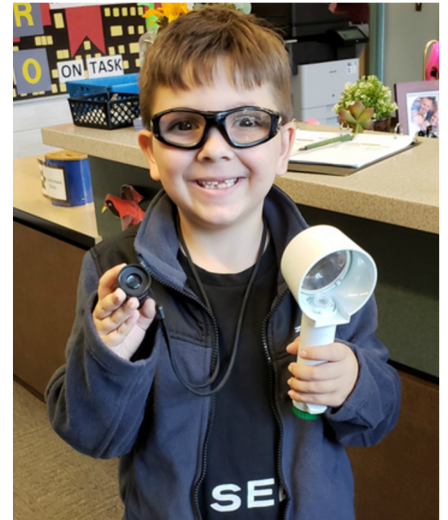


# Student Low Vision Program



## Dear Lions Members & Friends,

The Lions of Illinois Foundation partners with Spectrios Institute for Low Vision, the Illinois College of Optometry, and the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind to provide a FREE comprehensive visual evaluation to Illinois students in grades K-12.



Students are referred by special education staff employed by the Illinois Board of Education. The exams are performed by licensed optometrists that travel to the different screening locations throughout the state.

The LIF “**Seeing is Believing**” Low Vision Program for Students provides a child who has low vision with the optical tools and training necessary to help prevent further vision loss or even blindness. But more importantly, these are the children we have promised to help by preserving what sight they have left. Their future is in our hands.

In 1991 Lions made a pledge to the children of Illinois.

**We Believe that No Child Needs to Face Blindness as their Future.**

Please help to preserve that pledge with your donation.

Enclosed is our check/money order to sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ student(s) at a cost of \$290 each.

Amount of donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Club Name or Individual Donor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

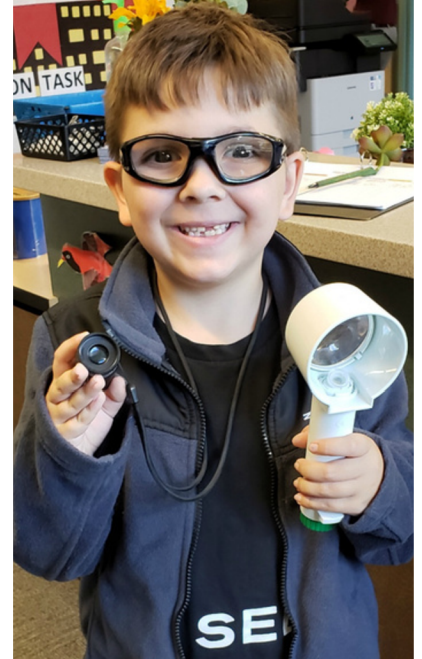
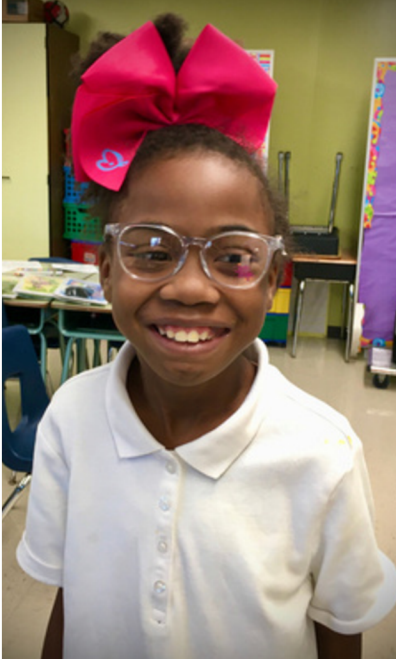
**Submit Form & Donation to:**  
**Lions of Illinois Foundation**  
**700 N Peace Road, Suite B**  
**DeKalb, IL 60115**

Please make your  
check payable to: LIF  
We also accept credit cards,  
please call us.  
Phone: 815-756-5633

**Please Join Us With  
Your Donation Today.**



Remember, we are not just asking for a donation, we are asking for the opportunity to provide a student with low vision a chance to excel in school, in society, in job placement and in their future.



Celebrating 50 Years of Service 1976-2026

# Student Low Vision Program

