

⋮LIGHTHOUSE⋮

FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

LightHouse Little Learners Early Intervention Program General Information

Did you know?

- Most people have never met a family whose young child is blind or has low vision, yet data from Babies Count, a registry of early childhood visual impairment, reflects that each year in California alone, hundreds of families seek specialized services for their infant or toddler who is blind or has low vision.
- It is widely considered that up to 80% of a child's early learning comes through vision. Because infants and toddlers learn primarily through imitation of the actions of others around them, blindness or low vision can impact all areas of their development.
- For their best start in life, young children who are blind or have low vision and their families benefit significantly from specialized services at this early age.

When a family receives a diagnosis of blindness or uncorrectable low vision for their infant or toddler, the impact is felt by the whole family who have so many questions about a world with which they are totally unfamiliar.

- How will my child learn about the world?
Will they have friends?
- I want the best for my child. Where do I turn to find services for my child and family?
- Who knows how to help me learn about my child's diagnosis?
- I feel so isolated. Are there other families I can meet who are in a similar circumstance?

LightHouse Little Learners Partners with Families to Find Answers

LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired-San Francisco has long known a family's sense of urgency and need for answers to these questions and many others, and in 2021 our team responded.

As part of our long-established service model for persons who are blind or have low vision, LightHouse created the Little Learners Early Intervention Program for young learners, birth to age three, who are blind or have low vision or whose developmental delays include blindness or low vision, to start them on the path to independence, exploration, fun, and curiosity about the world.



Dad holds young son who has curly hair; both have big smiles while on a hay ride.



Mother holds her daughter in her lap at a table while her daughter explores a tray of multi-colored feathers with her fingers.

Founded in 1902, the mission of LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired-San Francisco is to promote the independence, equality and self-reliance of people who are blind or have low vision. The LightHouse Little Learners Early Intervention Program aligns fully with the LightHouse mission.

How Does The LightHouse Little Learners Program Work?

LightHouse Little Learners Program is blindness-positive and rooted in the philosophy of infant and family mental health, which supports the child's ability to express their feelings, form close relationships and learn with encouragement from the whole family and community.

When a specialist in blindness and low vision partners with the family to enjoy all aspects of the child's development while having fun learning about the world through hands-on exploration and adventure, the path to accessibility and possibility begins to unfold in spectacular ways. LightHouse Little Learners' dedicated staff will walk alongside families on this path.

A Sneak Peek into LightHouse Little Learners' Services

- Home-based services are responsive to each family's culture, values and priorities, and are play-based and incorporated into daily routines
- The Early Childhood Blind and Low Vision Specialist observes and evaluates each child's development, using assessments for young children who are blind, or have low vision, or are deafblind, have neurological visual impairment or whose developmental delays include blindness or low vision
- The Specialist is a full member of the child and family's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) Team
- The Specialist may consult with community programs, where the child receives other early intervention services, to adapt activities and the environment for the child who is blind or has low vision
- The Specialist helps prepare for, accompany and de-brief with families at their child's important medical visits
- Parent education, and recreation and leisure activities with other families and mentors are provided in a variety of LightHouse settings, including beautiful Enchanted Hills Camp in Napa

Join Us! Walk Alongside LightHouse Little Learners Families!

Join our efforts to provide transformative parent education and in-home specialized services to Little Learners' families.

Inquire about LightHouse Little Learners services:

VISIT: www.lighthouse-sf.org/lighthouse-little-learners

EMAIL: littlelearners@lighthouse-sf.org

CALL: (415) 694-7657 Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM PST

SHARE THE NEWS of LightHouse Little Learners Program with community organizations and service clubs.

CONSIDER A GIFT to LightHouse Little Learners Program to provide parent education, hope, and fun to families of infants and toddlers who are blind or have low vision in northern and central California. Visit www.lighthouse-sf.org to learn more.