

# NDVS/SB Outreach Newsletter

## December 2025

*Our mission is to provide specialized and individualized services for people of all ages who are blind or low vision by partnering with families, educators, and agencies to empower them in achieving their goals.*

### Babies Count: Using Data to Shape the Future of Vision Services

Just like the students and clients we serve, the babies we serve are all different – they have different diagnoses, different needs, different personalities. But knowing what our babies are experiencing now can help us, as an agency, as a state, and as a country, prepare for the future.

That is the idea behind Babies Count, a national registry of children from birth to 36 months of age who have visual impairments. Demographic and epidemiologic information provided by parents and vision professionals about each child is anonymously entered into a secure online database. Each year, the data is analyzed and shared with the partner agencies who have helped collect the data.

The results can then be used to help those agencies better understand current needs, watch as trends emerge or patterns change, and plan for the future. Knowing what babies are experiencing now gives us an idea of what we, as an agency, may need in the future. Even better, this data can be shared with other agencies who serve the blind, and other stakeholders, like legislators and policy makers,

who can help initiate change on a state or national level. By participating in Babies Count, NDVS/SB is helping to shape the future of the field of vision loss.

Each year NDVS/SB receives the data collected on a state level and nationally, so that we can compare our babies to what the rest of the nation is experiencing. Overall what we have found is that even though North Dakota babies only make up about 1% of the national data, our trends reflect what the nation is experiencing as a whole.

To read the entire article on our website, go to [Babies Count article](#).

If you are interested in learning more about Babies Count, visit their website, <https://www.babiescount.org/>



*Soraya, a baby served by NDVS/SB in Fargo, playing with a variety of different textures.*

### Making Your Holiday Bright, Accessible, and Inclusive

Check out these links for some easy and fun holiday ideas

[Gift Guide: accessible, inclusive presents for everyone on your list](#)

[Making Winter Holiday Traditions Accessible](#)

[Blind Musicians Holiday Playlist](#)

[Making a Holiday Concept Box](#)





## Research Study Opportunities

**Share your experiences with researchers through the following studies**

### NIH Vocabulary Study

Earn \$100 by participating in a study on vocabulary development in children who are blind! The study is being conducted by Dr. Lindsay Harris at Northern Illinois University, who was awarded a grant from the National Institutes of Health to research how to support word learning and vocabulary development in children who are blind.

Your child is eligible to participate if they are:

- 5 - 14 years old
- completely blind by age 1, with no more than light perception
- no hearing loss, intellectual disability, or deafblindness
- a resident of the U.S. or Canada
- an English speaker who hears English at least 3 hours a day
- able to access a computer with a camera, microphone and internet connection

Obtain more info and sign up.

### Well-being and Health Among Low Vision and Blind Youth (WHALABY)

Researchers supported by the National Eye Institute are seeking participants for a study on experiences of children (ages 9 - 17) who are blind or visually impaired and their parent/guardian.

- The study is virtual and takes 3 - 4 hours of your time.
- Some child participants will wear an activity monitor for 14 days.
- Participating families are paid up to \$250 for their time and effort.

For more information and to complete the screening survey, go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/whalaby>

If you have questions, email [psychology.youthview@ttu.edu](mailto:psychology.youthview@ttu.edu)