

Bringing together all of the skills learned in ECC provides students with visual impairments an opportunity to become well rounded, just as their sighted peers. It is difficult to expect that a congenitally blind or visually impaired person could be entirely at ease within the social, recreational, and vocational structure of the general community without mastering the elements of the ECC. We know that congenitally blind and visually impaired students require specific social interaction, and independent living. Without these skills, these students are at high risk for more isolated lives. Accomplishments and joys such as shopping, dining, and participating in recreational activities are a right, not a privilege for a blind and visually impaired person. Responsibilities such as working, banking, taking care of health needs, and using public and private services are a part of a full life for everyone, including those who are blind or visually impaired. Adoption and implementation of a core curriculum for blind and visually impaired students, including those with additional disabilities, will assure those students have the opportunity to function more effectively and completely in the general community.



Illinois School for the Visually Impaired (ISVI), established in 1849, is a residential/day school for students who are blind or visually impaired. Located in Jacksonville, ISVI provides accredited educational and related services for children from birth to twenty-two years of age through preschool, elementary, and high school.

All educational and social programs are designed to prepare students for successful living as independent, self-supporting citizens.

For more information contact us at:

ISVI

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Jacksonville, IL 62650

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Additional resources:

Expanded Core Curriculum - American  
Foundation for the Blind

<https://www.afb.org/>

Family Connect

<https://aphconnectcenter.org/>



Programs, activities, and employment opportunities in the IDHS are open and accessible to any individual or group without regard to age, sex, race, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin, or religion. The department is an equal opportunity employer and practices affirmative action and reasonable accommodation programs.

## Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC)

The body of knowledge and skills that is needed by students with visual impairments due to their unique disability specific needs. Students with visual impairments need both the academic core curriculum. The ECC should be used as a framework for assessing students, planning individual goals, and providing instruction.



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## The 9 Components of ECC

**Compensatory or functional academic skills** include learning experiences such as concept development and spatial awareness, organizational skills, using braille or low vision devices to read and write, using alternative communication systems such as sign language or the use of calendar systems, using audio materials and so forth.

**Orientation and Mobility (O&M)** training focuses on alternatives to using sight for safe and independent travel purposes. In this instructional area, children are taught the use of a long white cane, as well as, techniques for using any remaining vision that they may have. This includes the use of optical devices like telescopes or monoculars.

**Career education** for students with visual impairments needs to begin as early as possible and include self-awareness and career exploration activities, job seeking skills instruction, information about job keeping, and encourage opportunities for granting work experience.

**Social interaction skills** must be taught to children with visual impairments because they are unable to casually observe how people interact and socialize with one another. They must be taught when and how to smile, frown, nod, wink, shrug, and the many other nonverbal communication skills.

**Independent living skills** are the chores people perform, according to their abilities, which enable them to manage their homes and personal lives. These chores including grooming, eating and preparing meals, taking care of household chores, money and time management, and so forth.

**Recreation and leisure skills** may include traditional, as well as, adapted physical education activities. However, as with social interaction skills, visually impaired children need help identifying the array of choices available to them in this area and must be taught how to perform leisure skills that most children learn through observation.



**Assistive technology** training is needed in the curriculum for students with visual impairments. Assistive technology enables blind and visually impaired students to access and store information from libraries around the world and the internet. In addition, students with visual impairments can use assistive technology for notetaking, studying for tests, research and a variety of other academic uses.

**Visual efficiency** skills are those skills that children with visual impairment, but good remaining vision, use to make the most use of their remaining sight. Instruction in this area may focus on the use of optical devices such as magnifiers, bioptic aids, telescopes, closed circuit televisions, and so forth.

**Self-Determination** includes choice-making, decision-making, problem-solving, personal advocacy, assertiveness, and goal setting. Students with visual impairments often have fewer opportunities to develop and practice the specific skills that lead to self-determination. Students who have self-determination skills become effective advocates for themselves and therefore have more control over their lives.