

# VI Times

Volume 3, Issue 2

MN Regions 5 & 7 Vision - O&M Staff  
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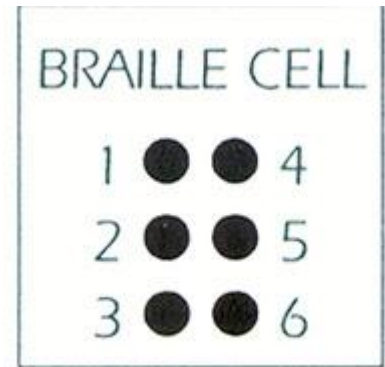


## Vision-O&M Staff

The purpose of a newsletter is to provide specialized information to parents and teachers of students with vision impairments. We hope to send regular newsletters that will cover topics of interest that are informative and create a base of knowledge that will assist our students with their on-going success!

## Braille

Braille is a code not a language. It is based on the possible arrangements of six raised dots within what is called the braille cell.



Each of the six dots has a numbered position within the cell. Combinations of those dots make up the alphabet letters, numbers, and punctuation. The braille code uses dot combinations to represent words, parts of words, and special dot patterns to represent the presence of capital letters, italics, etc.

Some students learn braille at different stages of their academic career. Others do not read standard braille, but may use tactile symbols or objects to represent information and / or directions.

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**Contact your Teacher for the Blind / Visually Impaired or Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist if:**

- You have further questions on the newsletter topic
- Would prefer the newsletter in electronic format by email or in print.

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## Topic Preview

Future issues of this newsletter will address:

- Early Childhood Intervention
- Parenting
- Self-Determination & Advocacy
- Sensory Efficiency
- Social Skills
- Technology

## Past Topics

- Introduction to BVI
- Cortical Vision Impairment
- Living Skills
- Low Vision
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orientation & Mobility
- Recreation & Leisure
- Transition
- Braille

## Skills & Concepts

Children who will become braille readers need to develop skills and concepts in several areas. A teacher for the visually impaired is essential in providing the experiences and curriculum for the student to become a proficient braille reader.

The skill areas include:

- Tactile
  - Tolerates, enjoys touch
  - Locates, examines, matches, sorts objects
  - Explores braille
  - Locates, touches, traces, tracks, follows line of braille
- Fine Motor
  - Holds objects, uses pincer grasp, uses hands together
  - Opens / closes books, turns pages, turns a page
  - Copies tactile pattern
  - Shows hand strength & flexibility
  - Shows finger strength & dexterity, individualizes fingers
  - Scribbles with braille, makes braille dots
- Listening, Attention, & Expression
  - Listens to songs, rhymes, finger plays, books
  - Follows directions, matches sounds
  - Interested in stories, tells events, makes up stories
  - Attends to task for 5-20 minutes
- Concept Building
  - Body parts, objects & actions, basic concepts
  - Understands positional concepts
  - Knows alphabet
  - Experiences daily life events
  - Aware of letters and braille cell appearance
  - Can relate braille keys to braille cell
- Book & Story Skills
  - Uses books as toys
  - Identifies parts of books
  - Holds book and turns pages
  - Explores tactile books
  - Traces marks purposefully in tactile book
  - Start to end understood
  - Understands positions on a page
  - Participates in concept / object book story
  - Spends time with adult being read to and exploring tactile / braille book
  - Dictates and “reads” own book
  - Selects favorite book and stories
  - Participates in formal braille curriculum

There are many steps in learning to read, and braille reading follows a similar path with some differences due to the tactile aspect. Learning to read braille is a systematic skill building process.

*Adapted from Anne McComiskey.*