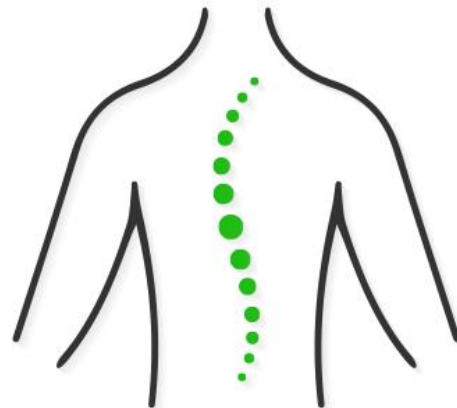


The Center's News

NATIONAL
SCOLIOSIS
AWARENESS
MONTH



June is National Scoliosis Awareness Month which is a time to shine a light on a condition that affects millions of people but often goes undetected until it begins to shape more than just the spine. Scoliosis is a condition that causes a sideways curvature of the spine. It is most often diagnosed in childhood or adolescence. It can vary from mild to severe, and in some cases, the curve can worsen as a person grows.

Imagine growing up and noticing that one shoulder always appears higher in photos, or that your clothes never quite hang evenly. For many living with scoliosis, these small observations are the first clues. It is more than a medical issue as it can affect how a person feels in their body, how they move and how confident they feel in everyday life.

In the United States alone, more than 7 million people are living with scoliosis according to the National Scoliosis Foundation. It is most often diagnosed between the ages of 10 and 15. Girls are significantly more likely to develop a curve that requires treatment and is up to eight times more likely than boys, according to experts at the Mayo Clinic. When scoliosis is detected early, it can often be managed with noninvasive approaches like physical therapy or a brace, which may help avoid surgery later on in life.

Unfortunately, scoliosis often progresses silently. By the time it is noticed, the curvature may already be more severe. That is why public awareness is so important. By recognizing some early signs such as uneven shoulders or hips, a visibly curved spine or one side of the ribs sticking out more than the other – can help ensure that individuals receive the proper care as early as possible.

Scoliosis does not just affect the spine, but it can shape a person's self-esteem, mobility and outlook. Raising awareness helps to create a more informed and compassionate community. Whether it is encouraging school screenings, spreading reliable information or simply listening to someone's story, every effort matters.

If you or someone you know has questions about scoliosis, early detection, or support resources, help is available. Let's use this month to learn more, speak up, and support those living with scoliosis.

6 things you should know about scoliosis

Early detection makes a difference!



It can run in families



Kids, teens & adults can be affected



Most cases of scoliosis have no known cause



Warning signs can be subtle, check kids and teens regularly



Conservative treatment has high success rates



Early detection can mean better clinical outcomes

Learn More or Find Support:

- National Scoliosis Foundation – www.scoliosis.org
- Mayo Clinic – www.mayoclinic.org
- Scoliosis Research Society – www.srs.org
- John Hopkins Medicine – www.hopkinsmedicine.org

Independent Living Program

Recognizing Leadership: Tonya Pfaff's Commitment to Disability Advocacy in Indiana

Krista Smith – IL/Transition Coordinator

State Representative Tonya Pfaff serves Indiana House District 43 in the General Assembly. She is a lifelong Terre Haute resident who has dedicated 32 years to teaching in the community and continues to educate students as a math teacher at Terre Haute North Vigo High School. Representative Pfaff has consistently advocated for the rights and well-being of Hoosiers with disabilities. Through her legislative work, she has fought for policies that preserve essential healthcare access, expand safety programs, and ensure dignity and protection for people with disabilities across the state.

Preserving Medicaid Access for Vulnerable Hoosiers

Pfaff has emphasized the importance of protecting Medicaid coverage for underserved populations. In response to efforts to introduce stricter eligibility checks, which could lead to unintended loss of coverage for families relying on Medicaid, Pfaff has stood firm against these barriers. Pfaff states, "Protecting the most vulnerable Hoosiers has always been a priority for me as a legislator. One of the most important ways to do this is to protect Medicaid coverage for underserved populations. This year, I voted against legislation that creates barriers to access by requiring strict and more frequent eligibility checks for Medicaid. While the administrative burden will cost the state more than we expect to save, families who rely on Medicaid for their health care may lose coverage due to trivial errors in paperwork." Her stance reflects a broader commitment to making sure that Indiana's policies prioritize people over bureaucratic obstacles.

Expanding Project Lifesaver Across Indiana

For the past four years, Pfaff has championed legislation aimed at expanding Project Lifesaver, a program that works with local public safety agencies to provide transmitter bracelets to individuals with cognitive disabilities or dementia who are prone to wandering. Vigo County has already adopted this program, but Pfaff wants to ensure it extends beyond county lines, allowing families across Indiana the capability to bring vulnerable Hoosiers home safely.

She explained her motivation behind her legislative push. "For the past four years, I have filed legislation to expand Project Lifesaver across the state. Project Lifesaver works with local public safety agencies to provide transmitter bracelets to those with cognitive disabilities or adults with dementia who are prone to wandering, which can put individuals in dangerous situations. Vigo County is one of the places in Indiana enrolled in this lifesaving program, but the tracking capabilities stop at the county line. The legislation I have authored would expand this program so that every county in the state can safely bring home vulnerable Hoosiers prone to wandering."

Supporting the Yellow Dot Program

Pfaff also played a role in supporting Indiana's newly established Yellow Dot Program, which aims to assist first responders in identifying medical conditions that may impact emergency care. The program involves placing a yellow sticker on a vehicle's rear window, signaling that critical medical documentation is stored in the glove compartment.

Pfaff stated, "I was also proud to support legislation this year authored by my colleague Rep. Sue Errington (D-Muncie) to establish the Yellow Dot Program in Indiana. This is an initiative that indicates a person has documentation of a medical condition in their glove compartment by placing a yellow sticker on their rear window. For people with disabilities or chronic conditions that would impact how they are treated by a first responder or law enforcement officer in the event of an accident, the indication can be lifesaving. This policy was signed into law by the governor last month and will go into effect on July 1, 2025."

A Legacy of Advocacy

Pfaff's legislative work reflects a commitment to advocating for Indiana's disability community. She is fighting for Medicaid accessibility, expanding safety programs, and ensuring medical transparency for first responders. As Indiana continues to evolve its policies regarding healthcare and disability services, Pfaff is working to be a voice for those who need it, ensuring that vulnerable Hoosiers receive the care, protection, and dignity they deserve.



You may reach out to Representative Pfaff to share your views at:

200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Phone: 800-382-9842

Discover the Support Offered by Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation

Jared Price – IL/Transition Coordinator

Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) offers valuable support and services to individuals with disabilities who are looking to enhance their independence and pursue meaningful employment. As part of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, VR is dedicated to helping people identify their strengths, explore career options, and reach their employment goals.



VR provides a wide range of individualized services based on each person's needs and abilities. These services may include career counseling, skills training, job placement assistance, education support, and help with obtaining assistive technology or other accommodations. The goal is to remove barriers to employment and empower individuals to succeed in the workforce.

In addition to supporting job seekers, VR works closely with businesses and community organizations to promote inclusive practices and create opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This collaboration helps build stronger, more diverse workplaces throughout Indiana.

Whether someone is entering the workforce for the first time, returning after an injury or illness, or simply looking for a new direction, Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation can be a helpful resource. To learn more or start the process, visit the Indiana VR website at in.gov or contact a local office. If you are ready to explore employment, give The WILL Center a call at (812) 298-9455 and we would be glad to help you begin the referral process.

Honoring Juneteenth with Heart and Action

Bianca Nosek – IL Manager

Juneteenth is not just another date on the calendar – it is a pulse in American history that still beats today.

June 19th marks the day in 1865 when the last enslaved Black Americans were told they were free, which was two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation had already declared that freedom. That delay speaks volumes. Freedom had been written into law but not delivered in life. Juneteenth is about that moment, when freedom had finally reached the people who had waited far too long to hear it.

Even now, Juneteenth reminds us that justice often comes slowly. It is a day to honor those who endured slavery, those who fought for civil rights, and those who continue to push for equity today. It is about recognizing not only what has been overcome, but also what still needs to be changed in society - systemic racism, inequality and injustice that persist in our communities.

Juneteenth is a celebration of heritage, resilience and the immeasurable contributions Black Americans have made to every part of America's story.

So, how can we honor Juneteenth this month? We can start by learning and telling the truth about our history and about how that history lives on in today's policies and practices. We can support Black-owned businesses, listen to Black voices, and engage in conversations that move us closer to real equity.

And we can show up to local events. Terre Haute's Juneteenth celebration will take place on Friday, June 14th from 12 PM to 5 PM at the Booker T. Washington Community Center, located at S. 13th St and College Avenue. Join the celebration for games, fun, learning, and more. For more information, visit the Terre Haute Day Facebook page or terrehaute.org.

Juneteenth is not just Black history, but American history. And it calls on all of us to not only remember, but to act. To honor the past and to celebrate the present. And to commit to a future where freedom and justice are real for everyone.



L.I.V.E Program

Low Vision & Summer Living: Tips for Staying Safe and Independent

Summer brings longer days, warmer weather, and more opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. But for individuals with low vision, this season can also introduce unique challenges. From managing bright sunlight to staying safe during outdoor activities, planning ahead can make a big difference. Here are some helpful tips to support safety, comfort, and independence all summer long.

Minimize Sun Glare

Glare from the sun can be overwhelming for those with low vision. To improve comfort and visibility, consider wearing wrap-around sunglasses that offer both UV protection and polarization. A wide-brimmed hat or visor can also help block overhead sunlight and reduce strain. Some people benefit from tinted lenses in different colors, depending on their specific vision needs—amber or yellow tints, for example, can enhance contrast and reduce glare.

Travel Smart

Whether you're heading out for a weekend getaway or a neighborhood event, travel can become more manageable with a bit of preparation. Plan your routes ahead of time using accessible map apps or GPS tools. Assistive apps like Be My Eyes or Seeing AI can offer visual information on the go. If flying or using public transportation, be sure to request mobility assistance in advance. Keeping a collapsible white cane in your travel bag can offer added confidence and safety in unfamiliar environments.

Embrace Assistive Technology

Portable magnifiers, screen readers, and voice-controlled assistants can all play a role in supporting independence. Voice assistants like Alexa or Siri can help with reminders, setting timers, and giving weather updates. Handheld electronic magnifiers make it easier to read menus, price tags, or brochures while on the move. Don't forget about wearable devices and apps that can read text, identify objects, and even recognize faces.

Stay Cool and Healthy

People with low vision may miss early signs of heat exhaustion, so it's important to take precautions. Drink plenty of fluids, stay indoors during the hottest parts of the day, and wear light, breathable clothing. If you're heading outside, bring along a water bottle, wear a hat, and try to stay in shaded areas when possible.

Stay Connected

With summer schedules shifting, it's easy to lose touch with friends or routines. This can lead to feelings of isolation, which impact emotional and mental well-being. Consider joining a local or virtual support group, signing up for summer classes, or checking in with your low vision service provider for community events or workshops.

Our Low Vision Program is here to help you enjoy summer safely and confidently. Whether you're interested in assistive technology or daily living strategies, we're just a call or email away. Let us help you make the most of the season with tools and support designed around your needs. Contact us at (812) 298-9455 to learn more.

Community Events

June 5th, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
American Sign Language Class
Torner Community Center
(812) 232-0147

June 6th, 5:00pm - 8:00pm
First Fridays in 12 Points
12 Points District
(812) 241-9250

June 7th, 9:00am - 4:00pm
VCPL Friends June Book Sale
Vigo County Public Library
(812) 232-1113

June 8th, 1:00pm - 3:00pm
VCPL Friends June Book Sale
Vigo County Public Library
(812) 232-1113

June 8th, 2:00 pm - Westminster
Symphony Sundays
Westminster Village
thsymphony@aol.com

June 10th, 2:00pm - 3:00pm
Bead Art Workshop
Clinton Public Library
(765) 832-8349

June 10th, 3:30pm - 5:00pm
Adult Reading Group
Brazil Public Library
(812) 448-1981

June 14th, 10:00am - 4:00pm
Sixth Street Arts Festival
Arts Illiana
(812) 242-8476

June 16th, 6:00pm - 7:30pm
Summer Craft Night: Bob Ross
Clinton Public Library
(765) 832-8349

June 17th, 6:00pm - 8:30pm
Courage in the Face of Hate
Wabash Senior Activity Center
(812) 232-3245

June 20th, 7:30pm
The Wizard of Oz
221 N 6th St Terre Haute
(812) 237-3333

June 21st, 11:00am - 3:00pm
Juneteenth Celebration
Wabash Senior Activity Center
(812) 232-3245

June 28th, 8:00am - 1:00pm
First UU Annual Yard Sale
First Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Terre Haute
(812) 917-0030

June 30th, 6:00pm - 7:30pm
Community Art/Craft Supply Swap
Clinton Public Library
(765) 832-9349

**To discover more local events,
visit the Community Calendar
at WTHITV.com.**