

## Some Questions and Answers about the Bureau's Youth Services

**Q: How old does my child have to be before receiving services from the Youth Low Vision Program?**

A: Services are available to youth from birth to 26 years with an acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye or with a restricted field of 20 degrees or less.

**Q: What is provided through the Youth Low Vision Program?**

A: The program assists students with low-vision exams when not covered by insurance. The program also assists with the purchase of head-borne devices such as microscopes, telescopes, and prescriptions not covered by insurance that will enhance the student's ability to read textbooks, see the board in the classroom, and generally improve the child's ability to participate in home, school, and recreational activities.

**Q: How do I enroll my student in the Youth Low Vision Program?**

A: Contact the Intermediate School District "teacher consultant for the visually impaired" where your child is registered to attend school.

Parents are required to sign an application for services and provide documentation of visual impairment.

**Q: Where do I take my child for the exam needed for the Youth Low Vision Program documentation?**

A: Any licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist who provides low-vision services can do the exam.

**Q: How much of the costs are paid for by the Youth Low Vision Program?**

A: Reasonable costs, based on available funds, will be paid by the Youth Low Vision Program for head-borne devices recommended by an optometrist or ophthalmologist. Limits may be imposed on the number of items and/or the cost of items. It is expected that your vision insurance, if available, will be used to cover costs before Youth Low Vision Program funds are used.

**Q: How often can my child take advantage of this program?**

A: Youth Low Vision services are available every other school year, as

long as needed, up to age 26 (age at the start of the school year).

**Q: Are there other services available from the Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons besides Youth Services?**

A: Yes. The Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons also has services for adults to help them achieve independence in daily living and/or employment. For more information on services available to youth or adults who are blind or visually impaired, call 1-800-292-4200 toll-free (TTY 1-888-864-1212 toll-free).

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# Youth Services

available from the Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons





## The Bureau's Youth Services

The Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) provides free services to youth who are blind or visually impaired. The bureau typically provides more than 250 specialized evaluations and more than 350 low-vision aids each year. In addition, the Bureau provides services to help youth successfully make the transition to postsecondary education or employment.

The Bureau's Youth Services are delivered through the Intermediate School District (ISD) where your child is registered to attend school. To access these services, contact your "ISD teacher consultant for the visually impaired" by calling your Intermediate School District office or your child's school. You may also contact the Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons at 1-800-292-4200 and ask for assistance in contacting your ISD's teacher consultant.

- The **Youth Low-Vision Program** provides low-vision eye **exams** and low-vision **devices** worn on the head, such as telescopic and microscopic glasses, complex contact lenses, light-filtering eyewear, prescription sports goggles, bifocals, and prismatic lenses.
- The **Transition Program** helps students age 14 and over to successfully transition from high school to postsecondary education or employment, based on the student's goals. Each student works with a team including a Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons rehabilitation counselor and the student's parents, teacher consultant, social worker, special education director, and possibly others to prepare an

annual Individual Education Program (IEP) plan. The plan includes details such as what classes will be taken the following year, extracurricular and volunteer activities, job shadowing, mentoring, work experience, and others.

- \* The **College Prep Transition Program** includes about 10 weeks of training in Kalamazoo, including two weeks while living at the Bureau's Training Center followed by eight weeks while living at a nearby Western Michigan University dormitory. The training includes a World of Work class at the training center, work experience at the nearby Goodwill Industries, and one class (chosen

from several options) at Western Michigan University.

- \* The **Non-College Transition Program** includes vocational programs during the latter part of high school. These include job shadowing, pre-employment interviews, summer employment, an introduction to the Bureau's Business Enterprise Program, food service opportunities, and others. The student is ready for employment after graduating from high school.