



# V.I.E.P.

VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
EDUCATION PROGRAM

Have you ever noticed a blind or visually impaired person in the grocery store?  
Have you ever seen a guide dog helping their partner cross a busy intersection?  
Ever wondered what it feels like to navigate Staten Island without sight?

***"If we want to live in a world with more disability advocates, we had better start raising them."***

~ Holly Bonner, Blind Motherhood

## WHAT IS V.I.E.P.?

The Visually Impaired Education Program (V.I.E.P.) provides an opportunity for elementary school children (Pre-K to 5) to learn how to positively and respectfully interact with the blind and visually impaired community.

Through V.I.E.P, students will meet and interact with Holly Bonner, a legally blind mother and social worker. Accompanied by her guide dog, Frances, Holly will present V.I.E.P.'s unique programming, educating kids about:

- Terminology relating to "blindness" & "visual impairments"
- Etiquette for interacting with the blind/visually impaired community
- Braille & Adaptive Technology
- The role of guide dogs and proper interaction with service animals
- How they can become an effective "Disability Ally"

***"V.I.E.P.'s mission is to educate and engage school aged children through classroom interaction with the blind/visually impaired community; helping diminish pre-imposed stereotypes associated with blindness."***

## BRING V.I.E.P TO YOUR STUDENTS

The Visually Impaired Education Program (V.I.E.P.) is **"FREE"** to all Staten Island schools and community groups. Scheduling is easy. Simply email Holly Bonner [holly@blindmotherhood.com](mailto:holly@blindmotherhood.com) or call 347-257- 9402 to determine a suitable time to bring V.I.E.P to your students grades Pre-K to 5.





## MEET HOLLY

Holly Bonner, MPA, MSW, MAPCC, CASAC is a licensed mental health professional and addictions counselor. After completing chemotherapy for breast cancer in 2012, Ms. Bonner became legally blind from a neurological condition. With help from the New York State Commission for the Blind, she received training in technology, O & M (Orientation and Mobility) and ADL (Adult Daily Living Skills). In 2015, Holly started her website, [www.blindmotherhood.com](http://www.blindmotherhood.com). **Blind Motherhood** is an online resource for individuals and their families who have been impacted by sight loss. The site seeks to diminish any negative perceptions of parenting while visually impaired; educating and enlightening both the sighted and the blind. A 2017 Staten Island Advance Woman of Achievement, Ms. Bonner is a contributor to multiple publications and serves as a peer advisor for the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB). Holly balances her roles as wife, mother and social worker, "never losing sight of life, love and laughter." **"Blind Motherhood's mission is to demonstrate members of the blind & visually impaired community can parent safely, independently and effectively."**

## MEET FRANCES

Frances, "Franny" for short, is a female, yellow Labrador retriever. Trained by Guiding Eyes for the Blind in Yorktown Heights, New York, Franny was matched with Holly in September of 2016. Frances is a certified "guide dog," whose sole responsibility is to keep Holly safe while she's out in the world. Franny demonstrates exemplary self-control and obedience. Her training specifically included intense socialization around children and she has worked with Holly in a variety of educational settings. As with all guide dogs, Frances is fully vaccinated. Service animals are provided access to all public accommodations, including schools and educational institutions, under New York State law and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



## SHARE V.I.E.P.'S CLASSROOM SONG WITH YOUR STUDENTS:



***When you have eyes that can not see; you're visually impaired.  
A guide dog or a long, white cane - will help you stay prepared.  
The blind are people, just like you - who do things differently.  
Don't be shy.  
Just say, "Hello!"  
You'll make a friend - you'll see!***

Check out the Staten Island V.I.E.P.'s Facebook Page.  
Contact Us: [holly@blindmotherhood.com](mailto:holly@blindmotherhood.com) or call 347-257- 9402

Owner/Founder  
of Blind Motherhood

