

## **COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

When speaking with a person who is blind or has low vision, be yourself and act naturally. You should also consider the following tips:

1. Identify yourself - don't assume the person will recognize you by your voice.
2. Speak naturally and clearly. Loss of eyesight does not mean loss of hearing.
3. Continue to use body language. This will affect the tone of your voice and give a lot of extra information to the person who is vision impaired.
4. Use everyday language. Don't avoid words like "see" or "look" or talking about everyday activities such as watching TV or videos.
5. Name the person when introducing yourself or when directing conversation to them in a group situation.
6. Never channel conversation through a third person.
7. In a group situation, introduce the other people present.
8. Never leave a conversation with a person without saying so.
9. Use accurate and specific language when giving directions. For example, "the door is on your left", rather than "the door is over there".
10. Avoid situations where there is competing noise.
11. Always ask first to check if help is needed.
12. Relax and be yourself.