



Media Release

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For Immediate Release

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Importance of the White Cane Celebrated

Department of Human Services Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) celebrated White Cane Safety Day on Tuesday with a mobility demonstration by children from the Arkansas School for the Blind. The event is part of October's Blindness Awareness Month. The white cane is a symbol of independence because it increases mobility for people who are blind or visually impaired. The white cane also raises awareness for pedestrian safety.

The Governor's Office has issued a proclamation proclaiming October 15 as White Cane Safety Day.

Cane-using representatives of Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind, the National Federation of the Blind Arkansas Affiliate, the American Council of the Blind Arkansas Affiliate, World Services for the Blind, and DSB spoke about the difference the white cane has made in their lives and their independence.

DSB Director Katy Morris spoke about the history of White Cane Safety Day. The day has been observed every year since President Lyndon B. Johnson signed it into law in 1964. The first White Cane Ordinance was passed in 1930 in Peoria, Illinois and granted pedestrians carrying a white cane protections and the right-of-way. Other states soon adopted similar laws.

"It is so important to celebrate White Cane Safety Day because it represents independence and strength for blind or visually-impaired citizens," said Morris. "Without these laws, visually-impaired citizens would not be able to safely enjoy the freedoms every other citizen enjoys."

For more information on Services for the Blind, contact Kandy Cayce at kandy.cayce@arkansas.gov or 501-682-