

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE ADDS KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
TO ITS LIGHTHOUSE LEARNING CENTER FOR CHILDREN™

MIAMI, FL – The Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired early childhood education program will open its doors this school year, beginning August 19, with a new curriculum and classroom for kindergarten children with vision impairments. The Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™, which currently holds Florida's first-of-its-kind, fully inclusive pre-kindergarten for visually impaired students and their sighted peers, will house the kindergarten expansion.

Learning in the new kindergarten will be conducted by Florida-certified elementary-school teachers, teachers of the visually impaired and teaching assistants. The curriculum design includes meeting the individual needs of students in a print/braille rich environment supported by advances in technology.

The kindergarten is in partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and designed to support the academic needs of its students. Miami Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™ is a nationally Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment (APPLE Center).

“Our new kindergarten class will be a continuum for some of the blind and visually impaired students who attended our pre-K,” said Virginia Jacko, President and CEO of Miami Lighthouse. “Our kindergarten doors also will be open to other blind and visually impaired students who can benefit from our specialized learning environment before being integrated into the general public school population for first grade.”

Research faculty from the University of Miami is continuing a four-year longitudinal study of the participating pre-k children and families, as the Lighthouse

Learning Center for Children™ helps prepare them for mainstreaming into Miami-Dade's public-school system. Research outcomes demonstrate the Center provides high quality instructional practices above the national average.

Miami Lighthouse annually transforms the lives of over 75,000 blind and visually impaired people, babies to seniors, and their families. The impact of the services and programs is statewide, national, and international. Miami Lighthouse and its Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™ are located at 601 Southwest Eighth Avenue in Miami. For more information about Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, visit [www.miamilighthouse.org](http://www.miamilighthouse.org), or call 305-856-4176.

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