



## **Major gift to enhance Miami Lighthouse for the Blind fight against cortical visual impairment**

**MIAMI, Fla.** - [Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) (MLB) has received a \$2 million gift to study and treat a serious condition affecting the sight of more than 180,000 children in the United States.

The grant will help researchers focus on cerebral visual impairment, often called cortical visual impairment (CVI), a disorder caused by damage to the parts of the brain that process vision. It's most common in babies and young children who have suffered an injury – or lack of oxygen or infection – before, during, or shortly after birth.

“Due to the complexity of the condition, early detection is key to providing a proper diagnosis,” said Virginia Jacko, CEO of MLB. “CVI typically goes undetected or misdiagnosed, so this new funding will help lead to a better understanding of the condition’s genetic and neural basis.”

Despite being the leading cause of childhood blindness and low vision, CVI isn't widely understood, and many who suffer from it aren't being diagnosed. MLB officials hope to change that, as the two-year grant will help expand research at the facility's CVI Collaborative Center.

Founded in 2020, the interdisciplinary center includes the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, Nicklaus Children's Hospital, Nova Southeastern University's Colleges of Business and Medicine, and Miami-Dade Public Schools Office of Exceptional Learners.

The center has completed over 160 children's assessments to date and provides comprehensive reports on educational interventions for families to share with a child's teachers. These assessments are crucial as functional vision in children can be expected to improve with the appropriate intervention.

The grant – which came from an anonymous donor – also will help enhance extensive literature reviews and development of an evidence-based, age-appropriate test battery and CVI classification system, including data collection. When the project ends in 2026, all results will be shared with research and educational communities.

To learn about scheduling a CVI assessment call MLB Senior Vice President Cameron Sisser at 786-362-7515. For more information about Miami Lighthouse and the CVI Collaborative Center, please visit <https://www.miamilighthouse.org/CVICenter.asp>.