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Dear <<Title>><<Name>>,

It feels like a lifetime ago since I wrote to you in early spring. The coronavirus outbreak, COVID-19, has turned our lives upside down.

**I hope that you and the ones you love are keeping safe, most of all.**

And I wanted to let you know the generosity you have shown to ChildVision is still helping blind children and their families, even at this incredibly difficult time.

ChildVision's campus is closed, of course. To protect students and staff – and to do our part to lessen the spread of the virus.

To a person, bolstered by all the help you have given, our staff have drawn a circle of support around our blind students that would make you proud.

We are in constant contact with our children and young people. Many of them are in such fragile health from underlying conditions, at such young ages! The coronavirus is a grave threat, and their families are worried sick. So I want you to know you're providing phone and email outreach for families too.


Staff have moved the work they do with students online, and each child or young person has an individual plan. They are checking in, and interacting.

It's not a replacement for the breakthroughs and the learning and the magic that happens here on campus. *How could it be?!*

And it breaks our hearts to try and explain to each student... when they already can't see the world... why they can't come to therapy with the horses, or chat to their friends, or learn in-person and on-campus from their tutors...

... Why they can't touch to communicate, when touch is their anchor.

**These days are not easy. But know this: you have made bright spots**

 (read on overleaf please)

**possible...** amidst all the uncertainty, there are beautiful sparks of online learning and moments of humanity happening that could not have existed without you.

**No one knows what tomorrow holds. I can't begin to predict how our already limited resources will be affected when the virus subsides.**

Our Garden Party, without a doubt, is cancelled. As is the Mini Marathon fundraiser. Both are vital to help fund all that happens here. There is talk too that ChildVision staff, virtually all of whom hold advanced degrees in medical and/or social care, could be redeployed to the frontlines of the coronavirus fight.

I'll update you as soon as I know more. As someone who has shown they care deeply about this work, you can always count on me to be open with you.

**But for today, I just want to say thank you.**

Thank you for giving us a way to mobilise around Ireland's blind children and young people when it seemed the goodness went missing from their world.

Thank you for online learning and video chats and the laughter of tutors and students they work, virtually, through a new challenge.

Thank you for reassuring phone calls to parents and families who live with the nonstop worry that the coronavirus will knock at their door next.

Thank you for helping us to look after the animals in the petting zoo and the amazing equine therapy horses, who are really missing the children.

Thank you for doing your part to stay safe and help ease the spread of the virus. The coronavirus is a terrifying foe to face for fragile blind children already living with chronic and daunting health conditions. Your respect for the HSE guidelines matters more than you know.

And thank you today and always, for believing in Ireland's blind children.

**You are the heart of ChildVision, and we are with you,**

Brian Allen, CEO  
ChildVision



P.S. Please let's not lose contact during COVID-19: if you'd like to provide your current email and phone, we can keep connected if posting becomes uncertain – update your details with Ruth on **RuthAllen@childvision.ie** or **01 837 3635**. The enclosed Freepost envelope offers details on how you can give safely to ChildVision during the coronavirus. Your support is a massive help. But please know you should never feel pressured to donate, by any charity. You are family at ChildVision, always. Keep safe, and God bless.