Pediatric belt canes were declared a medical necessity for blind toddlers’ safe independent walking by doctors and physical therapists who serve visually impaired toddlers AND the BELT CANE WAS COVERED BY MEDICAID.

A medical resident’s study of belt cane outcomes was accepted to 2024 Conference of American Association of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (AAPOS).

Safe Toddlers shipped an average of 50 belt canes a month this year. That’s 40% more belt canes shipped this year than in 2022.

Northern Illinois University (NIU) completed a 2-year study of 50 blind toddlers. When wearing belt canes, blind toddlers spend 60% of their time safely walking and running independently. Funded by the Lavelle Fund for the Blind.
Our Hard Working Board!
- Grace Ambrose-Zaken, President/CEO
- Marom Bikson, Secretary
- Constance Engelstad, Development Chair
- Joy Harris, Marketing Chair
- Janie Blome, Professional Outreach Chair
- Sylvia Stinson-Perez, Governance Chair
- June Allison, Family Outreach Chair
- Nick Muller, Board Member
- Cheryle Roe, Board Member

Community Advisors
- Kirk Adams, Organization & DEI Consultant
- Roslyn Adams, Early Childhood Education
- Brent Weichers, Manufacturing Advisor

Strategic Planning The Safe Toddlers board gathered in person and via zoom for a weekend retreat in Fishkill, New York. Together we codified our strategic plan for the next 2 years. Our board is committed to accomplishing the work needed to achieve our mission of providing safe mobility to blind toddlers worldwide.
Current Projects

- **Funding** from the **Hoffman Foundation** will provide belt canes and belt cane certification courses to 2 agencies in Metropolitan New York/New Jersey in 2024!

- **Funding** from the **Department of Education** to create Soterix Medical and Safe Toddlers Smart Mobility App. The Smart Mobility App is for teachers and families to measure the walking progress blind toddlers make when wearing the belt cane.
  - Currently available in the Apple Store.

- Safe Toddlers staff projects include:
  - Outcome studies and publications
  - Multi-media Belt Cane Curriculum Development
  - Groundbreaking book on the Science of Early Intervention Orientation & Mobility for Blind Learners
Publication

Outreach: Safe Toddlers attended 1 to 2 conferences a month in 2023. As vendors and presenters, we accomplished our goal of increasing the number of professionals who have learned about the benefits of safe mobility for blind toddlers. We provided webinars to professionals and families; staff training and our social media base consists of almost 20,000 followers.

All the Light... Shines a Light on un-Safe Mobility
Netflix's New Series “All the Light We Cannot See” Shines A Light on un-Safe Mobility History for Blind Kids

Netflix TV Show anachronistic use of the long cane during WWII is a more progressive stance on blind children’s safety than actuality. The character Marie Laure at age 6 and 16 years uses white canes in the TV series.

Historical record shows blind children are not the reason the white cane was invented. Blind children’s access to white cane safety began long AFTER Lyndon B. Johnson signed the first Presidential proclamation for White Cane Safety Day, in 1964.

As proof, Ambrose-Zaken’s YouTube video includes footage showing state-of-the-art instruction of blind children on skills for walking independently without white canes. “From Here to There” was written, directed and narrated by Phil Hatlen, then principal of the California School for the Blind. Hatlen released in 1966.

White canes were invented by and for adults who had lost their vision. Belt Canes were invented for toddlers born blind and provide them easy safety. For a more detailed history read Safe Toddlers’ newest Blog.
Safe Toddlers began as an advocate for safe mobility. We invented the pediatric belt cane, a safe mobility tool for blind toddlers. Research studies have shown a positive correlation between improving safety and blind babies improved independent walking outcomes (Ambrose-Zaken, 2022, 2023; Penrod, W, 2023).

Blind toddlers benefit from easy safe mobility through wearing the pediatric belt cane. The more they wear the belt cane they learn to trust and respond to the cane frame. A safety arc reliably checks the forward path 2 steps ahead. Our social media is @SafeToddlers YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, X and Facebook

Safe Mobility Tools Remove Barriers from Blind Children’s Potential!