What is First Steps?
The First Steps pilot study is a British Blind Sport initiative for visually impaired children. The aim of the project is to improve the children’s health and fitness by encouraging an active lifestyle.

The challenge
Two in every three children do not meet the Government’s guidelines of 60 minutes activity each day and over one third are overweight or obese. The risk of inactivity and obesity is even higher for visually impaired children, who face additional barriers to participation such as a lack of inclusive PE teaching in mainstream schools, bullying and family income constraints.

Our solution
Each participant will be sent a free First Steps activity pack to their home. The pack will contain an audible ball, a pump, fitness activity cards and information on local accessible sports clubs. The activity cards have been designed to be used individually or with friends and family within the home environment.

The pilot study
The six month pilot launches in January 2015. The study will cover Coventry, Birmingham, Sandwell and Dudley and a rural area within the West Midlands.

We will work with 53 visually impaired children and their families during the study. They will have varying levels of visual impairment and be aged between 7 and 12 years old.

We will work closely with the children and their families throughout the six month period to measure the success of this initiative. Following the pilot and further successful funding bids, we hope this initiative will develop into a national scheme.

Get involved
If you have a visually impaired child and would like to be involved in the First Steps pilot study, please complete the application form on the following link: http://bit.ly/steps2015

Funders
Our First Steps pilot study had been generously funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund and BBC Children in Need.