

**Nebraska Deaf-Blind Project  
Fact Sheet #2, December 2004**

**Assistive Technology for the Deaf-Blind**

**By**

**Dixie Trevarthen, TA Team Member**

There are many different types of technology that can be used by children and youth who are deaf-blind. Each child is different and therefore there is no one perfect solution. They must each be assessed individually to determine what are the most appropriate solutions. The following are examples of different types of technology that might be considered for an individual with dual sensory losses:

**Communication**

Sign language - ASL (American Sign Language), SEE (Signed Exact English), Tactile sign, co-active signs, Print-in-Palm\_

Picture symbols (vision must be considered)

Communication Book

Switches

Single message voice output devices

Voice output devices

Hearing aids

Auditory trainer

FM system

TTY/TDD (telecommunication device)

Pocket Talker

Printer - standard and/or Braille

Refreshable Braille keyboards

**Reading**

Adapted books with large print, Braille, picture symbols, tactile symbols

Tape recorder  
Books on tape  
Colored overlays for paper  
Colored mats to put work on to show the contrast  
Desk lamp  
Large print materials  
Glasses/magnifiers/monocular/binoculars

### Writing

Flair markers  
Writing guides  
Raised line paper  
Hand-held spell checker  
Pencil grips  
Book holder/stand

### Environmental/Life Skills

Tactile surfaces  
Reflective or colored tape- for marking steps, surface changes, edges of walls, edges of tables  
Tap lights  
Vibrating Alarm Clock  
Large display/large button calculator  
Slant board  
CCTV (closed circuit television)  
Braille watch or talking watch  
Watch with alarms  
Vibrating toys

### Computer Access

Computer  
Large screen monitor

**Alternate keyboards**

**Key cap covers**

**Alternate mice/track balls**

**Scanner**

**Software**

**talking word processors**

**talking word prediction programs**

**sign language books**

**screen readers**

**enlarged cursor and/or enlarger programs**

**Kurzweil Reading Edge/Arkenstone Open Book/Arkenstone WYNN**

### **Some Possible Accommodations for the Deaf-Blind**

Many of the accommodations that can be made for children and youth who are deaf-blind are very simple things. Many require little or no technology, minimum expense and a minimum of time.

#### **Some examples of accommodations:**

- \* allowing enough time to respond to questions or conversation items**
- \* use of schedule/calendar boxes, visual planners, or auditory planners**
- \* preferential seating in the classroom**
- \* clear floor space to improve mobility**
- \* minimal clutter on the walls**
- \* lighting issues**
  - dimming the lights in the room;**
  - use of small direct source of lighting;**
  - use of back lighting;**
  - shades on the windows**
- \* physical room setup - keeping things in their place and not moving furniture to improve mobility**

- ✖ visual and/or tactile cues to location in the building
- ✖ contrasting tape/color on edges of chairs, steps and flooring
- ✖ matte surfaces to reduce glare
- ✖ colored transparencies to cover work
- ✖ colored mats to place work on for better contrast
- ✖ identifying individuals learning style
  - best format for materials;
  - amount of time needed to complete activity;
  - necessary modifications
- ✖ mobility
- ✖ toys - push/pull, shapes, sorting, battery operated
- ✖ large print materials
- ✖ Braille
- ✖ communication devices
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>texture boards;</li> <li>object calendars;</li> <li>picture boards/books;</li> <li>symbol boards/books;</li> <li>nonverbal communication and movement;</li> <li>Tadoma;</li> <li>computer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sign language;</li> <li>fingerspelling;</li> <li>cued speech;</li> <li>palm writing;</li> <li>auditory trainer;</li> <li>gestures;</li> </ul>
---	--

For Additional Information Contact:



Teresa Coonts, Project Coordinator  
Nebraska Deaf-Blind Project

NDE @ ESU#3

6949 South 110<sup>th</sup> St.

Omaha, NE 68128

PH: 402-595-1810; Fax: 402-597-4811

Email: [tcoonts@esu3.org](mailto:tcoonts@esu3.org) ; Web: [www.nedbp.org](http://www.nedbp.org)