



Idaho Project for Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness Fact Sheet

Key Elements for Effective Assessment of Children who are Deaf-Blind

Children with deaf-blindness or multiple disabilities tend to experience the world as it exists within their immediate reach (Miles, 2000). Many of these children may have some residual vision and /or hearing. However, the combination of the dual sensory impairment limits the extent of interaction they have with people, access to information about events and objects at a distance, incidental learning acquired just by seeing and hearing, and development of meaningful concept about home, school, and community. School teams must assess these children differently from other students to effectively address their unique learning needs.

SUCCESSFUL ASSESSMENTS SHOULD INCLUDE

I----FAMILY PARTICIPATION

- ◆ Incorporate active family involvement throughout the assessment process.
- ◆ Interview the family regarding their priorities, immediate goals, and long-term dreams.
- ◆ Include family input in planning assessment activities.
- ◆ Use family members to facilitate some assessment activities, as they are familiar and trusted by the child.
- ◆ Give attention to any family concerns that remain following assessment.

II----TRANSDICIPLINARY ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

- ◆ Assessment of the child across natural setting (i.e. home, classroom).
- ◆ Selection of a variety of familiar, everyday activities where different skill can be assessed.

- ◆ Use of a transdisciplinary team approach in which educational team members share knowledge from their areas of expertise for other team members to incorporate in their practice.
- ◆ Follow-up team assessment by using information to plan the educational program.
- ◆ Focus IEP goals and short-term objectives on behavioral skills to be developed or expanded.
- ◆ Conduct ongoing assessment throughout the school year, with changes to the IEP made as the child masters critical skills (short-term objectives).

III---ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- ◆ Base interactions on data in most recent vision and hearing reports. Select toy or other objects that use the child's preferred colors, textures and sounds. Present the objects in the positions where the child has the best vision and hearing. After the child is engaged, move the toys to varying positions to assess any response.
- ◆ Use the child's current communication program if one exists. Interpret the child's changes in behavior as communication, and prolong the exchange to learn more about how the child communicates.
- ◆ Select a single team member to act as activity facilitator to decrease the number of people with whom the child will interact.
- ◆ Choose activities based on family routines.
- ◆ Include components that apply to classroom instruction and appropriate age level activities.
- ◆ Ask the child to make choices, follow steps in a routine, or indicate what comes next in an activity.
- ◆ Embed critical skills within activities to assess the child's level of understanding and

Fact sheets from the Idaho Project for Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness (IPCYDB) are to be used by both families and Professionals serving individuals with dual-sensory impairments. The information applies to students 0-22 years of age. The purpose of the fact sheet is to give general information on a specific topic. More information for an individual student can be provided through individualized technical assistance available for IPCYDB. This fact sheet is a starting point for further information.

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