Children Who Are Deaf-Blind

Deaf-blindness is a low incidence disability. Although the term deaf-blind implies a complete absence of hearing and sight, in reality, it refers to children with varying degrees of vision and hearing losses. The combined loss significantly impacts a child’s ability to access information, communicate, and interact with other people. This population of children requires intensive and effective programs from infancy through young adulthood.

Deaf-blindness is extremely complex and the majority of these children also have additional physical, medical and/or cognitive challenges. As a result, families and service providers often face difficulties in securing needed knowledge and resources. Students who are deaf-blind require special teaching methods and accommodations to succeed as learners, and there is an ongoing need for specialized professional development to train teachers and service providers.

Our Partners

The National Center on Deaf-Blindness has nearly thirty years of experience in the provision of successful technical assistance related to deaf-blindness. This success is the result of a strong partnership among three agencies with long histories of expertise in deaf-blindness:

- Teaching Research Institute (TRI) at Western Oregon University
  - teachingresearchinstitute.org

- Helen Keller National Center (HKNC)
  - hknc.org

- Perkins
  - perkins.org

On the web at nationaldb.org
Email us at info@nationaldb.org

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About NCDB

The National Center on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB) works to positively impact the lives of children and students who are deaf-blind, their families, and those that serve them, through a work scope designed to address the needs of individuals, organizations, and agencies serving this population.

NCDB creates visibility and direction for identified priorities and develops and delivers evidence-based services, supports, tools, and products through a range of technical assistance activities.

NCDB endeavors to capitalize on current and future opportunities to improve the national network of OSEP-funded technical assistance (TA) projects for children who are deaf-blind.

State & Multi-State Deaf-Blind Projects

State deaf-blind projects partner with NCDB in building effective programs. They serve as the connection between local school districts and service providers working with children and their families, and the national and state systems that serve as supports.

Service Providers

Most children with deaf-blindness live at home and receive services in the local community. School systems need access to information, support, products and consistent policy in order to develop qualified personnel and quality programs.

Families

Partnering with families and family organizations is core to NCDB's work. In collaboration with state deaf-blind projects, OSEP funded parent centers and national family organizations, NCDB strives to provide the information, resources and tools families need to successfully advocate on behalf of their children.

Current Initiatives

High quality technical assistance, training and product development in prioritized content areas is designed to both improve the use of evidence based practices and to build more visible and effective systems of support.

- Intervener Services
- Technology Solutions
- Early Identification
- Family Engagement
- National Deaf-Blind Child Count
- Literacy
- Transition

A Network Approach

Together, the National Center and the State and Multi-State Deaf-Blind Projects form a network of OSEP-funded technical assistance projects. The collective emphasis of the network is to improve the integration of services and supports, at the state and national level, to serve children who are deaf-blind.

NCDB strives to foster a culture of collaboration and support for sharing expertise, experience, leadership and resource development.