 **Do you know an infant or toddler with Vision and Hearing problems?** 

 This is why it is important to look at vision and hearing together:

One of the key ways babies learn is by exploring the world around them using all their senses (sight, sound, touch, smell, taste). When babies begin to crawl their world gets bigger as they move around and play in new places. Older babies also like to try out new skills, point to people and objects they find interesting and “talk” about what’s going on around them. Toddlers continue exploring by moving and playing with objects of all shapes and sizes, trying things out and repeating what they hear.

Having vision problems makes learning more difficult. When babies can’t see all the people and things around them (or don’t see them the same way other babies do) the world can be an unusual and even scary place. Having hearing problems also makes learning more difficult. When babies can’t hear (or don’t hear well) they must rely more on vision to learn about their world. They are less likely to experiment with their voices and may become discouraged or angry when people can’t tell what they want or need.

When an infant or toddler has vision and hearing problems together the challenges are multiplied, even if the child is not totally deaf and/or totally blind. Babies may be afraid to touch things or to move around. They may make unusual noises or act in unusual ways when trying to let people know what they want. Some babies act out almost constantly while others withdraw almost completely. Parents, brothers and sisters, babysitters and friends may become frustrated because they don’t know what to do.

A combined vision and hearing loss causes unique learning needs for these little ones, but unique learning techniques have been developed and proven to work. If you know an infant or toddler with combined vision and hearing loss, help is available. It doesn’t matter if the child spends his or her time at home or in a day care setting. It doesn’t matter if they have additional disabilities. What does matter is that each infant or toddler with these unique needs, and their families, find the support that will make a difference.

 ***Turn this page over to find out who to call*** 

ADD DB PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION, PART C PROGRAMS, OTHER AGENCIES

Taken from: ***The Sooner the Better: Effective Strategies for Identifying Infants and Young Children with***

***Combined Vision and Hearing Loss;* Barbara Purvis, M.Ed., National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness, Sept 2007.** 