



State Deaf-Blind Projects and Parent Centers Working Together: Highlighting Collaboration

A key activity of State Deaf-Blind Projects is collaboration with their Parent Centers to create an alliance of mutual benefit. Parent Centers extend to deaf-blind projects, and ultimately to children who are deaf-blind and their families, the benefits of hard-earned wisdom acquired over years. State Deaf-Blind Projects provide Parent Centers with the specialized knowledge and experience needed to extend their work with a low-incidence population.

There are a number of different ways in which collaborations can occur—some small and some more extensive. Now almost 2 years into the State Deaf-Blind Projects' grant cycles, the members of NCDB's Family Engagement Initiative Technical Work Group (TWG) thought highlighting partnerships between State Deaf-Blind Projects and Parent Centers would be beneficial to the network.

We are asking projects and centers that have established collaborative relationships (big or small) to describe their shared efforts by working together to complete the attached form. Once this information has been collected, collaborative pairs will be highlighted through activities such as:

- Online engagement (e.g., interactive webinars, forums, blogs)
- Joint interviews to be featured via accessible multi-media
- Presentations at national and regional conferences

The desired outcome of this process is to learn about effective strategies and activities that will be useful to many projects and centers. We realize that there is not one way of doing things that works for everyone and that states have varying levels of resources to devote to this work. Hopefully, the information gathered as a result of this process will provide a variety of practical strategies that meet different state needs and enable State Deaf-Blind Project-Parent Center partnerships to evolve in ways that lead to systemic change.

In an effort to describe the wonderful variety of work in our network, materials and information about shared collaborative activities will be highlighted using the following continuum of collaboration:

1. Awareness (of the other organization)
2. Communication (communication and networking)
3. Cooperation (shared information and mutual support)
4. Coordination (common tasks and collaborative goals)
5. Collaboration (integrated strategies and collective purpose)

Please complete the form on the next page (you can fill it out electronically—be sure to save a copy first) and submit via e-mail to Megan Cote at megan.cote@hknc.org. (Contact Megan with any questions.)

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Complete just one copy per pair (State Deaf-Blind Project + Parent Center)

Parent Center _____
Contact Person _____
Title _____
Address _____
City, State, ZIP _____
Phone _____
Email _____

SDBP _____
Contact Person _____
Title _____
Address _____
City, State, ZIP _____
Phone _____
Email _____

1. How long you have been working together:

1-2 years 3-5 6-8 9-12 13-15 > 15 years

2. How often during the year do you typically meet (in-person, phone, email):

- Annually Quarterly Monthly Weekly Other: _____

3. Please check all of the following that characterize the substance of your collaboration:

- ☐ We have an informal understanding/protocol for shared problem-solving, referrals, etc.
- ☐ We have a signed written Memorandum of Understanding.
- ☐ We have a formal contractual arrangement.
- ☐ We have an arrangement that that involves funding from one of us to the other.
- ☐ We have a jointly-determined case-triage process.
- ☐ Other type of arrangement: _____

Please provide concrete examples of your shared work and how you accomplish it:

4. Historically, to what extent have you been involved in each other's activities?

Attend events sponsored by the other: not yet occasionally annually several per year

Co-sponsor training events: not yet occasionally annually several per year

Provide training for the partner agency focused on:

Family members: not yet occasionally annually several per year

Staff: not yet occasionally annually several per year

Other (list): _____

5. Do you have Board/Advisory Committee representation on the other's Board/Advisory Committee?

No

Yes, a representative of one of our agencies currently serves on the other's Board.

Please identify: _____

Yes, we each have a representative that is serving on the other's Board.

Not yet, but working on it.

6. Tell us about the benefits of your collaboration. How has it positively impacted your projects and the families with whom you work?

7. Why do you feel your collaboration has been successful? What are some of the key factors that have made it work?

8. Changes in personnel, funding, and other situations can challenge collaboration initiatives. Have you faced these or other challenges? If yes, how have you handled them?

9. Does your collaboration include other stakeholders?

No

Yes: If yes, list stakeholders. _____

10. Which of the following are true about how you share/collaborate on resources and materials:

- ☐ We share our materials with each other.
- ☐ We let each other know when we develop materials.
- ☐ We work together to develop materials.
- ☐ Other _____

11. Do you have any materials (e.g., fact sheets, slide presentations) that you have used as part of your collaboration that you'd be willing to share with other State Deaf-Blind Projects and Parent Centers? Please list them here and submit along with this form.

12. What other things do you share?

- ☐ We share data on children & families.
- ☐ We contribute to the other's staff development.
- ☐ We work together on state level systems change initiatives in the following areas:
 - ☐ Education ☐ B-3/Early Childhood ☐ Health Care ☐ Mental Health ☐ Employment
 - ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Other: _____

13. Do you have any way of evaluating the outcome(s) of your collaboration?

- No Yes. If yes, please describe: