

Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss

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**WV SenseAbilities
Project**





Welcome

Agenda Overview

- WV SenseAbilities
- Importance of Early Identification
- Identification Process/Census
- Resources
- Questions



WVDE – OSP

WV SenseAbilities

- Technical assistance and training for children, their families, their service personnel.
- 123 children birth to 21 identified at this time
- 9 infants and toddlers-birth to 3
(2 Cabell; 1 Kanawha; 1 Logan; 1 Mercer; 3 Preston; 1 Wood)



Definition of deafblindness

Children with hearing and visual impairments occurring together, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that they cannot be appropriately educated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or blindness, are considered deafblind.



Infants and toddlers who are deafblind include:

- Children birth through age 2 who are experiencing developmental delays in hearing and vision,
- Children that have a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delays in hearing and vision, or
- Children who are at risk of having a substantial developmental delays in hearing and vision if early intervention services are not provided.



Who might qualify?

- Hereditary syndrome such as CHARGE, Downs Syndrome
- Pre and post-natal conditions such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, CMV, PVL, toxoplasmosis, Asphyxia
- Severe head injury and or trauma
- Premature birth
- Multiple disabilities



Setting the Stage

It is not the impairment itself but rather it is the lack of access to information or distorted information that has a cumulative impact on child development, especially concept development.

Things to consider

- Distorted information
- Accessing information
- Lack of details
- Energy needed to obtain information



Why is it important to identify?

Early intervention including access to information is extremely important for these children. Giving information to families and service providers on ways to increase understanding for this population should start as soon in their lives as possible.



Key Concepts....

- Vision and hearing are your distance senses
- 95% of all learning is through your distance senses
- 80% of learning is through vision
- 90% of learning is incidental
- Language is learned incidentally
- Sensory Impairments result in distorted or lack of access to information in his/her environment



Key Concepts:

- Early **experiences** have a **decisive impact** on the architecture of the brain, and on the nature and extent of adult capacities
- Concept Development is learned through a child's interaction with his/her environment
- How a brain develops hinges on a complex **interplay** between the **genes** you are born with and the **experiences** you have.



The disability is **not** the Sensory Impairment



The disability is in
Information Gathering



Few are Helen Kellers

- 95% of all of the children on the census have other significant disabilities
- 50%+ of children on the census now have CVI
- Significant and steady increase of children with CVI both with and without hearing loss
- What is CVI?



Census -- SenseAbilities

- On-going Process
- <https://wvde.state.wv.us/osp/deafblindcensus.html>
- When in doubt: contact us
- Word of caution
 - Families become attached and then do not have the small, specific support group



How we can help

DB-Link:

<http://www.tr.wou.edu/dblink/>

Training, team support

WV SenseAbilities Institute, topical workshops

Family support

Family weekend

Home visits, phone calls, email

Individualized assistance

CVI Mentorship Project

Training, assessments, Camp GIZMO, CVRP/CVI

Resource Connections



Questions



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