Accommodations and Supports for Children who have combined hearing and vision loss (Deafblindness)

Center for Disabilities Deafblind Program
Degree of Hearing Loss

Decibel Loss

- Slight 16-25
- Mild 26-40
- Moderate 41-55
- Mod/Severe 56-70
- Severe 71-90
- Profound 90

- High Frequency Loss
Speech sounds

below the lines on the audiogram can be heard
# Other Types of Hearing Loss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Audiogram</th>
<th>Tympanometry</th>
<th>Middle Ear Muscle Reflexes</th>
<th>Auditory Brainstem Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auditory Neuropathy</strong></td>
<td>Anywhere from mild to Deaf</td>
<td>Generally normal</td>
<td>Almost always absent or elevated</td>
<td>Never normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Auditory Processing Disorder</strong></td>
<td>Almost always normal</td>
<td>Generally normal</td>
<td>Virtually always normal. IF a child is diagnosed as having CAPD in isolation he/she must have normal reflexes</td>
<td>Virtually always normal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SD Dept. of Education
Hearing Loss - Definitions

• Deaf: A student may be identified as deaf if the unaided hearing loss is in excess of 70 decibels

• Hearing Loss: A student may be identified as having a hearing loss if an unaided hearing loss of 35 to 69 decibels
2005 Statistics…

• Dept. of Ed. Federal Child Count
  – Numbers of children who are coded as Deaf is 49 (2009 # was 52)
  – Numbers of children who are coded as Hearing Impaired 108 (2009 # was 94)

• SDSD outreach program serves approximately 200 children in SD
Impact of Hearing Loss/Deafness

• Communication/Language development
• Academic performance
  – Reading
  – Writing
  – Concept development
• Social and emotional
• Reduced or missed opportunities for incidental learning
• Greater reliance on vision
Accommodations for Hearing Loss

• Use of good communication techniques
• Environmental considerations
• Classroom techniques
• Equipment (hearing aids/assistive listening devices)
Accommodations for Hearing Loss/Deafness

• Other
  – Interpreters
  – Note takers
  – Captioned media
  – CART (real time captioning)

• Resources:
  – South Dakota School for the Deaf/Outreach/Sioux Falls/605-367-5200
  – Center for Disabilities Deafblind Program Topic Pages:  http://www.usd.edu/medical-school-center-for-disabilities/upload/HI-Class-Accommodations.pdf
Vision Testing

- Vision Evaluations:
  - Health of the eye
  - Distance acuity
  - Near acuity
  - Other
    - Color
    - Contrast
- Low Vision
- Functional Low Vision Evaluation (SDSVI)
Degree of Vision Loss

- Low Vision- 20/70
- Legally Blind -20/200 in the best corrected eye and/or a visual field loss of 20 degrees or less. (Acuity or field loss)
- Blind-no functional vision
Vision Loss

• Other:
  – Cortical Vision Impairment
    • Color
    • Movement
    • Latency
    • Visual Fields
    • Complexity
    • Light Gazing
    • Distance Viewing
    • Visual Reflexive Responses
    • Visual Motor
Vision loss (including blindness) - Defined

- Visual impairment including blindness is an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a student’s educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.
  - Blindness 20/20 or 20 degree or more field loss
  - Partial sight 20/70
2005 STATISTICS

• Dept. of Ed. Federal Child Count
  – Visually Impaired- 42 (2009 # was 46)

• SDSBVI caseload -160
Impact of vision loss

• Mobility
• Academic performance
  – Reading
  – Writing
  – Concept development
• Social and emotional
• Reduced or missed opportunities for incidental learning
• Greater reliance on use of hearing
Accommodations for Vision Loss

- Lighting
- Other Environmental considerations
- Classroom techniques
- Equipment and Materials
- Techniques
Accommodations for Vision Loss

- **Other:**
  - Braille/Braillist
  - Travel Skills/Mobility Instructor

- **Resource:**
  - South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired/Aberdeen/1-888-275-3814
  - Center for Disabilities Deafblind Program Topic Pages: [http://www.usd.edu/medical-school-center-for-disabilities/upload/VI-Class-Accommodations.pdf](http://www.usd.edu/medical-school-center-for-disabilities/upload/VI-Class-Accommodations.pdf)
Deafblindness means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.
Statistical Data 2009

• Dept. of Education Federal child count - 2
• Deafblind Program annual census – 27
  – Most are coded under the multiple disabilities category
Impact of Deafblindness

- Is also a disability of access, but the child’s hearing or vision cannot adequately compensate for the loss in the other sense

- Not all accommodations used for hearing and vision impairments, work for the child with Deafblindness

- Needs and level of support can vastly vary depending upon the child and degree of loss
Impact of Deafblindness

• Three primary needs related to Deafblindness:
  – Learning
  – Communication
  – Social/Emotional Development
Impact of Deafblindness

• Learning:
  – through independent observation and exploration is difficult
  – Children cannot learn what they do not detect
  – They are unaware of what information is missed
  – Essential information is missed and incidental learning is greatly limited
Typical Learning

Direct
Hands-on experiences

Secondary
Listening to a person teach or present information

Incidental
Occurs automatically without much effort
The way most information is learned
Incidental learning usually does not occur and is not effective

Secondary learning is difficult

Direct learning and hands-on experiences are essential and the best way to learn

Deafblind Learning
Impact of Deafblindness Learning

• For the child with deafblindness, one of the most critical areas related to learning is concept development.

• Learning a skill vs. a concept:
  – A skill is the ability to do something
  – A concept is mental representation image or idea of tangible and concrete objects and intangible ideas and feelings.
Impact of Deafblindness
Learning/Concept Development

• Early concepts develop in a predictable order in six areas. The child learns that objects:
  – Exist
  – Have permanence
  – Differ from one another
  – Have names or labels
  – Have characteristics
  – Have function or use
Impact of Deafblindness

• Communication:
  – Development of formal language is difficult
  – Ability to connect to others and be a part of the world is difficult
  – Children who are Deafblind miss opportunities to:
    • Observe the communication of others
    • Participate in communication themselves
  – Communication attempts may be missed or misunderstood
Impact of Deafblindness

• Communication:
  – May try to express their wants through behaviors that seem inappropriate
  – May be unaware of what their actions are communicating to others
  – May have behavioral problems
  – Cannot develop formal communication and interaction skills on their own.
Impact of Deafblindness

• Social and Emotional Development
  • Children who are Deaf-Blind lack of access to complete visual and auditory information results in varying degrees of isolation and disconnection from the world that are incomprehensible
  • They may live lives of chaos
  • They may find social interactions unpleasant
  • They may detach from others
Deafblindness

Instructional Strategies Include:

• Access to visual and auditory information
• Support for the use of remaining vision and hearing
• Experiential (hands on learning)
• Teaching of concepts as well as skills
Deafblindness
Instructional Strategies

• A high degree of consistency
• Routines and structure to enhance learning
• More time to process information and respond
• Opportunities for repetition
• Support for receptive and expressive communication
Deafblindness
Instructional Strategies

• Programming to make choices, solve problems, and develop self-determination
• Confirmation/feedback about the results of their actions
• Support for interaction with peers and others
• Rest time to deal with fatigue
Deafblindness and the Intervener

• What is an Intervener
  – A one to one service provider with specialized training and skills in Deaf-Blindness
  – Provides a bridge to the world for a student who is Deaf-Blind
The role of an intervener is threefold

1. Facilitates access to the environmental information that is usually gained through vision and hearing, but which is unavailable or incomplete to the student who is Deaf-Blind

2. Facilitates the development and/or use of the student’s receptive and expressive skills

3. Develops and maintains a trusting, interactive relationship with the student who is Deaf-Blind that promotes social and emotional development and well being.
Intervener Training

- States have addressed intervener training in different ways
- Movement toward credentialing through the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals and Related Service Providers

- Intervener coursework:
  - Ski Hi Institute/Utah State University
  - North Carolina Central University

- Intervener website: Intervener.org
  http://intervener.org/?page_id=8
Contact Information

- Center for Disabilities [www.usd.edu/medical-school/center-for-disabilities](http://www.usd.edu/medical-school/center-for-disabilities) (1-800-658-3080)
- Deafblind Program -federally Funded through OSEP
  - Technical Assistance
  - Training
  - Information Dissemination
- Website: [http://www.usd.edu/medical-school/center-for-disabilities/db-about-us.cfm](http://www.usd.edu/medical-school/center-for-disabilities/db-about-us.cfm)
- Phone: Rose Moehring, Coordinator (605-357-1437)
  Darla Atsma, Family Specialist (605-357-1518)