

Did you Know?

- ❖ Deaf-Blindness is a term that describes children who have both vision and hearing loss
- ❖ Children with Deaf-Blindness have different amounts of usable hearing and vision
- ❖ More than 90% of children with combined vision and hearing loss have additional disabilities or health problems
- ❖ Having multiple disabilities or complex health problems often keeps combined vision and hearing loss from being recognized or addressed



Karlota is 5 years old and living cheerfully with Treacher Collins syndrome, hearing loss and vision loss, among other challenges.



Berneice Ann is 8 years old and living happily with pyruvate dehydrogenase deficiency, hearing loss and vision loss, among other challenges.

“Close attention needs to be given to vision and hearing skills and development. If you suspect that a child may not be able to use his/her hearing and vision effectively to communicate and gain information, please refer the family to the Florida & Virgin Islands Deaf-Blind Collaborative”

Leading Diagnoses Frequently Associated with Deaf-Blindness

1. Complications of prematurity, birth injury, asphyxia
2. Infections/ Meningitis/ Encephalitis
3. Hereditary hearing loss, vision loss
4. Congenital Rubella, Toxoplasmosis, other congenital conditions
5. CHARGE syndrome
6. Down Syndrome and other Trisomy syndromes
7. Usher syndrome
8. Cytomegalovirus
9. Hydrocephaly or Microcephaly
10. Numerous other syndromes



Florida & Virgin Islands
Deaf-Blind
COLLABORATIVE

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Assisting families of
children and youth who are

Deaf-Blind

Services

For families:

- ❖ Consultation with early intervention team (via in home visit /phone/email)
- ❖ Family to family connections
- ❖ Access to free training (via phone/computer)
- ❖ Access to Family Specialist for resources and information
- ❖ Access to Deaf-Blind specialists to assist with communication and educational information
- ❖ Limited support for families to attend conferences

For everyone:

- ❖ Provide research-based onsite training, distance learning, information and consultation to individuals and teams
- ❖ Build team capacity to implement evidence-based strategies, accommodations and interventions
- ❖ Refer and connect individuals and teams to relevant organizations, technologies and services

**Services are free of charge.*



Eva is 7 years old living joyfully with Trisomy 13, Cortical Blindness & a mild hearing loss among other challenges.

Who are we & how can we help?

The Florida and Virgin Islands (FAVI) Deaf-Blind Collaborative provide consultation and support to children and youth (ages birth through 21) who have both hearing loss and vision loss (diagnosed or suspected). We consult with families, educators, service providers, agencies and educational teams to support the growth, educational success, communication needs and accessibility for children and young adults concerning their Deaf-Blindness .

Deaf-Blindness is defined as combined hearing and vision losses that may impact communication, mobility, participation and learning. Many people with Deaf-Blindness may also have physical, intellectual and/or additional disabilities. Our goal is to help children and young adults who are deaf-blind participate and experience the same opportunities within our community as others.



William is an 11 year old with Pfeiffer Syndrome Type 2. He wears beautiful blue prosthetic lens and no one can tell they are not his own eyes, he also has conductive hearing loss which since his loss of sight has thankfully improved. He has several girlfriends and LOVES SpongeBob.

Infants and toddlers with some of these behaviors may have combined vision and hearing loss:

- **Balance problems, bumping into or tripping over objects**
- **Inconsistent responses to sounds or visual images**
- **Light gazing**
- **Tactile sensitivity**
- **Overactive startle response**
- **Communication by biting, hitting self or others, throwing objects, screaming, etc.**



Assisting families of children and youth who are *deaf-blind*