

THE OHIO CENTER FOR




DEAFBLIND EDUCATION

# EDUCATORS GUIDE FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DEAFBLINDNESS



Education  
Criminal Justice  
Human Services  
Information Technology

 Systems Development & Improvement Center

# Educators Guide for the Identification of Students with Deafblindness\* for the National Deafblind Child Count

\*also known as combined vision-hearing loss or dual sensory loss



## Degree of Vision Loss (with correction)

		Normal 20/20	Acuity 20/40- 20/200	Acuity 20/200- 20/400	Peripheral Fields <20 degrees	Visual Acuity 20/400- 20/1000	Light Perception Only	Totally Blind
Degree of Hearing Loss (with correction)	0-25dB- Normal	No Combined Vision and Hearing Loss						
	26-40dB- Mild	No Combined Hearing and Vision Loss	Close vision and functional hearing	Reduced peripheral fields and functional hearing	Minimal vision and functional hearing	Blind and functional hearing		
	41-55dB- Moderate		Close vision and unreliable hearing	Reduced fields unreliable hearing	Minimal vision and unreliable hearing	Blind and unreliable hearing		
	56-70dB- Moderate to Severe		Close vision and very minimal hearing	Reduced fields and very minimal hearing	Minimal vision and very minimal hearing	Blind and very minimal hearing		
	71-90dB- Severe		Close vision and deaf	Reduced fields and deaf	Minimal vision and deaf	Blind and deaf		
	>91dB- Profound							

### Hearing

**Functional hearing** - hearing aids, FM system, relies upon audition and speech for communication

**Unreliable hearing** - hearing aids, cannot rely only on audition for communication, may use sign language as main mode of communication

**Very minimal hearing** - cannot rely only on audition for communication, may use sign language, speech, speech reading, or a combination of all three

**Deaf** - no usable hearing for communication

### Vision

**Close vision** - blurry vision, needs large print, needs to sit close to communicator

**Reduced peripheral fields** - good cortical vision, may wear glasses, cannot see well on sides, or above head or below waist

**Minimal vision** - can identify only shapes and shadows, uses adaptive equipment to aid vision in accessing printed material or the environment

**Blind** - no usable vision for accessing the environment

## *Do you have a student who has both a vision and hearing loss?*

To determine if your student should register with the Ohio Center for Deafblind Education (OCDBE) and be included in the national deafblind child count, follow these simple steps:

1. Find the student's degree of hearing loss along the left-hand column.
2. Find the student's degree of vision loss along the top of the page.
3. Find where the row and column intersect.
4. If the column and row intersect within the red lines, the student may be considered deafblind and should be registered with OCDBE and included on the national deafblind child count.
5. **To register a student for the OCDBE deafblind census** go to [www.ohiodeafblind.org](http://www.ohiodeafblind.org) home page and **click** on the green box, "Register a Child." Registration is completed online.



# Steps to follow if a student has a vision, hearing, or combined vision-hearing loss

## Confirmed Vision Loss

### Steps to follow:

1. Obtain the ophthalmology report and recommendations
2. Obtain a functional vision assessment
3. Add appropriate vision services (teacher of the visually impaired, O&M) and accommodations to the IFSP or IEP
4. Communicate vision accommodations to all team members
5. Monitor for changes in vision
6. Ensure intervention programming includes needs related to vision on IFSP or IEP
7. Evaluate and monitor for hearing loss (hearing screening, audiology report)

## Confirmed Hearing Loss

### Steps to follow:

1. Obtain the audiology report and recommendation
2. Obtain the functional listening evaluation
3. Add appropriate hearing services (teacher of the hearing impaired, communication services) and accommodations to IFSP or IEP
4. Communicate hearing accommodations to all team members
5. Monitor for changes in hearing
6. Ensure intervention programming includes needs related to hearing on IFSP or IEP
7. Evaluate and monitor for vision loss (ophthalmology evaluation)

## Confirmed Vision and Hearing Loss

### If a student has a confirmed vision and hearing loss (deafblindness)

1. Discuss the vision-hearing loss and deafblindness with the student's parents.
2. Refer the student and family to the:  
**Ohio Center for Deafblind Education**  
3246 Henderson Rd. • Columbus, OH 43220  
614-897-0020 • [www.ohiodeafblind.org](http://www.ohiodeafblind.org)
3. Convene or reconvene the evaluation team to determine if deafblindness is suspected as a disability that requires a multi-factored evaluation or re-evaluation.

# Do You Know a Student with Deafblindness?

## What is Deafblindness?

Deafblindness affects 1 in every 734 children with special needs birth through 21 years.

The federal definition of deafblindness does NOT specify specific degrees of vision and hearing loss. Ohio's definition mirrors the federal definition:

*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.*

The Ohio definition for multiple disabilities includes the statement that *"Multiple disabilities does not include deafblindness."*

Use the chart on the inside of this brochure as a guide to consider whether a student should be registered on the OCDBE deafblind census and included in the national deafblind child count.

Remember, the chart is a guide only. For purposes of the deafblind census, a child does not have to meet specific degrees of vision and hearing loss to be included on the census if the combination of vision and hearing loss impacts a child's communication and other developmental and educational needs.

Go to [www.ohiodeafblind.org](http://www.ohiodeafblind.org) and click on the green box- **Register a Child**- to complete the online registration process. Students registered with OCDBE, their families, and the educators and agency personnel who support them are eligible for services and supports from OCDBE.

### Ohio Center for Deafblind Education

3246 Henderson Rd. • Columbus, OH 43220

614-897-0020 • [www.ohiodeafblind.org](http://www.ohiodeafblind.org)