

# MISSISSIPPI HEARING-VISION PROJECT

*Technical Assistance Services for Children  
and Young Adults Who Are Deaf-Blind*



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI.

The **Mississippi Hearing-Vision Project** provides training and assistance to families, administrators, educators and service providers of children (birth to 22) who have both a hearing and vision impairment, also referred to as deaf-blind. Services are offered to families, educators, administrators and service providers of these children.

All services are confidential and are provided at the request of families, educators, administrators and service providers.

## WHAT DOES DEAF-BLIND MEAN?

Deaf-blindness is a condition in which both a hearing and vision loss are present at the same time.\*

The **combined effect** of these losses, **even if both are mild**, creates unique challenges for the individual that cannot be addressed solely within a special education program for the deaf or special education program for the blind.

Deaf-blindness affects more than 10,000 children between birth and 22 years of age in the United States. It affects many children living in our own state.

Deaf-blindness has more than 70 known causes, including Usher's Syndrome, CHARGE Syndrome, meningitis and Rubella Syndrome. Within each of these etiologies, there are specific concerns that carry lifelong challenges. Appropriate education must address both the hearing and vision impairments, as well as any other disabilities that may be present.

**\*Federal definition of deaf-blindness:**

Concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which creates such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education in programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness. FR Dept. of Education, 34 CFR Parts 300 & 303. Vol. 64, No.48.3/12/99

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Children, birth to 22 years, with varying degrees of hearing and vision losses are eligible. Very few children who qualify for services are totally deaf and blind. Qualified individuals may have additional disabilities, such as cognitive or motor disabilities and medical conditions.

## WHO CAN REQUEST SERVICES?

Any family member or service provider of a child, birth to 22 years, with both vision and hearing losses can request services.

## SERVICES

- **Resource library** with materials on a range of topics:
  - Receptive/Expressive Communication
  - Orientation and Mobility
  - Functional/Age-Appropriate Activities
  - Active Engagement
  - Functional Implications of Vision/Hearing Loss
  - Transition Planning
  - Early Identification and Assessment
  - Behavior Issues
  - IFSP/IEP Planning/Implementation
- Access to **information** on evidence-based interventions
- Links to resources, current events, discussions and materials by visiting our **website** and **Facebook** page
- **Training and technical assistance** - project staff provides training on topics listed above and travels on-site to offer individual technical assistance to families and service providers.
- A family training program, **Project SPARKLE** - parents have access to information, training and resources in their homes via DVD technology and the Internet.
- **Connection** with other families and educators
- Because of the **continued involvement** of project staff with individuals on the registry and their families until they exit educational programs, staff of the Mississippi Hearing-Vision Project offer **a consistent, continual resource** well-versed in each individual child's unique needs and technical assistance in the most current strategies and resources for supporting the ever-changing educational program.

## MISSISSIPPI HEARING-VISION REGISTRY

Project staff maintains a registry of individuals, birth to 22 years of age, who have, or are suspected to have, both vision and hearing losses.

This registry helps shape the locations and types of technical assistance provided. The Mississippi Registry information is compiled by the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB) with registry information from all states for a national child count. Families of children over 21 are provided information on how to link to the Helen Keller National Center services.

If you suspect a child has both hearing and vision impairments, please contact Mississippi Hearing-Vision Project for further information and support.

Phone: 800.264.5135 | 601.266.5135

Fax: 601.266.4978

Email: [hearing-vision@usm.edu](mailto:hearing-vision@usm.edu)

[www.usm.edu/mhvp](http://www.usm.edu/mhvp)

Facebook: Mississippi Hearing-Vision Project

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*The Mississippi Hearing-Vision Project would like to thank the families and children for sharing the pictures included in this brochure.*