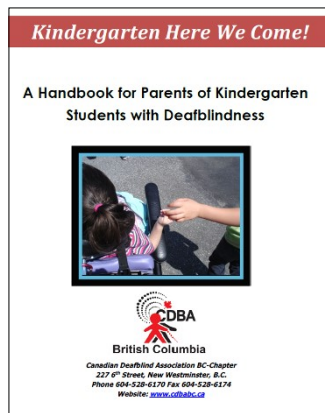


Canadian Deafblind Association — BC Chapter

Kindergarten Transition

Starting Kindergarten is a big adventure for both parents and their child. As a parent of a child with deafblindness, moving from the safety of your Early Intervention team to your school team can be overwhelming and confusing. A handbook has been designed as an overview of this kindergarten transition process. It provides a thorough timeline of what is ahead and explains terms that will be heard at school. The handbook is a place to familiarize



yourself with frequently asked questions, to record information that you would like to share with your school team and to make all

your transition notes. You are not alone on this journey; successful transition for students with deafblindness involves good communication and teamwork between your Early Intervention team and your new school team. Ask lots of questions and draw on the support of your team members at any stage along the way. We are all working together.

Inside this issue:

Kindergarten Transition	1
Upcoming Events	1
Principles of Intervention	2
Family Network Workshops	3
Sensory Exploration Clinic	5
Tips for Play	6
What is a PATH?	7
Youth to Adult Transition	7
Transition Plan Timeline	8
Transition Support	9
Transition Resources	10

Upcoming Events

17th Deafblind International World Conference
Gold Coast, Australia
(August 12th to 16th, 2019)



The theme for the conference is Sharing the Knowledge to ACT: Accessibility, Communication, Technology. Each day of the conference will feature one of these three themes. The conference offers a rich and engaging program featuring worldwide perspectives to empower the deafblind community.

14th International CHARGE Conference
Dallas, Texas
(August 2nd to 5th, 2019)



Parents describe the conference as a rite of passage, a family reunion, a place to meet and network with others facing the same challenges, learn from professionals (medical, clinical and educational), and leave better informed about how to help their child.

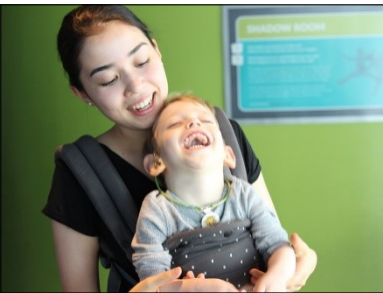
Principles of Intervention



1. Total and unconditional belief in and respect for an individual who is deafblind.



2. The amount of intervention and the form it will take must be individualized to meet the specific needs and desires of each individual who is deafblind.



3. The amount of intervention and the form it will take must be individualized to meet the specific needs and desires of each individual who is deafblind.



4. Individuals who are deafblind have a right to access information in their modes of communication.

5. Intervention is “Doing With, Not For.”



6. No assumptions should be made regarding the abilities of an individual with deafblindness.



7. Never underestimate the importance of the relationship between the intervenor and the individual who is deafblind.



8. The process of intervention must always provide the individual who is deafblind with the information required for anticipation, motivation, communication, and confirmation.



9. Every experience is an opportunity to provide information and encourage interaction.

10. The focus of intervention should always be on the needs of the individual who is deafblind.



11. Intervention is recognized as a process that requires intervenors to have specific skills, knowledge and experiences in order to be effective in providing the best possible opportunity for people who are deafblind to gather information, process it and develop communication, concepts and skills.



Family Network Workshops

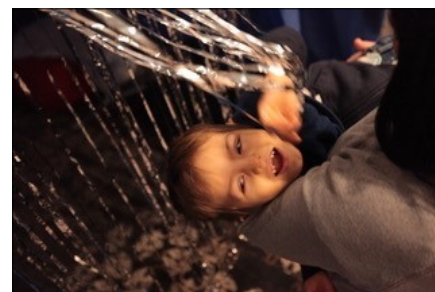
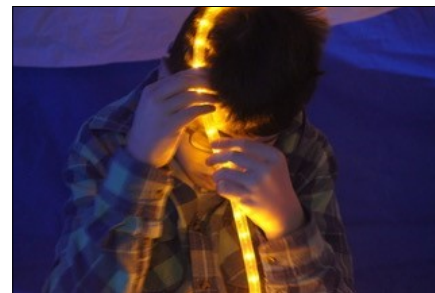


Taking place in November and January, the Family Network Workshops were held in both Richmond and Nanaimo. They featured a sensory tent, presentations on “The Eye” by Linda Mamer as well as “The Ear” by Shelley Law. Beyond the presentations, there was a panel present to speak on the subject of Transition.

Children who are deafblind vary widely in their loss of vision and hearing. Their touch, taste, smell, balance and other senses work together as they develop and grow; however, integration

of all these senses can be challenging. Play assists children with sensory impairments and complex needs to use touch to explore the world, learn and develop communication skills, and have a better understanding of what is going on around them.

At the workshops, the children with deafblindness, their families and intervenors had a chance to experience various sights, sounds, smells and textures - the children and adults in attendance had a great time and smiles could be seen all around.



Family Network Workshops



Some of the feedback that was received regarding the Family Network Workshop:



From Parents:

“Loved meeting parents with similar experiences”

“Super helpful”

“Nice to connect with other parents as well”

“Great functional knowledge”



From Intervenors:

“Very cool area ... ”

“Very engaging”

“Absolutely loved the sensory tent!”

“Lots of interactive activities”



Sensory Exploration Clinic



Aside from just having the Family Network Workshop, the CDBA-BC hosted a Sensory Exploration Clinic. The team set up a Sensory Tent and Sensory Stations. A tactile painting station was set up and led by Estelle Barron, a registered art therapist.

promote emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual health.

This approach celebrates the power that imagination, creativity, and playfulness have on general well-being. Thank you, Estelle!

Art therapy is a sensory-based therapy utilizing various art materials and methods to



Top Tips for Play

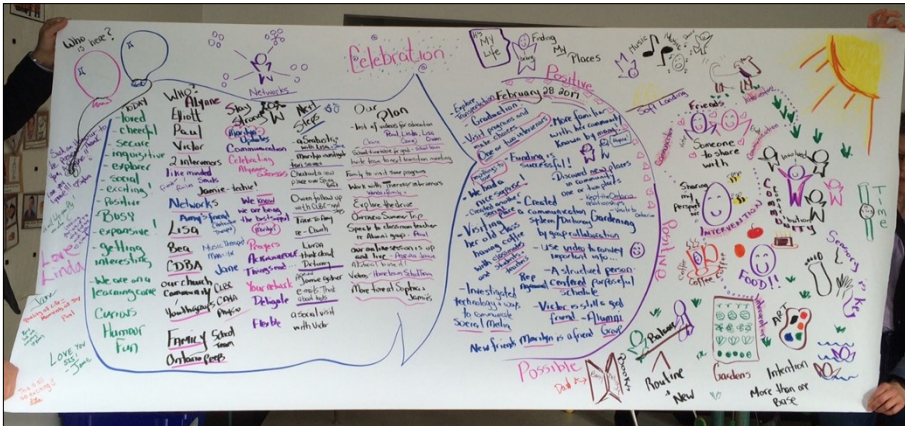
1. Make sure your child is comfortably positioned and as relaxed as possible.
2. Some children can only use one sense at a time initially, so do not do too much too quickly – try only one or a few things at a time.
3. Children need time to respond and do things for themselves. Let the child feel for things without pushing them – you can use hand under hand guidance to feel things together.
4. Observation is important so as not to miss any of the child's milestones, such as increased babbling or increased use of visual or hearing skills.
5. Develop turn-taking games. These can include action rhymes, cradling, rocking and bouncing games. They provide opportunities for stimulating the use of vision, use of hearing, and tolerance of touch.
6. Offer play with food. Children who are developing normally will have many opportunities to experiment and play with their food. This is a precursor to interacting with other substances such as paint, playdough and clay. Children who are deafblind, by contrast, may require feeding by an adult. Playing with food substances, such as instant whip or custard, will allow your child to explore through vision, touch, smell and taste at their own pace.



7. Use a resonance board. This aid feeds information back to your child through vibro-tactile means. Objects can be placed on the board around your child, who feels the effects of his or her own random movements on the objects through both touch and vibration.
8. Choose toys that suit your child's needs. Plastic toys are not interesting if you cannot see the colours or hear the tunes they play. Everyday objects (such as a mirror or Christmas lights) may be better than toys, but always check for safety. For example:
 - Different types of brushes
 - Textured fabrics
 - Lighting, preferably with different colours
 - A foot spa.
9. There are objects 'out there' waiting to be discovered and played with, and we need to bring this world closer to them. Children should be supported to develop their early play and sensory skills.
10. Create a 'sensory environment' for the child. These can range from specialist rooms that may be found in schools or day services, to an environment that has been set up for the child at home. For example, a pop-up camping tent could be used to create an indoor sensory 'room' that encourages a child to learn, to look and to explore

(Sense.org)

What is a PATH?



A PATH is...

- P - Planning
- A - Alternative
- T - Tomorrows with
- H - Hope

...a planning tool used to 'envison' a preferred future for individuals with disabilities. It begins in the future and works backwards to discern the first steps towards accomplishing an individual's dreams and visions for his/her future. It is a celebration of accomplishments and of what is to come!

Youth to Adult Transition Planning

A transition plan should:

- Introduce the student and family to the next steps in life-long learning – moving from childhood to adult life
- Ensure a smooth and meaningful transition for the individual with deafblindness, by beginning the planning process well in advance of school completion – three-year plan (at age 14 or 15)
- Determine who will be on the Transition Planning Team and what role the school and school district will take in transition planning. Involve the student and his/her family as the center of all transition planning. Determine a transition coordinator.
- Be person-centered and be based upon the individual needs of the student. Determine supports required by the student – i.e. Deafblind Intervention
- Determine what skills the student requires on graduation and embed these in his/her IEP. Determine what or who can teach the identified needs
- Encourage and reinforce volunteer and work experience so that the student could complete school with work experience and/or a job
- Enable team members to collaborate and advocate for support services to create an individualized and meaningful working document for the student
- Provide information about the student to the new environment: create a plan that involves cross transition visits for student and new staff



High School to Adult Services: Transition Plan for the Student with Deafblindness

Three years in Advance: (Around 14-15 years)

- Formation of transition team: Establish key contacts – transition coordinator.
- Determine key members for your transition team: student, parents/family/caregivers, Intervenor, school personnel, supporting professionals, Canadian Deafblind Association. Child and Youth Special Needs Social Worker (MCFD).
- If the student qualifies for CLBC services, a CLBC Facilitator may join the team when the student is approximately 16 or 17 years old.
- Confirm date of graduation – check with school district to see what the policy is regarding bonus year(s)
- Encourage parent to contact MCFD: Child and Youth Special Needs Worker
- Do a Path or Maps – a vision statement: dreams and hope for the future (There may be staff in the district who are trained with Path/Maps. The Navigator program and CDBA-BC can facilitate these as well).
- Identify goals, concepts, skills required for post-school years – build into IEP at this point
- Explore work or volunteer opportunities
- Encourage family to begin exploring financial supports such as Disability Assistance (PWD), Disability Tax Credit, Registered Disability Savings Plan

Two Years in Advance: (around 16 years)

- Regular Transition Team Meetings
- Complete Application for Community Living Services (CLBC) (at age 16). CLBC will determine eligibility for services.
- Contact STADD: Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities (at age 16) if this exists in the area of BC where the student lives: (Currently in Abbotsford, Burnaby/New Westminster, Courtenay, Delta, Haida Gwaii, Surrey, Kamloops, Langley, Merritt, Nanaimo, Prince George).
- Ensure student has government I.D. and a Social Insurance Number.
- Further development of IEP goals with strategies and skills which will be needed for adult services.
- Assessment of Student's Current Level of Functioning: Psychoeducational Assessment (Psych Ed) - for CLBC this needs to be less

than five years old on completion of school.

- Create Profile – likes, dislikes, motivators, communication styles

One Year in Advance: (around 17-18 years)

- Monthly transition team meetings.
- At age 17.5, encourage individual or family (on behalf of their child) to apply for income assistance (PWD). This will begin at age 18.
- Encourage family to arrange vision and hearing appointments and assessments; updated reports will be needed to access services.
- Residential Options: discuss housing needs with CLBC.
- Discuss and explore day programs, work or educational settings with CLBC.
- Work Placement: continued focus on work and volunteer experience.
- Transition to new setting (six month transition plan): If possible, the best case scenario would be;
 - Four to Six months in advance: monthly visits to new facility.
 - Four to Two months in advance: weekly visits.
 - Two Months to One Month in advance: twice weekly visits.
 - One month: increasing from two visits per week to daily visits.

- Determine Intervenor and school involvement in these transition visits to new placement.
- Permission will be required from school principal for Intervenor to be working with the student off-site for extended periods of time.
- Discuss training of staff at new setting. Ensure that CLBC considers extra funding for staff training both at the beginning of new placement and on-going. CDBA-BC is able to do some training of staff at day programs, educational settings.
- Once a new program is identified, encourage their staff to observe student at school setting. For continuity, videotape routines – pass video on to new staff.
- Representation agreement should be done in the student's last year at school: CDBA-BC can facilitate this for students that POPDB supports.

~ Compiled by POPDB Consultants
Sheila McIntosh and Jane Sikorski (retired)

What Transition Support Does CDDBA - BC Offer?

Preschool

- Discuss with families what they would like their child to enjoy about Preschool.
- Attend preschool meetings.
- Provide deafblind education and training to preschool staff.
- Provide direct training to support staff working with child in kindergarten
- Develop the preschool communication calendar with the child, their support worker and their team.

Kindergarten

- Work with the family and the child's team making this transition as smooth as possible.
- Work through the CDDBA-BC Kindergarten Transition Handbook, assisting families and their team to meet the timelines.
- Support families in getting Vision and Hearing Reports updated and available for the transition meeting.
- Talk to families about the role of the school Intervenor.
- Discuss with families training available for school-based Intervenor.
- Attend and support the family during the Kindergarten transition meeting.
- Meet with the Provincial Outreach Program for Students with Deafblindness (POPDB), providing profiles of students entering Kindergarten across the province.
- Prepare the 'Introduction to your School' brochure with family.
- Assist with preparing a letter to parents and classmates.
- Complete an 'All About Me' communication dictionary with family and team.
- Tour the school with the family in preparation.

Youth to Adult

- Attend school transition meetings, either in person or by phone.
- Support the family and their child's team in navigating through the transition process, assisting to meet timelines.
- Support the family and their child's team to understand the transition process and the role of agencies and professionals within that process.
- Discuss with the family the benefit of a PATH for their child and if desired, coordinate and facilitate.
- Assist the family with choosing appropriate residential and/or day programs, if desired.
- Support the family during informational and preparatory meetings with agencies or professionals.
- Discuss with the family the benefit of a Representation Agreement and if desired, coordinate and facilitate in preparation for their child's 19th birthday.
- Support the family and their child's team in negotiating for sufficient support, funding and training to allow for a smooth transition.
- Provide workshops and training on deafblindness and Intervention to staff at adult service agencies and programs.
- Provide on-going consultation and support to adult service agencies and programs when requested.



Transition Resources

- Nidus Personal Planning Resource Centre and Registry
 - www.nidus.ca
- Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation
 - Transition Planning for Youth and Young Adults:
 - www.gov.bc.ca/adultdevelopmentaldisabilityservices
- Navigator Program
 - (Phone) [1-855-356-5609](tel:1-855-356-5609)
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
 - Your Future Now; A Transition Planning and Resource Guide:
 - https://www.chs.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/your_future_now.pdf
- Community Living BC
 - Youth in Transition
 - <http://www.communitylivingbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Information-for-Families-Youth-in-Transition.pdf>
- Inclusion BC
 - On My Way: Transition Planning Workshop Guide for Students and Families
 - <https://inclusionbc.org/our-resources/on-my-way-transition-planning-guide-for-families/>
- Community Resource Centres
 - Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Quick Reference Guide
 - <https://askanadvocate.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/PWD-QRG-Good-Copy.pdf>
- Provincial Outreach Program for Students with Deafblindness
 - High School to Adult Services: Transition Plan for the Student with Deafblindness
 - www.popdb.sd38.bc.ca



Canadian Deafblind Association—BC Chapter
227—6th Street, New Westminster, BC V3L 3A5 P: 604-528-617 F: 604-528-6174 E: theresa@cdbabc.ca