



Instructional Strategy – Multiple Challenges

Assessments for Those with Additional Disabilities

“The “why” of assessments is “to determine strengths and next steps.” *Van Dijk approach*

Assessment and progress monitoring among children who are deaf or hard of hearing with additional disabilities is a unique and complex challenge. For those who are not familiar with the impact of hearing and vision loss the challenges often go undetected. The purpose of assessments is to identify and verify educational disabilities and make educational recommendations based on the learner’s strengths and weakness.

Assessments may include a wide variety of formats including formal and informal assessments. Formal assessments are standardized systems used to make comparisons between groups of learners, determine placement of learners, monitor individual progress and provide accountability. Formal assessments types include: criterion-referenced, norm-referenced and standardized procedures. Informal assessments are used to collect data not used or available through formal assessments as well as determine student’s functional skills. Observations, parent, teacher, student interviews, data collection and student portfolios are part of informal assessments.

Available assessment tools to use for students who are deaf and hard of hearing with additional disabilities to include deaf-blindness are:

The Callier-Azusa Scale – G and H

The scale assesses the overall development of students who are deaf-blind or have multiple disabilities. The “G” scale has a high focus on pre-symbolic skills. The “H” scale assesses the communicative abilities of students who are deaf-blind or have multiple disabilities. The “H” scales focus on representational and symbolic abilities, receptive and intentional communication and reciprocity.

The Communication Matrix

The Communication Matrix is an assessment tool used to document the expressive communication skills of children who have severe or multiple disabilities, including children with sensory, motor and cognitive impairments.

Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP)

The HELP is a comprehensive, on-going family centered curriculum based assessment for infants, toddlers and their families. The HELP domains include cognitive, language, gross and fine motor, social-emotional and self-help.

INSITE Developmental Checklist Instructional Manual: Assessment of Developmental Skills for Young Multidisabled Sensory Impaired (MSI) Children

The INSITE is a developmental checklist that assesses the areas of cognitive, gross and fine motor, self-help, social, emotional, communication, vision, auditory, and tactile development.

HomeTalk: A family Assessment of Children Who are Deafblind

HomeTalk is an assessment tool used by parents and care providers of children who are deafblind and have other disabilities to help in planning a child's educational program by providing a broad picture of the child's skills, interest, and personality.

The Carolina Curriculum

The Carolina Curriculum is an assessment and intervention program designed for use with young children from birth to five who have mild to severe disabilities. The Carolina Curriculum covers the following domains cognition, communication, person-social, fine motor, and gross motor.

Assessing Communication and Learning in Young Children who are Deafblind or Have Multiple Disabilities

This guide is an assessment guide to help professionals and family members better understand children who are deafblind or who have multiple disabilities.

The Child Guided-Approach to Assessment using the van Dijk Framework for Assessment

The Child Guided-Approach to Assessment using the van Dijk Framework for Assessment follows the lead of the child as it attempts to discover the processes a child uses to learn rather than what he or she knows. It builds upon child strengths as interventions are developed based upon the findings of the assessment (*Nelson, van Dijk, Oster & McDonnell, 2009; Nelson, van Dijk, McDonnell, & Thompson, 2002*).

Cottage Acquisition Scales For Listening, Language, and Speech. This curriculum includes a developmental checklist assessment and planning for diagnostic therapy. The language section includes steps from pre-verbal through to complex sentences, including pragmatic development.

The Preschool Language Scale-5 (PLS-5)

The PLS-5 is a standardized test of auditory comprehension and expressive communication for infants and toddlers.

School inventory of Problem Solving Skills (SIPSS)

The SIPSS is an assessment of object interaction skills that reflect concept development. The SIPSS has three strands: Basic Skills, Ways to Gain Access to Objects and Ways to Use Objects. The SIPSS has a home inventory assessment as well.

Resources: Designtolearn.com nationaldb.org