

## Part C Intervention Services for Infants and Toddlers (Birth to Age 3) with Sensory Loss: Recommended Collaborative Practices

The purpose of this resource is to provide information on recommended collaborative practices when providing early intervention services for infants and toddlers with sensory loss, including those who are Blind/Visually Impaired, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind. For information on diagnosed physical or mental conditions with a high probability of resulting in developmental delay, including conditions related to sensory loss in infants and toddlers, [refer to the Help Me Grow Minnesota webpage Diagnosed Conditions Affecting Development](#).

Early intervention is critical for a child with a sensory loss. Hearing and/or vision loss results in compromised or missing access to people, communication and the child's environment, which can significantly impact the child's early learning and brain development, as well as access to and interaction with others. Collaboration among service providers and with the child's family is essential in building the family's capacity to provide experiences that will support the child's overall learning and development.

For infants and toddlers who are receiving an initial evaluation for Part C eligibility, evaluation teams must address the child's physical development, including both vision and hearing. If a local education agency or an early intervention service provider receives documentation that a child has been diagnosed with sensory loss, or a medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in a sensory loss, it is recommended that the team consult with the appropriate low-incidence provider(s), such as the teacher of the blind/visually impaired (TBVI) and/or the teacher of the deaf/hard of hearing (TDHH). The team, including the parent(s)/caregiver(s), early intervention specialists, appropriate low-incidence teachers and related service providers (e.g., educational audiologists, speech language pathologists and/or certified orientation and mobility specialists), will determine next steps in addressing the individual potential impacts of the child's sensory loss on their overall development.

Teachers of the blind/visually impaired and teachers of deaf/hard of hearing are able to:

- Share information about the medical diagnoses, etiology and prognosis of both hearing and vision loss.
- Support the family and team with information and resources specific to the impact of hearing and/or vision loss on the child's access and development.
- Coach families on how they can support their child's individual sensory needs and learning.
- Provide appropriate adaptations for home and learning environments specific to hearing and vision challenges.
- Recommend emergent literacy strategies and accommodations that are specific to hearing and/or vision loss with the child's family and team.

It is recommended that teams serving families of children with both hearing and vision loss (DeafBlind) connect with the Minnesota DeafBlind Project to receive specific materials and resources to support their unique needs. For questions regarding resources and materials for combined hearing and vision loss (DeafBlind), please contact the Statewide DeafBlind Specialist, [Ann Mayes](mailto:ann.mayes@metroecu.org) at [ann.mayes@metroecu.org](mailto:ann.mayes@metroecu.org).

For questions about this document or the recommended practices above, please [contact the Minnesota Department of Education Early Childhood Special Education \(ECSE\) mailbox](#) at [mde.ecse@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.ecse@state.mn.us).

## Additional Resources:

### Blind/Visually Impaired

- [Early Childhood Vision Observation and Interview Protocol](#)
- [Ohio Center for Deafblind Education's Vision Assessment Algorithm and Hearing Assessment Algorithm](#)
- [Minnesota Vision Screening Guidelines for Children Post Newborn through 20 Years of Age](#)
- [Minnesota's definition and criteria for the visually impaired categorical disability is provided in Minnesota Rules, part 3525.1345](#)

### Deaf/Hard of Hearing

- [Guidelines for Hearing Screening After the Newborn Period to Kindergarten Age](#)
- Guidance on Part C eligibility for infants and toddlers with hearing loss can be reviewed on the document on the Minnesota Low Incidence Disabilities website: [Determining Eligibility for Minnesota's IDEA Part C Infant and Toddler Intervention Services for Young Children with Hearing Differences](#)
- [Optimizing Outcomes for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing; Educational Service Guidelines, National Association for State Directors of Special Education, Inc. \(NASDSE\), 2018; Chapter 3 Early Identification and Intervention](#)
- [Year 2019 Position Statement: Principles and Guidelines for Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Programs, Joint Committee on Infant Hearing](#)
- [Supplement to the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing \(JCIH\) 2007 Position Statement: Principles and Guidelines for Early Intervention After Confirmation That a Child is Deaf or Hard of Hearing; Joint Committee on Infant Hearing, 2013](#)
- [A Parent's Guide to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Early Intervention Recommendations, 2017](#)
- [Minnesota's definition and criteria for the deaf and hard of hearing categorical disability is provided in Minnesota Rules, part 3525.1331](#)

### DeafBlind (Combined Hearing and Vision Loss)

- [Minnesota DeafBlind Project](#)
- [Ohio Center for Deafblind Education's Vision Assessment Algorithm and Hearing Assessment Algorithm](#)
- [Minnesota's definition and criteria for the deaf-blind categorical disability is provided in Minnesota Rules, part 3525.1327](#)

### Part C

- The definition of an infant or toddler with a disability is found at [34 CFR § 303.21](#)
- The definition of Early Intervention Services is found at [34 CFR § 303.13](#)
- The definition of Early Intervention Service Provider is found at [34 CFR § 303.12](#)
- [The ECSE Part C and Part B Resources Page](#) provides further information regarding eligibility for Part C services in Minnesota. Please [reference the Part C Eligibility Determination Flowchart](#) posted on this page