



## CHECKLIST TO CONSIDER WDBTAP SUPPORTS AND SERVICES SUPPSERV-WDBTAP-001 (Updated 9/2021)

*This checklist is provided for local use only.*

This checklist is to expand awareness of deafblindness and to assist local education agency (LEA) staff, individualized education program (IEP) teams, families, medical providers, birth to 3 providers, or others in determining whether to access free services and support through the Wisconsin Deafblind Technical Assistance Project.

WDBTAP is a federally funded project through the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs. WDBTAP has been established to provide technical assistance on behalf of children aged birth through 21 or until high school graduation who are deafblind. To access services through WDBTAP a child must have combined vision and hearing losses.

- The child does not need to meet Wisconsin state special education disability category criteria for both Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Blind and Visually Impaired.
- Deafblindness does not need to be identified as the child's primary disability.

**If you have checked at least two boxes**, then the Department of Public Instruction strongly encourages you to contact staff from WDBTAP to discuss how the project might provide free services and support.

- **High-Risk Medical History, including the presence of any of the following conditions:**

- Hereditary Syndromes and Disorders, such as:
  - CHARGE Syndrome/Association
  - Down Syndrome
  - Trisomy 13
  - Usher Syndrome
  - Alstrom Syndrome
  - Goldenhar, Hurler, Norrie, Waardenburg Syndrome
  - Cornelia de Lange
  - Stickler Syndrome
  - Zellweger Syndrome
  - Other genetic syndromes or defects
- Prenatal - History of maternal infection/exposure to the following conditions during pregnancy:
  - Rubella
  - CMV (Cytomegalovirus)
  - Toxoplasmosis
  - Herpes; Syphilis
  - Prenatal infant exposure to drugs or alcohol
  - Cleft lip or palate

- Birth History Factors, such as:
  - Birth weight < than 1500 grams (3.3lbs)
  - Prematurity; preterm birth, exposure to oxygen
  - On ventilator longer than 5 days
  - Elevated bilirubin requiring transfusion
  - Low Apgar scores (1-4 at 1 minute or 0-6 at 5 minutes)
- Post-Natal – History of the following conditions:
  - Meningitis or encephalitis
  - Hydrocephalus
  - Cerebral palsy or other neurological disorders
  - Brain disorders, brain tumors or malformations of the brain such as DandyWalker
  - Microcephaly
  - Loss of oxygen to the brain
  - Severe head trauma
  - Prolonged fever
  - Child received “mycin”, lasix, chemotherapy or other known ototoxic medications
- Medical conditions associated with hearing or vision loss:
  - Anoxia, asphyxia, hypoxia
  - Atresia
  - Cerebral hemorrhage
  - Cerebral Palsy
  - Ischemia
  - Meningitis
  - Periventricular damage
  - Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
  - Unknown Medical History

- **Hearing and Vision Information**

- Medically documented vision loss
- Functional vision loss (see page 3 for possible characteristics)
- Medically documented hearing loss
- Functional hearing loss (see page 4 for possible characteristics)

## Functional Vision and Hearing Loss

The information below is intended to provide guidance regarding how a student is **functionally** using their vision and hearing on a daily basis. If during your observations, you note a student demonstrates **any of the following characteristics**, the student may have a functional vision or hearing loss.

### Characteristics of Functional Vision Loss

The following visual and behavioral characteristics may indicate a functional vision loss.

- Abnormal appearance of the eyes, may include:
  - Eye alignment (crossed or turned eye)
  - Unusual eye movements (nystagmus)
  - Visible irregularities (sagging eyelids, shape, size, structure)
  - Tearing, redness of eye or eyelid
  - Absence of a clear black pupil, or a pupil that is excessively large or small
  
- Behaviors of the Student:
  - Unusual eye gaze (e.g. viewing from the side of their eyes, looking around an object)
  - Unusual head position (e.g. head is tilted to the side to look or looking up or down when the object is directly in front of them)
  - Absence of visually directed behaviors that are expected for developmental level (e.g. looking for your glasses and reaching for them, picking up a ball that rolled away)
  - Lack of interest in visual materials
  - Poor reaching behaviors with under or overshooting of target
  - Squinting, tearing, frequently closes eyes
  - Turning away from light (photophobia)
  - Difficulty adapting to changes in lighting
  - Strains or appears to not see as well in dim light
  - Tendency to not look at faces
  - Pokes, presses, or rubs eyes frequently
  - Holds visual materials close to face or at an atypical angle
  - If the object the child is looking at is moved, the child does not follow or track the object with eyes effectively or efficiently
  - Does not visually inspect items being held
  - Does not reach for objects or over or under reaches for objects

## Characteristics of Functional Hearing Loss

The following listening and behavioral characteristics may indicate a functional hearing loss.

- Abnormal appearance of the ears and associated structures, may include:
  - Cleft lip or palate
  - Malformations of head and neck
  - Malformations of ears
  - Frequent earaches or infection
  - Discharge from ears
  
- Behaviors of the Student:
  - Makes few or inconsistent responses to sound
  - High preference for toys with auditory (music) component
  - Startles to new or unfamiliar sounds in the environment
  - May not habituate to sounds in the environment
  - Responds most consistently to familiar voices
  - Shows a preference for certain types of sound (high or low frequency, louder or softer sounds)
  - Has limited vocalizations, does not try to imitate
  - Has difficulty attending to auditory stimuli for a reasonable length of time
  - Does not turn to or attend to voices or sounds
  - Has difficulty localizing sounds (i.e. if you call a child from another room, the child does not know where to look)
  - Differences in voice quality, pitch patterns, or speech sounds
  - Pulls on or covers ears
  - Angles head to one side so as to favor one ear
  - Says “huh” or “what” frequently
  - Misunderstands directions or questions
  - Watches other students to understand instructions

**To access *FREE* services and supports through WDBTAP**

Contact: Wisconsin Deafblind Technical Assistance Project  
(608) 356-2023  
<https://wesp-dhh.wi.gov/wdbtap/>  
[wdbtap@wesp-dhh.wi.gov](mailto:wdbtap@wesp-dhh.wi.gov)