



Oregon Deafblind Project



Building Effective Programs

Lyn Ayer, Project Director • Winter 2010



December 2010



Hello everyone!

Now that Thanksgiving has come and gone — I guess we are all looking for some more holiday fun and winding down this part of the school year!

It's time to document how many children and youth we have in Oregon who have a combination of vision and hearing impairments.... Anyone who reads this newsletter and believes there is a child who has both distance senses affected in some way, please get in touch with one of our Regional Consultants or myself (see page 9). Remember, even though the Federal category is "deafblind" — most children who are deafblind have some residual vision and hearing. MANY children who are deafblind have additional, sometimes severe, disabilities.

This is our "holiday" newsletter, and — as usual — we have some pages on places to look for toys, or holiday ideas, especially if you want some ideas of things to do from or at home — or before you go out to the stores. Personally — I love going to toy stores and playing with the toys :-)

You take care. Enjoy the holidays!

Lyn



"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart. Wishing you happiness" (Helen Keller)



CONTENTS

Director's note	1
Oregon Deafblind Project: Child registration 2009 totals (graphs)	2
Time for Toys, Games and more If you want Braille "stuff" From the Lekotek Center	3-4
The Toolbox: Let's Make That Functional: Using Memory	5-6
Parent-to-parent mentor training: Announcement from the r.i.s.e. Center	7
Upcoming events and news	7
Greetings!	8
The Deafblind Working Group Project Contact Information	9

Oregon Deafblind Project

Don't forget to register any new children identified as Deafblind!

THANK YOU to all Regional Program consultants and others who continue to be involved with the Federal Registry of children who are deafblind. As we know, many of the children who are on this Registry cannot be served as just visually impaired, or deaf/hard of hearing, or just via techniques used for children with cognitive disabilities, autism etc. These children are much more complex than that.

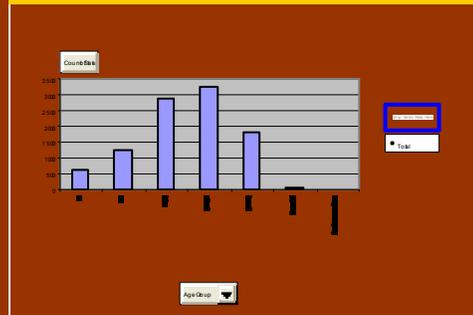
Keep in mind:

- Sometimes a child has a mild vision loss and the team determines that the services of a vision teacher are not warranted; or the hearing loss is mild and the services of a teacher of the D/HH is not deemed necessary. However, it is the combined impact of the losses in both distance senses that must be considered when registering a child on the deafblind registry.
- A child with a vision loss will be able to function by depending on hearing; and a child with a hearing loss will be able to compensate via vision. However a child who is "deafblind" cannot adequately use either sense to compensate for the other since both distance senses are affected. Even with a mild loss in one of the two distance senses, learning is impacted.
- Spectacles and hearing aids may help a child to get more information — but this information will still be incomplete, distorted, and/slow-to-attain!
- Modifications, including one-on-one assistance (preferably an "intervener" who has the appropriate training) will still be needed!

Totals: 2009 Child Registration

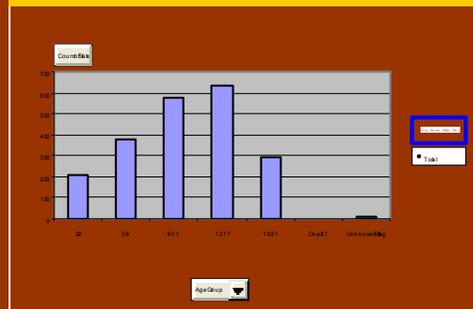
The bars represent ages 0-2, 3-5, 6-11, 12-17 and 18-21 from left to right

Each line represents 500: 0, 500, 1000, 1500, 2000, 2500, 3000, 3500



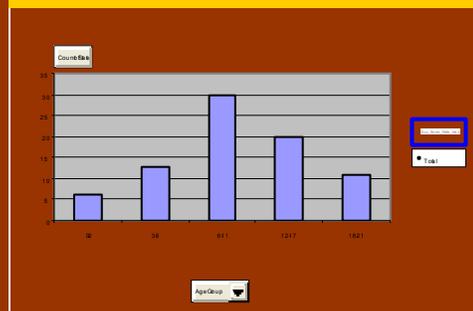
National

Each line represents 500: 0, 500, 1000, 1500, 2000, 2500, 3000, 3500



NDCB Area 1 — Western States

Each line represents 5: 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35



Oregon



ATTENTION PARENTS!

TIME FOR TOYS, GAMES & MORE

Hello parents and families — and educators. Last year we looked at some places you might want to spend some time — and money — especially at this time of the year. Here are some more places to go!

<http://www.vtechkids.com> has a range of toys for young children from around \$50.00 and less.

For example:

- **the Jungle Gym: Ride and Learn Bike** or the **Ride and Learn Giraffe Bike**, encourage gross movement, but also help with fine motor as well. They say, “.....the more your kid pedals, the more they learn....they’ll learn letters, objects and more. This cute giraffe bike includes an adjustable, kid-safe, bouncy seat with three positions that grows with your child.....”
- **3-in-1 Smart Wheels** can be split up and put together for various work levels — beginning with the floor when your child is not yet walking. Some features: “....the pull-out panel and cool light-up dashboard, built-in cell phone, steering wheel, turn signals and horn.” It converts to a rocker and, finally, a riding machine!
- The **Sit-to-Stand Learning Walker** is a “busy box” with a difference! Check it out!
- The **Move and Crawl Ball** introduces things to “press, pull, spin and peel ...introduces shapes, numbers, animals, animal sounds.....Plus, equipped with a sensor, the Move and Crawl Ball wobbles and wiggles with baby’s every giggle!”
- There’s even a **Baby’s Learning Laptop!**
- The **Sit-to-Stand Alphabet Train** has three modes — floor play mode, walker mode, and ride-on mode. It has “26 double-side letter blocks, a book with six turning pages, five colorful number buttons, one movable elephant character, a motion sensor, a ride-on carriage and drop-space for sending the blocks from the train to the carriage”.



You might NOT want toys — and here is something for you to read. Throw away those toys!

<http://www.deafblindresources.org/article/throwawaytoys.htm> This article underlines that human interaction may be far more rewarding than any toys — and teach far more too, while still catering to a child’s need to play!



Blog

You might find it interesting to visit a parent’s blog site such as this one:

http://www.ndcschallenges.org.uk/applications/discussion/view.rm?post_id=7095

— or this

<http://dreammom.blogspot.com/2006/12/best-toy-gift-ideas-for-special-needs.html>

<http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20011217/flair/flair1.html>

Linda Marsa gives us hints on choosing toys for the disabled , gifts that are stimulating, good for gross movement, etc.



http://www.amazingmoms.com/html/christmasgifts_from_kids.htm

This site has homemade gifts, crafts, Christmas party ideas, holiday craft supplies, Hanukkah too, as well as holiday travel tips; the information is by age-range. There are also useful links included — e.g., hand-made gift kits, and a Christmas crafts page.

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IF YOU WANT BRAILLE "STUFF"



One place to visit:
www.BrailleBookstore.com This site has not just books. The Braille bookstore has Braille and Braille/text books for children of all ages, youth, adults, as well as audio books. But take a look at the other "departments" as well: Timekeeping, Housewares, Low vision products, Toys and games, a Gift shop, a Braille workshop, and greeting cards. At the "Info desk" you can conduct a search for something specific.

The "Hands-On Braille" section of the Braille Workshop department has a lot of really cool products. There is a Playskool Magnetic kit with Braille letters, as well as one with numbers. Spell out something and stick this on your refrigerator. There is also a kit with really colorful Braille Magnetic Squares — with the print version of the letters on each tile. Another device called Braille Interlock has letters that you can snap together to form words and sentences. BraillePhun Letters or Math is like a cross between scrabble and dominoes.

In the toy department, take a look at Interactive Bop-It — "the ultimate handheld talking game anyone can play". There are four instructions: Bop it, Twist it, Pull it, and Shout it. Following one of these commands, you need to either smack the center button, twist the lever on the right, yank the nob on the left, or shout a word or two to keep playing. One mistake and you're out! The website states that the "revolutionary new toy is the ultimate boredom buster.... We are very excited about this new toy, because it is one of the first handheld games blind kids can play". There are some other fascinating games such as the Junior Tangler, Magna Buzz, a variety of audible balls, Braille jigsaw puzzles, and — for steady hands — Jenga.

More about braille...

http://www.afb.org/braillebug/braille_print.asp

<http://www.omniglot.com/writing/braille.htm>

<http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/braille/index.html>

From the LEKOTEK CENTER.....

One Step Ahead [www.AblePlay.org OR www.lekotek.org] is the "latest initiative from the nonprofit National Lekotek Center, division of the nonprofit Anixter Center, and the leading authority on toys and play for children with disabilities."

AblePlay has a toy rating system that was launched in November 2005. The unique evaluation process they use provides

"developmental skills and play ideas organized by disability category". Look for the rating scale below each item.



SO — take a look at:

<http://www.onestepahead.com/catalog>

Here are a few of the items I looked at:

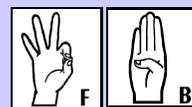
- The Explorer Ring — a "busy box" with a difference.
- Tangoes Jr. — a child version of an adult puzzle/game. Bright colors heighten the visual contrast.
- Configuration Balance Beam — has 27 straight and curved pieces that can be arranged in various patterns on the floor.
- What's Inside? Toy Box — is made of multi-textured cloth. Great for infants and toddlers.
- Baby Dragon Rocker — the rocking horse with a difference. The "dragon" is plush and safe, rocks gently — and is accompanied by "music, diverse textures, various crinkle, squeak and rattle sounds...."



- A trampoline with a handle



The AblePlay site also has a number of interesting new items such as:



- the Fingerspelling Blocks — with molded "hands" atop each block.

- The Tuck-me-in Travel Bed — a unique inflatable travel bed which has "a soft flocked covering for a quiet night's sleep and gentle curved side walls to help prevent tumbles off the bed". Comes with an electric inflator — to make it easy to inflate!

THE TOOLBOX



Let's make that **FUNCTIONAL**
Let's make it **MEMORABLE!**

Think of what your life would be like without being able to depend on memory!! We not only remember, but we have aids to help us. What is more functional than developing and using a child's **MEMORY** of his/her world to enhance it?

Things you might do with Jenny, who is deaf-blind:

- Make "lists" for Jenny to use - e.g., a shopping list. This could be tactile or large print or even on tape/voice device— or a combination
- Create an "appointment" book for Jenny so she knows who she is going to see on a specific day — teacher, doctor, friend, grandma...
- A scrapbook of "Things I like" so Jenny can share things she has experienced and likes — fun to share!!



If a child's vision is likely to deteriorate, it is important to spend time making sure that this child is exposed to as much visual information as possible.

For example, if Jenny is able to go to her visual memory for help — she will better understand what a "squirrel" looks like, rather than just know that it is a small, furry something with a fluffy tail that she can feel. She might remember the color—brown, grey, red— the way the bright little eyes look, the way squirrels scamper around and race up and down trees, or the way they like to bury nuts.....



The same idea would apply to deteriorating hearing — or the other senses. It will give

Jenny a "place" to go when she needs to think about something she can no longer see and/or hear. Jenny will be able to connect the information from her residual senses and fill in "pictures" of her world from what she has in memory.

How many of us keep memorabilia around us — both at home, at work, even in a locker at the gym? Our memories are closely connected to our emotions. These memorabilia are not just aids to memory, but — like chicken soup — they are comforting!

SO — let's think of things we could do with Jenny that might do the same for her:

- One item on the tray of her wheelchair
- Something in her "fanny pack" that she can check from time to time
- An item in her school locker that she can look at, listen to and/or feel each time she goes there — especially at the beginning and end of each school day
- One item on a corner of her desk or work-station



We use memory to match things. For example, most of us remember that a certain sweater looks better with a specific pair of trousers, or that a necklace is the right length for a particular blouse; or that a certain lid goes with a container or a cover with a specific pan.....

It might help Jenny remember what goes with what item if we:

- Use "mnemonic" devices: e.g., hang a necklace with a matching sweater, or a belt with a dress
- Mark clothes with tactile tags that can be matched
- Use tactile designs or braille strips to mark containers and lids
- Put a glob of heat-resistant glue in a design on the handle and cover of a pan.

THE TOOLBOX



(contd.....)

Each of us learns that our life is a sequence — and most of us have information that attests to significant events — birth and other certificates, photographs, collectibles. Sometimes we are organized enough to put these in albums or folders so that the sequence is obvious to us. We connect our present to our past — and sometimes we can also “predict” or “envision” the future! It’s fun....



Create a timeline for Jenny — maybe on the wall of her bedroom — so that she can go from “start”and keep adding to it. Have Jenny help set it up so that she gets the idea of the “sequence”. This happened first, then this, and so on....

Don’t forget to add a “vision” section to the end of the timeline — maybe one large sheet of cardstock or paper — document a “wish list” of things Jenny might hope will happen. As things “happen”, Jenny could take an item off the “vision” chart and paste it on the timeline instead so it adds to “memories”.

It is sometimes fun to **SHARE** our memories with others, especially friends who may not know of things that happened in the past, or others who were actually a part of the memory. Some of us have learned “Scrapbooking”, others prefer diaries that document events, videotaping, or recording on tape. Sometimes we need the memory aids so we can better share what we have in our minds. When we use the memory aids, it helps to bring the other person into the same “sensory place” that we were. It helps to communicate a clearer picture.

Create **MEMORY BOOKS** with Jenny so she can use these to “remember” events with friends and family.

- The books might be as simple as binders — sorted by



events : e.g.,

“Birthdays”

“Summer camp”

“Church events”



- Have one page for one event
- Choose one — or maybe two — items for a page
- Make sure that the chosen items are the most meaningful to Jenny — and not something you think is “cute”. For example, one student had a shoelace pasted on his “summer camp” one year. It meant little to us — until we learned that that year, he had lost a new and favorite shoe down the toilet at camp. He was **NOT** happy about that event, although he did go on to enjoy the rest of his stay. However — that was the one item that jogged his memory for that particular year.
- Once you have created memory books, don’t forget to **USE THEM!** They are no good sitting in a closet or under the bed!
- Pull them out when you are sitting on the couch together, or in the park, or at camp.
- Make it fun to talk about things....
- Remember to **PAUSE** and wait for Jenny to remember and respond
- Send the book to and from school — or maybe even other places in the community (e.g., gym, church, YMCA) where others can also get used to using the memory books.



- All this will help Jenny to build stronger memories, better concepts (because she has the past to use as “building blocks”)

- **GO FOR IT!**

DID YOU KNOW?

Announcement from the r.i.s.e.Center

PARENT to PARENT of Oregon is holding its first PARENT MENTOR TRAINING



When: Saturday, January 29, 2011;
9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Where: Self-Determination Inc., Board Room
1730 SW Skyline Blvd, Suite 127,
Portland, OR

To register: call (503) 706-0744 or
Send e-mail to: p2poregon@gmail.com
Pre-registration is REQUIRED. Lunch is provided.
There is **NO COST** for this training. Donations
are accepted.

What is the r.i.s.e. Center?

We are a statewide organization that encourages, educates, and empowers children and young adults with disabilities, their parents, family members, and professionals to collaboratively achieve unlimited success. Our current programs include:

OrPTI—a statewide parent training and information program serving parents of children and youth experiencing disability, as well as the professionals who serve them....

Bullying Prevention and Awareness — the program focuses on specific curriculum and school-wide programs to eliminate bullying in our schools and communities....

Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education — this program focuses on the parents and family members who are raising our community of children ages birth to five years old.

Transition — our transition program focuses on children and youth with disabilities who transition at different points in their lives.

CONTACT US:

2288 Liberty St. N.E., Salem, OR 97301

503.581.8156 or 1.888.505.2673

Help Line: 1.888.891.6784

E-mail: info@oregonrisecenter.org

Website: www.oregonrisecenter.org

UPCOMING EVENTS and NEWS

➔ For the holidays, Perkins has free shipping storewide.
<http://support.perkins.org>

➔ **Oregon Technology Access Program (OTAP)** has an Assistive Technology (AT) Now! Conference — Thursday and Friday, February 17 & 18, 2011 at Northwest Regional ESD, Hillsboro, OR. To register, visit their website: www.otap-oregon.org

➔ Oregon r.i.s.e Center is hosting a winter fashion show fundraiser, "Awkwardness Unzipped"
When: Friday, January 28, 2011 from 6:30-9:00 p.m.
Where: Venue Pearl, 325 NW 13th Ave., Portland, OR 97214
Find out more: <http://awkwardnessunzipped2011.eventbrite.com>

➔ The newsletter from the Alaska Dual Sensory Impaired Project features "**Math in a Cultural context: Lessons Learned From Yup'ik Eskimo Elders**". This is a fascinating curriculum which might trigger some ideas in your mind. The website where you can take a look at it is <http://www.uaf.edu/mcc> and you can purchase it at <http://www.temerondetselig.com/Math%20in%20a%20Cultural%20Context.html>.

Michelle Radin from the Alaska project is writing an addendum which will include ideas for children who are deafblind [mradin@sesa.org] If you buy the curriculum, she has offered to send you — at no cost — the addendum she is designing! Thanks Michelle and the Alaska project!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



*Every piece of the universe,
even the tiniest little snow crystal,
matters somehow.*

*I have a place in the pattern,
and so do you.....*

Thinking of you this holiday season!

(J.A. Barron)

THE DEAFBLIND WORKING GROUP

Marria Knight— Region one, Eastern Oregon
Colleen McLaughlin—Region two, Central Oregon
John Pierce— Region three, Southern Oregon
Terry Cadigan — Region four, Cascade Regional
Jan Hearing — Region four, South Coast Regional
Anne Olson-Murphy — Region five, Willamette Regional
Kim Puckett — Region six, Columbia Regional
Timothy McCleod—Region seven, Lane Regional
Brenda Satter—Region eight, Northwest Regional
Donna Schuyler - Oregon School for the Deaf
Dennis Crepeaux— Oregon Commission for the Blind
Paddi Davies— NCDB representative, WOU
Tom Udell — NCDB representative, WOU
Sue Mathisen — Regional Services, Management Team
Sam Ko & Colleen Stover — Oregon Department of Education
John Killoran — Director, The Teaching Research Institute, WOU
Lyn Ayer — Oregon Deafblind Project, WOU



We have our newsletters and other information on our web-page with the Oregon Department of Education:

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=185>

Also take a look at our project website at www.oregondb.org

Contact the Oregon Deafblind Project!



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