Deaf-blindness

Description:

“Deaf-blindness is a condition in which the combination of hearing and visual losses in children cause such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness” (Miles, 2003,p.1).

The range of sensory impairments included in the term “deaf-blindness” is great (Miles, 2003).

Many children called deaf-blind have enough vision to be able to move about in their environments, recognize familiar people, see sign language at close distances, and read large print (Miles, 2003).

Others have adequate hearing to recognize familiar sounds, understand some speech, or develop speech themselves (Miles, 2003).

Causes:

There are over 10,000 children (ages birth to 22 years) in the U.S. who have been classified as deaf-blind.

There are many causes of deaf-blindness.

Some are born with it and others become impaired later in life.

Syndromes (Down, Usher)

Fetal alcohol syndrome, maternal drug abuse

AIDS, Herpes, Syphilis

Asphyxia, Stoke, Head Injury/Trauma

(Miles, 2003)

Modifications:

(Jordan, 1998) (Moss, 1995)

- Small groups or individual instruction
- Encourage them to be responsive (my turn, your turn)
- Support from an orientation and mobility specialist
- Co-actively moved through an activity
- Vocab concepts should be broad
- Provide adequate lighting
- Provide enough space for guide dog or interpreter
- Some materials should be available early
- Large print or Braille material
- Interpreters, Notetakers, Tutors, Readers
- Use of signals, objects, gestures, for routine

- Test taking orally
- Extended time of tests
- Teacher stays in one spot while talking
- Teacher does not talk while writing on the chalkboard
- Role-play should include student who is deaf-blind
- Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs)