

Collaborating to Enhance Services for Children with Complex Needs



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Who we are . . .

The Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center (Clerc Center) at Gallaudet University is a federally funded program established to guide effective practices in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in the United States. Two demonstration schools (KDES and MSSD) are a component of the Clerc Center.





Approximately 40% of deaf and hard of hearing children have additional disabilities



GRI Annual Survey of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children and Youth (2006)

Our PIP Program

- Number of families: 17 (and growing)
- Number of children with complex needs: 7



Our PIP classroom includes young children with the following complex needs:

- CHARGE
- Down Syndrome
- Deaf/Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Deaf/Motor disabilities (i.e. cerebral palsy)
- Dual Sensory loss (deaf-blind, hard of hearing, low vision)
- Behavior/attention disorders
- Medically fragile (feeding, complications of prematurity, etc..)

Why Collaborate?

- To promote efficient and effective service delivery
- To avoid duplication of services, contradictions in information shared, and possible competing interests of the service providers
- To promote cohesive information sharing between disciplines
- To avoid unnecessary stress and confusion for families
- To promote a collective, collaborative service delivery plan

“It **is so very obvious to families, but sometimes **not** to practitioners—the “personhood” of the infant, that is, who that infant is, the whole child, is always more significant than the sum of the infant’s developmental areas.”**

Chen, D. Klein, D. and Minor, L., (2009) Interdisciplinary Perspectives in Early Intervention Professional Development in Multiple Disabilities Through Distance Education, Infants and Young Children, Volume 22, page 142-158

Steps To Enhancing Services

- Enhancing on site supports
- Establishing local partnerships
- Utilizing national resources

Enhancing On-Site Supports

- Administrative commitment
 - ▶ Purchase of adaptive equipment
 - ▶ Funding/time for in-service training
- Collaborative support service provision
 - ▶ Assessment
 - ▶ Treatment



Establishing Local Partnerships

- Utilizing available Part C services (e.g. OT, PT, Speech, Audiology)
- Interagency participation at IFSP and Transition meetings
- Partnering with childcare providers

Utilizing National Resources

Places to start:

- National Consortium on Deaf Blindness
<http://www.nationaldb.org/>
- Charge Syndrome Foundation
<http://www.chargesyndrome.org/resources.asp>
- Autism Speaks <http://www.autismspeaks.org/>
- National Association For Down Syndrome
<http://www.nads.org/>
- Council for Exceptional Children:
<http://www.cec.sped.org//AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home>

Our tipping point . . . increase in number and complexity of children



Our Journey ...

Collaborative assessment
and treatment



Professional training
for EI team



Collaborative Assessment

- Teaming with members of on-site interdisciplinary team
- Teaming with outside specialists for assessment
 - ▶ co-assessment
 - ▶ consultation on assessment considerations

Co-treatment

- Use of KDES facilities for interagency service provision
- Availability of ASL classes for outside service providers (no charge)
- Joining home visits of other providers
- Outside service provider joining classroom activities

Professional Training



Connections Beyond Sight and Sound

<http://www.cbss.umd.edu/index.html>

“The experience of working with the team at PIP has been fabulous! We share common values about children and families. It has worked because we are both open to working together. The combination of our efforts is more than what we could offer separately. Effective teaming requires that we be willing to learn from each other, from the child, and from the family. No one has all the answers. I think PIP and CBSS is teaming and collaboration at its best.”

*Sandra Newcomb, Ph.D.
Connections Beyond Sight and Sound*

For More Information

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