

INTERVENOR SERVICES



INFORMATION AND TIPS

DeafBlind Ontario Services provides an array of services to people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, non-verbal and deafblind that are customized to each individual's unique needs, method of communication, and goals to enrich their life.

What is an Intervenor?

Intervenors are professionally trained to act as the “eyes” and “ears” of the individual with deafblindness through the sense of touch.

Because every person with deafblindness experiences a varying degree of sensory loss, each person will use their own unique and individual way to communicate.

Intervenors provide visual and auditory information to individuals with deafblindness. By facilitating the exchange of information and assisting with communication methods, intervenors empower people with deafblindness to thrive.

DeafBlind Ontario Services' professional intervenors foster independence through a holistic and person-centered approach of “do with, not for”. They support people with deafblindness to gain independence, build their life skills, and actively participate in all areas of their lives.

Training

Specialized training has always been a priority at DeafBlind Ontario Services. Our TOUCH™ (Training, Ongoing, Unique, Committed, Holistic) training was developed to strengthen the competencies of those who touch the lives of people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, non-verbal and deafblind.

Certification

Certified Deafblind Intervenor Specialists (CDBIS™) are highly trained professionals who work with individuals who are deafblind and those identified as having a dual sensory loss.

CDBIS's are experts in providing auditory, visual, and tactile information to someone who is deafblind. Learn more: acvrep.org/certifications/cdbis.

Tips for Communicating with a Person Who is Deafblind

1. When greeting a person who is deafblind, always say or sign your name even if they already know you. Wait for them to acknowledge you or offer their hand to be shaken.
2. Look and speak in first person to the person who is deafblind. Avoid personal conversations with the intervenor and phrases such as “tell her” and “explain to him”. They are working as a means of information transmission and are not a participant.
3. Avoid using acronyms. Use your ordinary language, as well as your normal tone, volume, and pace when speaking. Ask the intervenor to indicate if they want you to repeat information, speak slower, or do anything to facilitate communication. The intervenor must communicate everything that is said; never ask the intervenor to refrain from communicating some of what you say.
4. Before a meeting, ask about the best lighting for the deafblind person and ensure there is no background noise during the meeting or presentation. Make accommodations for any technical equipment or devices required.
5. If you are distributing an agenda, minutes, or other written material, offer a copy to both the person with deafblindness and the intervenor. Ensure you have braille copies, large print, or alternate formats as required. Consider the accessibility of the documents and meeting materials. Providing materials in advance helps the intervenor to better prepare and ensure the meeting/ conversation runs smoothly.
6. For larger crowds, intervenors will need accommodations so they can sit with the deafblind person. For smaller meetings, ask what works best for the deafblind person.
7. In a meeting with a person with deafblindness, let them know when you leave or re-enter the room.
8. Only one person at a time should speak at the meeting, otherwise it can be distracting and make it difficult for the intervenor to follow the main conversation.
9. When moving from one speaker to another, identify who is speaking next by taking a slight pause or a show of hands.
10. Schedule breaks every hour, and if you haven't, ask the person with deafblindness if they need a break.

**These tips are a general guide, each individual will have unique personal preferences.
If you are unsure of the appropriate way to proceed in a particular situation then just ask.**

