



# DeafBlind Ontario Services

## *Enriching Lives One Touch and Sign at a Time*





## About DeafBlind Ontario Services

DeafBlind Ontario Services supports people who are deafblind, as well as those living with a developmental disability who are Deaf, hard of hearing or use non-traditional forms of communication. Specialized services are customized to each person's unique needs, method of communication, and goals to live their best life.

Our reach extends into remote communities and urban centres across the province with supported living homes and community services.

We are one of the largest service providers in Ontario for people with sensory loss who experience communication challenges.

## Our Impact

As of March 31, 2026

37

Years of  
Service

111

People  
Supported

362,255

Hours of direct  
service delivered

324

Total  
Employees

202

Community  
Training Attendees



# Our Values

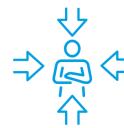
## Foundational Principles

This is our 'why' - the deep purpose and inspiration behind everything we do at DeafBlind Ontario Services



### Infinite Possibilities

We are driven by an unwavering belief that every person possesses 'Infinite Possibilities'.



### Person-Centered Dedication

At the heart of everything we do, we place the Individual.

## Core Values

This is our 'how' - the guide to our day-to-day interactions, decisions, and practices.



### Pursuit of Excellence

Relentless dedication to high standards.



### Accountability in Action

Achieving success, while emphasizing responsibility for one's actions, decisions, and outcomes.



### Collective Success

Collective effort aimed at achieving exceptional results.



### Fearless Empowerment

Taking bold actions that prioritize the well-being of individuals, teams, and the organization.



# About Deafblindness

Deafblindness is a combination of hearing and vision loss that is unique to each person and impacts access to information, communication, and mobility.

## **Types of deafblindness:**

### Acquired

Acquired deafblindness is a description applied to people who experience both vision and hearing loss later in life. Losses may occur at separate times or may occur simultaneously. They may also be progressive.

### Congenital Deafblindness

Congenital deafblindness is a description applied to people who are born with both hearing and vision loss or who became deafblind before developing symbolic language.

### Age related

Adults who experience both hearing and vision loss as they age are considered to have “dual sensory loss” or “age related” deafblindness.

The Canadian Survey on Disability data, 2022 from Statistics Canada, confirms that over 2% of Canada’s population 15 years and over (or 602,160) are deafblind. 52% of those who are deafblind (or 314,260) are 65 years and older.

In Ontario, 246,370 people who are 15 years and over are deafblind. Of those 65 years of age and over, 120,800 are deafblind.

*95% of what we learn comes from what we see and hear. Imagine what it must be like to be deafblind.*



## About Hearing Loss

According to the World Health Organization's 2021 World Report on Hearing, by 2050 approximately 2.5 billion people globally will be living with some degree of hearing loss, of whom at least 700 million will require rehabilitation services.

The Canadian Association of the Deaf-Association des Sourds du Canada recognizes a person to be medically/audiologically deaf when that person has little or no functional hearing and depends upon visual rather than auditory communication. "Visual means of communication" include Sign language, lip reading, speech-reading, and reading and writing. "Auditory means of communication" include voice, hearing, and hearing aids and devices.

People who live with a developmental disability and are Deaf, hard of hearing or use non-traditional forms of communication are a diverse group with a variety of support needs. They require access to specially trained professionals to communicate in their preferred language of choice. They may use augmentative or alternate systems of communication<sup>1</sup> as their additional mode of verbal and/or written expression (in addition to sign language – ASL, LSQ). Having inclusive and equitable access to services of their choice helps support their rights, culture and communication needs.

Of the estimated 1.5% (or 120,000) Canadians who live with developmental disabilities as per the Canadian Survey on Disability data, 2022 from Statistics Canada, approximately 0.2% (or 240) are Deaf, hard of hearing or use non-traditional forms of communication.



## Methods of Communication

With varying degrees of sensory loss, each person we support uses their own unique and individual way to communicate. As a communication partner, our specialized support team may use as many methods of communication as needed to facilitate the exchange of information. An Enriched Communication Approach (ECA) is for and with each person and assists in creating a responsive environment to address diverse communication styles and language needs of a person supported.

Methods of Communication can include, but are not limited to:

- Adapted American Sign Language (AASL)
- Adapted Interactive Tactual Sign Language (AITSL)
- American Sign Language (ASL)
- Braille
- Fingerspelling
- Gestures
- Langue des Signes Québécoise (LSQ)
- Large print notes
- Oral
- Print on Palm
- Signing Exact English (SEE)
- Tangible Symbols, including object cues and picture cues
- Technology like iPads, speech generative devices, screen readers, etc.
- Two-hand Manual
- Others, as determined by the person.