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ABSTRACT

This final report describes a 3-year project to provide services to all children (approximately 144) between 0-21 years with deaf blindness in Colorado. The project addressed seven areas: (1) information for identification, (2) technical assistance to develop services, (3) home-based services to infants and toddlers, (4) transition services, (5) parent support, (6) consultation and training, and (7) registry/census. A principal focus of the program was the provision of interagency services in a collaborative mode led by an interagency council. One conclusion was the need for regionalization of resources in such a large state. Accomplishments toward seven objectives are reported in terms of the project's goal and project year, including: providing information for identifying and referring infants and young children with deaf blindness; providing technical assistance in assessment and program development services for infants and preschoolers with deaf blindness; providing support services and consultation to parents, especially in rural areas; and maintaining an updated state registry of infants, children, and young adults with deaf blindness. Conclusions and recommendations are also given for each objective. (DB)

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SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DEAF-BLINDNESS  
CFDA-84 - STATE AND MULTI-STATE PROJECTS

FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

PROJECT NUMBER: H025A90029

PROJECT START DATE: 10-01-89  
PROJECT END DATE: 09-30-92

PROJECT TITLE: Services for Deaf Blind Children and Youth

PROJECT DIRECTOR: A. James Nezol, Ed.D. GEOGRAPHIC AREA SERVED: State of Colorado

MAILING ADDRESS:  
H025A90029

Colorado Department of Education  
Special Education Services Unit  
201 E. Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203

DIRECT SERVICE OFFERED BY PROJECT:

AGES OF CHILDREN: 0-21  
# OF CHILDREN: 144

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (303) 866-6719

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:  
# OF PARENTS: 250  
# OF TEACHERS: 150  
# OF ADMINISTRATORS: 80

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is the primary educational agency of the State of Colorado with the responsibility for assuring that all children with disabilities between the ages of birth and twenty-one receive a free and appropriate education. It applied for and received a three year (1989-1992) grant from the U. S. Department of Education to provide services to all children with deaf blindness in Colorado. This grant, entitled **Services to Deaf Blind Children and Youth**, addressed seven areas: (1) information for identification, (2) technical assistance to develop services, (3) home based services to infants and toddlers, (4) transition services, (5) parent support, (6) consultation and training, and (7) registry /census.

From the start, the intention of the grant was to provide interagency services in a collaborative mode with direction from an interagency council called the Network on Deaf Blindness. With CDE as the facilitator and technical assistance resource for the state, leadership for various components of the grant was assigned to those agencies whose applications reflected a history of strength and commitment in particular areas. Thus the Colorado Department of Health Home Intervention Program took on leadership in early childhood programming; and Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind was given a primary role in transition programming.

The three years provided many challenges and posed many questions to be answered. In many ways, this grant period set the tone for future grant activities. Many successes in providing for the needs of infants and toddlers gave impetus to even greater effort for the next three years. The obvious need for more systematic training made education the major focus for the whole array of future activities. The expressed needs of parents mandated a greater concentration on families for future endeavor.

One fact that became abundantly clear was that for an effective response to needs, regionalization of resources would need to be developed. Colorado is too large geographically to serve all technical assistance needs from Denver. The fact that two-thirds of identified children with deaf blindness in Colorado live in the Denver metro area demonstrates the danger of concentrating resources in one place. Other areas under-identify and too often under-serve. Future efforts must train a cadre of experts from all regions of the state.

Accomplishments and concerns are detailed below. Many needs are yet to be met. This grant period was a good beginning, which identified both children in need of service and partners for helping meet needs. We owe it to our children with deaf blindness and their families to continue the effort to fully include them in all areas of our communities.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Colorado Department of Education was the recipient of a three year grant through the U. S. Department of Education to help meet the needs of all children with deaf blindness in Colorado. At the inception of the grant period, 115 children were identified who qualified under the state definition of deaf blindness; at project conclusion, this population had expanded to 144 children. Particular emphasis was reserved for children meeting this definition for whom there was no state mandate; that is, children birth through age five and students in transition to adult services. Services for the remainder of the population were limited to technical assistance rather than direct service.

Results of the original needs assessment generated one major goal and seven objectives which were retained throughout the grant period. This goal and the seven objectives were the following:

**GOAL: To ensure services to the deaf blind population currently not covered by Colorado State Statute and to enhance existing services to individuals with deaf blindness.**

OBJECTIVE 1: To provide information for identifying and referring children with deaf blindness (birth - 5 years).

OBJECTIVE 2: To provide technical assistance to all appropriate educators and health personnel in assessment and program development services for all identified infants and preschoolers with deaf blindness.

OBJECTIVE 3: To support coordination between agencies for the provision of home-based services to infants and toddlers (birth to three years) with deaf blindness.

OBJECTIVE 4: To provide technical assistance, training, and support services to assist programs in the provision of transition services for youth (16-21 years) with deaf blindness, with specific emphasis given to supported employment, living options, mobility training and communication.

OBJECTIVE 5: To provide support services and consultation to parents (primary caregivers) throughout Colorado, especially in the rural areas, in order to enhance their involvement in the educational process.

OBJECTIVE 6: To provide consultation to preservice and current service providers for training, dissemination of effective strategies for community referenced curriculum, functional assessment, supported employment, behavioral management and appropriate recreation/leisure skills.

OBJECTIVE 7: To maintain an updated state registry of infants, children, and young adults with deaf blindness for planning and coordinating of activities.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PROJECT

Major activities were developed under each objective each of the three years of the project period. These resulted in enhanced services to children with deaf blindness as described in this section. The core for the planning and implementation of these activities was the

Network on Deaf Blindness, representing all of the major agencies serving persons with deaf blindness in Colorado as well as consumers who are deaf blind and parents of children who are deaf blind. As the result of the deliberation of this body and changing circumstances in the state, objectives and their activities were fine tuned on a continuous basis to assure that the intent and the regulations of the granting authority were adhered to. Activities are listed for each year of the project below.

**PROJECT YEAR ONE  
OCTOBER 1, 1989 - SEPTEMBER 30, 1990**

**OBJECTIVE 1: INFORMATION FOR IDENTIFICATION**

1. A brochure to acquaint the public with Colorado Deaf Blind Services was developed, and a newsletter was produced in October and May. These were disseminated to service providers and through them to other constituencies throughout the state.
2. Child Find Coordinators were contacted and made aware of the critical need to identify children with deaf blindness. Directors of Special Education and other key personnel were also addressed and enlisted in the effort to assure thorough identification.
3. The brochure was distributed at major conferences and registered with Directory Information Services (DIRS) for dissemination to major agencies.

**OBJECTIVE 2: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOP SERVICES**

1. Families of every newly identified child were sent pertinent information regarding services for their child; and agencies providing services developed resources to help families understand their role in the educational process.
2. Technical assistance was given to service providers working with children with deaf blindness at their request.
3. Consultations were provided by CDE both over the phone and through site visits.
4. The CDE Resource Materials Center was expanded to provide assessment tools and program development resources.

**OBJECTIVE 3: HOME-BASED SERVICES TO INFANTS AND TODDLERS**

1. A request for proposals was distributed to participating agencies in Colorado with priority for selection based upon an emphasis to serve infants at least four times a month in a home intervention model. The Colorado Department of Health was given the major responsibility for implementation of early childhood deaf blind services; and Anchor Center for Blind Children was assigned a supplementary role.
2. Infants suspected to be deaf blind received assessments in five functioning areas; and videotape assessments were provided twice during the year for each child with deaf blindness. Results and analysis of videotapes were shared with parents as part of the home intervention program.



3. Technical assistance was provided for approximately 50 professionals through two conference presentations.
4. Data was gathered on children served through reports, videotapes, and observation checklists.

#### OBJECTIVE 4: TRANSITION SERVICES

1. Through the Deaf Blind Network, coordination of services to assist transition was addressed. Information, resources and consultation were exchanged.
2. Requests for proposals were distributed. The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) was selected as a program site; and support was provided for a summer transition effort with payment for work experience paid by JTPA.
3. Two topical presentations specific to deaf blindness were featured at the fall Interagency Vocational Conference with grant support.
4. Technical assistance was provided through CSDB to other programs seeking to explore transition issues for their students with deaf blindness.
5. Parents and providers were encouraged to attend Next Steps Training for transition of young adults.
6. A video profile was developed for students involved in the CSDB transition effort providing a resume to be used for future employment inquiries.
7. Students in the transition program were evaluated and needs and abilities identified. This information was used to help in planning summer employment and post graduation support.

#### OBJECTIVE 5: PARENT SUPPORT

1. All families with children identified as deaf blind were provided with information on Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) and how to apply for attendance at its training's providing information on educational process, communication skills, legal rights and other parental issues.
2. Families were also mailed information on location, time, dates, and how to obtain reimbursement for Colorado TASH (C-TASH), another source of support stressing integrated education for children with severe needs.
3. Parents were also made acquainted with other parent resources, including Metro PEP, EPP, Northern Parent Center, and PEAK.
4. Parents were invited to the Fall Interagency Vocational Conference co-sponsored by the grant.
5. Infusion of topics of interest to parents and service providers of children with deaf blindness were arranged for conferences of related organizations, including VISERV (Visually Impaired Service, Education, Resources, Volunteers) and ARC (Association of Retarded Citizens); and parents were invited and offered reimbursement.

## OBJECTIVE 6: CONSULTATION AND TRAINING

1. The Deaf Blind Newsletter was published and disseminated twice during this period, documenting project activities, disseminating effective strategies, and announcing upcoming conferences and model programs.
2. Consultation was provided to University of Northern Colorado staff to assist in presentation of information relating to deaf blindness to preservice teachers of children with hearing and with vision impairments.
3. Technical assistance was provided on request to train existing service providers in best practices.
4. A line by line Braille to print computer system was developed allowing instant communication between a teacher and a student who is blind or deaf blind, utilizing a nine dot Braille code with advanced mathematics, scientific notation and foreign language capability.
5. Work was begun on an updated version of the Resource Catalog; additional education kits, curriculums, videotapes, and assessment instruments were purchased.
6. Reimbursement was provided to existing service providers to attend conferences related to deaf blindness.

## OBJECTIVE 7: REGISTRY/CENSUS

1. Forms were provided to referring agencies as new referrals were received in order to obtain information necessary for maintaining the Registry.
2. A report was printed for each administrative unit listing their children with deaf blindness and requesting corrections, deletions, additions and other changes. This coincided with December 1 count required of all other title programs.
3. Information received was reconciled with P.L. 94-142 and P.L. 89-313 data.
4. Data was supplied to TASH-TAC and to the Helen Keller Regional Center representative.

### PROJECT YEAR TWO OCTOBER 1, 1990 - SEPTEMBER 30, 1991

## OBJECTIVE ONE: INFORMATION FOR IDENTIFICATION

1. The Deaf Blind Newsletter was produced and disseminated both in the fall and in the spring to document current project activities. The brochure describing services for individuals with deaf blindness was distributed to service providers statewide through local education agencies, community centered boards, Child Find coordinators, the Department of Health Handicapped Childrens' Program, Anchor Center for the Blind and Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind.
2. The Coordinator of Deaf Blind Services co-hosted the annual Child Find Coordinator meeting and attended other Child Find meetings and inservice trainings for hospitals specializing in prenatal and pediatric care and helped develop deaf blind awareness.



3. Assessments of two newly identified children with deaf blindness helped service providers develop a better understanding to assist in Child Find efforts.

#### OBJECTIVE 2: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOP SERVICES

1. Technical assistance was made available to professionals serving children with deaf blindness in areas identified to be of critical need.
2. Consultation was provided to professionals through phone contact and home visits.
3. Direct services to infants were utilized as training opportunities for further services.

#### OBJECTIVE 3: HOME-BASED SERVICES TO INFANTS AND TODDLERS

1. The Colorado Department of Health Home Intervention Program continued to lead services to infants and toddlers with deaf blindness, working with fifteen families one time a week through the year and helping to provide training to 75 service providers statewide.
2. For each of the families above, a complete assessment was conducted, utilizing a detailed videotape analysis with evaluation addressing five identified areas of function.
3. Data was collected from the video assessments to predict needs, spot trends, and evaluate effectiveness of home intervention services.
4. Anchor Center expanded its role, providing 20 functional vision and compensatory skill evaluations and related parent/teacher/program consultations. For children in the Denver Metro Area, this included regular or weekly home visits providing developmental skill activities
5. Additional consultation was provided statewide and particularly in hard-to-serve rural areas to assist service providers in community agencies to better assess and serve the needs of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with deaf blindness.

#### OBJECTIVE 4: TRANSITION SERVICES

1. The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) continued to serve as a model site for transition services, providing summer transition services in cooperation with JTPA and community employers.
2. Video profiles demonstrating employability were developed for participating youth with deaf blindness as resumes for future employment inquiries; and each student was evaluated to identify needs and abilities in relation to post graduation, summer employment and community referenced curriculum.
3. The Jefferson County Community Centered Board was selected as an outreach site to explore the utilization of the CSDB Model in other settings. Two students with deaf blindness were evaluated and given work experience opportunities.
4. Two topical presentations on deaf blindness were presented at the Interagency Vocational Conference with grant support.

## OBJECTIVE 5: PARENT SUPPORT

1. Information and resources on support and educational groups were shared with all families of newly identified children with deaf blindness.
2. Families were assisted in obtaining information on educational process, legal rights, transition efforts, and other topics of interest.
3. Families were encouraged by participants in numerous conferences, including C-TASH, the Interagency Vocational Conference, the early childhood Alphabet Conference, the Affective Needs Conference, and Next Steps Training for Transition of young adults.

## OBJECTIVE 6: CONSULTATION AND TRAINING

1. Two editions of the Deaf Blind Newsletter were published which documented current project activities and announced up-coming conferences and model programs.
2. Consultation was provided to assist personnel training programs to address deaf blind issues. The Project Director presented information on deaf blindness to students at the University of Northern Colorado.
3. Consultation was provided to service providers to help them better meet the needs of their students with deaf blindness.
4. The up-dated version of the Resource Catalog was completed and widely distributed throughout the state. Additional items were purchased.
5. The Colorado Deaf Blind Network was strengthened and became a major forum for dissemination of current information on deaf blindness.
6. In cooperation with the Colorado Department of Health and with the infusion of Title VI-B funds, a major conference was presented on Vision As a Support Service for Children with Multiple Handicaps and Deaf Blindness. Dr. June Downing of the University of Arizona was a major presenter; and over 100 service providers participated.

## OBJECTIVE 7: REGISTRY/CENSUS

1. Data on newly identified individuals with deaf blindness was received and added to the census.
2. Census data was solicited from administrative units and agencies currently listing children with deaf blindness in their programs.
3. This data was reconciled with data received for I.D.E.A. and for P. L. 89-313 and P.L. 99-457.
4. The Census was submitted to OSERS and to TRACES.
5. The data was examined to help in planning future program needs.

**PROJECT YEAR THREE**  
**OCTOBER 1, 1991 - SEPTEMBER 30, 1992**

**OBJECTIVE 1: INFORMATION FOR IDENTIFICATION**

1. The Deaf Blind Newsletter was again produced and disseminated to families and service providers. The brochure and the resource catalog were distributed on request as new providers responded to new training opportunities, including a Hilton Perkins project to improve assessment practices and other aspects of delivery of services for children birth to age seven with deaf blindness.
2. Deaf blindness was given special emphasis as state leaders met to find ways to meet the needs of children with sensory impairments statewide and regionally.
3. Child find coordinators were assisted with efforts to identify children with potential deaf blind needs.

**OBJECTIVE 2: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOP SERVICES**

1. Information and resources were provided to families through agencies serving children with deaf blind needs.
2. Technical assistance was provided to service providers working with children with deaf blindness on request and through the state monitoring process.
3. Print and materials resources were made available to service providers statewide on request.
4. Direct services were provided to infants and toddlers with deaf blindness as training opportunities to improve future services.

**OBJECTIVE 3: HOME BASED SERVICES TO INFANTS AND TODDLERS**

1. The Colorado Department of Health Home Intervention Program (HIP) continued to provide leadership in services to infants, toddlers and preschoolers with deaf blindness. A total of 29 children received assessment, transition, and parent advocacy services via home visits, education and support over the period of the grant year.
2. Approximately 15 children birth to three years with deaf blindness and their families received an average of four home visits per month through the HIP.
3. The HIP also provided two F.A.M.I.L.Y. videotape assessments and two IFSP's at six month intervals for each of the above 15 families, as well as case management when appropriate.
4. Anchor Center for Blind Children provided functional vision evaluations for 41 children suspected to be or identified as deaf blind.
5. Anchor also provided transdisciplinary evaluations for six of the 39 children they helped identify as deaf blind.

6. For each child identified with their input as deaf blind, Anchor contributed vision and compensatory strategies to the individual education plan or IFSP in cooperation with local administrative units and agencies.
7. Additional follow through for Anchor included home visits for 18 families, center based services for nine families utilizing a variety of therapists and other service providers, and on going consultations with early intervention facilities.
8. Additional assessments utilizing private providers were contracted for children suspected of deaf blindness in western rural areas.
9. An assessment protocol specific to the auditory skills development of children with deaf blindness and designed for use with the Linder Transdisciplinary Play Assessment was developed. This was part of evaluation data on services for preschool children with deaf blindness prepared by Colorado State University.

#### OBJECTIVE 4: TRANSITION SERVICES

1. Support was provided for Paige Berry, an expert on interagency service delivery for persons with deaf blindness, to present three sessions at the Interagency Vocational Conference.
2. Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) provided transitional services for three students with deaf blindness as part of its summer transitional program which included work paid for by JTPA and video profiles for future job searches.
3. CSDB also provided extended technical assistance for a student from El Paso #11 School District in transition to adult services.
4. Additional technical assistance was provided via telephone consultation and site visitation.

#### OBJECTIVE 5: PARENT SUPPORT

1. Parents were contacted regarding numerous trainings available to them and encouraged to attend. Their attendance was noted at VISERV, the Alphabet Early Childhood Conference, and the Interagency Vocational Conference; but no reimbursement was requested.
2. One parent of a child with deaf blindness was sponsored to attend the National Deaf Blind Conference in Washington. Her participation was reported in detail to the Deaf Blind Network and helped in setting the agenda for future parent activities.

#### OBJECTIVE 6: CONSULTATION AND TRAINING

1. Support was provided for topical presentations on deaf blindness at the Alphabet Early Childhood Conference (featuring Tanni Anthony from Alaska), the Interagency Vocational Conference (featuring Paige Berry from Virginia), and the Colorado Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Visually Impaired (featuring Elga Joffe from AFB).
2. Consultation was provided for personnel training programs to assist in their efforts to address issues pertinent to the provision of services to children with deaf blindness. In particular, a forum was organized called the Vision Coalition, which provided opportunity for

CDE with CAER and CSDB to plan jointly with the University of Northern Colorado for meeting training needs. This forum was instrumental in development of a plan to offer endorsement training in deaf blindness in future years.

3. Initial efforts were put into place to locate potential providers and help develop expertise in deaf blindness in all the regions of Colorado.
4. Current items were added to the resource center for loan to parents and providers; and additional copies of the resource catalog were distributed.
5. The Newsletter was distributed and served as a vehicle to highlight best practices and upcoming conferences.
6. The Network on Deaf Blindness continued to provide leadership as an interagency forum for discussion of issues important to consumers, parents, and providers. The Network was a major contributor to planning for the grant scheduled to begin October, 1992.

#### OBJECTIVE SEVEN: CENSUS

1. A major effort was organized to improve the quality of data for the census. New contact persons were selected; and information was solicited to update entries.
2. Input data on newly identified individuals was added to the census.
3. Data was reconciled with data from the December 1991 special education count.
4. The census was submitted to OSERS and TRACES.
5. The information was analyzed to assist in future planning.

#### FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The three year grant helped spark major activity on behalf of children and youth with deaf blindness. Particularly strong was an interagency commitment to quality, given impetus through the leadership of the Deaf Blind Network. Changes in Colorado Department of Education leadership and periods without a Project Director and without a Project Coordinator hurt both continuity and intensity; but the overall intent of the grant was met and overall service delivery was much improved by project completion.

At grant inception with Chuck Wright as Project Director and Christine Clark as Project Coordinator, 115 children were identified as deaf blind, with the great majority from the Denver area. Approximately one third were in each of three age groups: birth-5 (32.5 %), 6-15 (37.6%) and 16-21 (29.9%). Primary emphasis was on children for whom there was no state mandate for service; that is, infants and toddlers and students in need of transition to adult services. Informal agreements were put into place with five consumer, five state, and seven other agencies

Chuck Wright left the grant in May 1990, four months before the conclusion of the first year. The Project Director position was vacant until mid-August when it was filled by James Nezol. Chris Clark left in May 1991; and because of a hiring freeze, the Project Coordinator position was vacant until August 1992, when it was filled by Tanni Anthony. This shortage of

manpower severely crippled grant activity; but thanks to the dedication of a number of individuals and to continued support and direction from the Deaf Blind Network, essential work was completed and important goals were achieved. By project completion, 144 children with deaf blindness were identified; and leaders statewide held a common mission deeply imbedded in projects well underway.

#### *Information for Identification*

Initial efforts to develop awareness and improve identification came through creation of a brochure and a semi-annual Newsletter. These were widely disseminated; and the former was registered with Directory Information Services for continued sharing with major agencies. In addition, Child Find coordinators were contacted to help infuse recognition of deaf blind needs into Child Find efforts. These strategies were continued in succeeding years and proved their worth as children continued to be identified with deaf blind needs, and as actual numbers swelled to levels projected by general population statistics. As valuable as these efforts proved to be, the major impact on improving identification proved to be the enthusiasm of service providers in the field as relationships developed through consistent service.

#### *Technical Assistance to Develop Services*

Technical assistance and consultation were seen as major contributors to cohesiveness and direction for the project. Parents, consumers, service providers, and administrators were made aware of this resource; and actual assistance was made available on request via telephone and site visitation. Whenever appropriate, referrals were made to collaborative agencies; and interagency efforts were facilitated. In addition, the resource catalog was expanded and revised; and assessment tools and program development resources were made available.

Lack of adequate manpower due to position vacancies aggravated by job freezes had the most significant impact in this area. Requests were honored, and technical assistance was provided; but expansion of the system was curtailed throughout the vacancy periods. Return to full manpower in recent months has made clear how much more could have been accomplished had the original positions been continuously filled.

#### *Home Based Services for Infants and Toddlers*

The initial request for proposals yielded a formal agreement with the Colorado Department of Health Home Intervention Program to act as lead agency for infant and toddler services with four visits per month and semiannual videotaped assessments. This program received high marks for satisfaction from parents and later became an excellent source of coordination with locally based services.

Anchor Center for Blind Children took on a supplementary role that continued to expand over time. It provided functional vision and compensatory skill evaluations and parent/teacher/program consultations. It also became a primary source of effective transition to center based services and public school education. Anchor received high marks both in parent and service provider satisfaction. Colorado State University helped with the evaluation of infant and toddler services.

Efforts to directly serve infants and toddlers with deaf blindness were among the most successful for the project. The network of providers that developed and the rapport and ease

of communion that ensued resulted in a very high level of service and satisfaction for the families of children identified. This component continues to evolve and will most directly benefit from the training component which is at the core of the 1992-1995 grant.

### *Transition Services*

On the other end of the age spectrum, Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind provided community based summer transition services in cooperation with several agencies including JTPA. It provided video resumes for its students for use in seeking future employment. Later it brought its model to Jefferson County Community Centered Board and to El Paso District #11 to aid in transition of students in those programs.

This component suffered from its inability under grant guidelines to offer direct intervention. While CSDB was a major player that provided high quality services, its enrollment of students with deaf blindness dwindled and lessened its impact on the rest of the state. The selection of Colorado to be a major recipient of federal funds to promote statewide transition efforts has greatly enhanced capacity for future efforts. Future activity will be tied to the statewide effort with its development of model sites and eventual impact on all administrative units in the state. Deaf blind services will be infused into these activities, providing a more natural integration of deaf blind with general transition needs.

### *Parent Support*

Efforts to provide parents with the information and support they needed to be effective partners in planning for their children's education were primarily through announcements of future conferences and workshops and offers of stipend support. Several parents attended various offerings, but financial support was not often requested. During the final year of the grant, one parent was sponsored to attend the National Conference on Deaf Blindness in Washington, D.C. Her participation was very helpful to the Network in planning future activity.

An additional source of parent support was through membership in the Deaf Blind Network. This proved to be an effective avenue for advocacy for some parents in the Denver metro area. It has become clear, however, that additional strength is needed for efforts to include parents in decision making and to give parents a network of support and self advocacy. A Family Learning Seminar is scheduled for the 1992-1995 grant period to launch a more coordinated inclusive effort.

### *Consultation and Training*

Very early in the grant it became very apparent that if services were to be of high quality, training of parents, service providers and key personnel would need to be emphasized. Three trainings were held in collaboration with the Department of Health Home Intervention Program (HIP) which included emphasis on deaf blindness. The last training in the spring of 1991 brought in June Downing from the University of Arizona and brought together home interventionists, parents, teachers of children with visual disabilities, teachers of children with hearing disabilities, and diverse service providers and administrators. This opportunity for cross training and transdisciplinary focus was enthusiastically received and did much to call attention to the needs of children with both vision and hearing disabilities.

The primary mode for delivering training during this grant period was the provision of topical sessions on deaf blindness at major conferences aimed at wider audiences. In addition to the HIP offerings, sessions were presented each of the three years at the Interagency Vocational Conference emphasizing transitional issues. Sessions presented the final year by Paige Berry of the Virginia Department for the Visually Handicapped had major impact on diverse agencies seeking to include students with deaf blindness in their transition efforts.

Other efforts infused deaf blind issues into conferences presented by VISERV, CAER, C-TASH, and CEC. One VISERV presentation introduced a project-developed line-by-line braille-to-print communication system developed to allow instant communication between a teacher and a student who is blind or deaf blind. During the final year, sessions presented by Tanni Anthony of the Alaska Special Education Service Agency at the Early Childhood Alphabet Conference helped focus a wide array of service providers, administrators, and parents on the unique needs of children with deaf blindness. Miss Anthony later joined the Department as Coordinator of Deaf Blind Programs.

While this topical session approach proved to be excellent for raising deaf blind awareness and had real value for disseminating best practices, the lack of follow through and the lack of opportunity for developing skills in depth proved the limitation of this approach as the sole means of educating service providers. The lack of a university level training program aimed specifically at meeting deaf blind needs was becoming increasingly apparent. Meanwhile a separate grant from the Hilton Perkins Foundation for developing transdisciplinary assessment skills for infants and children to age seven with deaf blindness was proving the value of specialized sequential practicum-based skill development. Thus the primary focus of the grant proposal for 1992-1995 was training, with the cornerstone being a sequence on courses leading to endorsement in deaf blindness.

The other limitation of the topical approach, the lack of effective follow through, was addressed by adding technical assistance to future topical sessions and endorsement training. Conference participants would be given the opportunity for mentoring to more fully develop skills, understandings, and knowledges introduced through conference training. Thus learning could be geared to individual needs, and the possibility for attaining a depth of understanding could be substantially increased.

### *Census*

Maintaining an accurate up-to-date census was a requirement for the grant. Data on new referrals was added as reported; and data was updated annually, reconciled with the December 1 special education count, and submitted to OSERS and TRACES. Major difficulty with this endeavor was the identification and maintenance of a reliable contact person for reporting sites. A decision was made the final year of the project to designate actual service providers as contact persons rather than administrative or office personnel. This has greatly improved efficiency.

Additional glitches were manifested when children made transition from one program to another program. This was particularly a problem for very young children whose inclusion on the census was made giving benefit of the doubt to early evaluations that were later proven to be inaccurate or reflective of temporary conditions. Steps have been taken to assure more adequate flow of information when transitions occur.



Overall the efforts made over the three year life of the grant resulted in substantial improvement in services for children with deaf blindness in Colorado. Future endeavors will greatly benefit from the foundation set in place over this period.

## PRODUCTS DEVELOPED

A decision was made when leadership personnel shortages made compromise necessary. It was agreed that continuing reliable support to programs should have precedence over production of materials for dissemination. Thus only a handful of products were produced.

The Resource Materials Catalog was updated in the Fall of 1991. This was produced for and distributed to all programs serving children with deaf blindness in Colorado. It is available on request.

The Deaf Blind Newsnote is produced two times a year, in the fall and in the spring. It is a means of disseminating information to parents, service providers, and administrators concerned with deaf blind issues. It contains updates on conferences and information regarding best practices, model programs, and items of interest to readers.

Braille Butler is a video tape produced by Colorado State University demonstrating a line by line Braille to print computer system that was developed to allow instant communication between a teacher and a student who is blind or deaf blind. The system utilizes a nine dot Braille code with advanced mathematics, scientific notation, and foreign language capability. The tape was produced in 1989 and demonstrated at the 1989 and 1990 VISERV Conferences. It is available from Colorado State University, A-71 Clark Building, Fort Collins, CO 80523.

No other products are currently available that are specific to the purposes of this grant.