

**FACT Sheet November 2017**  
**The Use of Interveners for Children who are Deaf-Blind**

An Intervener is a person who works consistently one-to-one with an individual who is deafblind, and has training and specialized skills in deafblindness. This model of services has been used effectively in Canada for many years, and is starting to be implemented across the United States. Many states are beginning to include coursework very specific for interveners in their higher education programs, while other state deaf-blind projects are offering professional development through the National Center on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB)'s Open Hands Open Access modules.

An intervener provides a bridge to the world for the student who is deafblind. The intervener helps the student gather information, learn concepts and skills, develop communication and language, and establish relationships that lead to greater independence. The intervener is a support person who does with, not for the student. Specialized training is needed to become an effective intervener. Training should address a wide range of topics necessary to understanding the nature and impact of deafblindness, the role of the intervener, and appropriate educational strategies to work with students with combined vision and hearing loss (Alsop, Killoran, Robinson, Durkel, & Prouty, 2004; McGinnes, 1986; Robinson et al., 2000).

Listed below are some very good materials to assist IEP team in making decisions regarding the use of an intervener for this population of children:

1) <http://intervener.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Interveners-and-IDEA.pdf>

2) Online training programs: Utah State University, Linda Alsop, [linda.alsop@usu.edu](mailto:linda.alsop@usu.edu)

Central Michigan University, Deafblind Intervener (DBI) Certificate Program. [cmuglobal@cmich.edu](mailto:cmuglobal@cmich.edu) or 877-268-4636

3) National Center on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB) <https://nationaldb.org> this website has the Open Hands Open Access Modules and the

document that can guide IEP teams entitled, “*Are Intervener Services Appropriate for Your Student with Deaf-Blindness? An IEP Team Discussion Guide*”, developed January 2016. Contact [info@nationaldb.org](mailto:info@nationaldb.org)



The contents of this presentation were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, H326C080023. However this content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer, Maryann McDermott.