# Technical Assistance Checklist

# March 2003

# NTAC Area 4 State Deaf-Blind Projects

This classroom and program evaluation tool was developed by state deaf-blind projects in NTAC (National Technical Assistance Consortium for Children and Young Adults Who Are Deaf-Blind) Area 4. State deaf-blind projects have permission to adapt this tool for use by their own projects. Please include appropriate citation information. For example, "Adapted with permission from NTAC Area 4 State Deaf-Blind Projects. (2003). *Technical assistance checklist*.”

Child’s Name: DOB:

Today’s Date: School: Observer:

## Environmental Adaptations to Support the Student's Sensory Needs

| **Classroom/Environment**  **Adaptations** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Appropriate lighting/illumination (includes shading/glare reduction and supplemental/focused lighting) are provided. |  |  |  |  |
| Environmental modifications for sound (includes carpet, tennis balls/felt on chair feet, acoustical tiles, auditory loop/sound field system) are evident. |  |  |  |  |
| A personal FM system is in good working order and in use with the student. |  |  |  |  |
| Visual figure/ground support - reduction of visual clutter - is evident. |  |  |  |  |
| Attention to other sensory needs (e.g., noise, odor, chemicals, temperature, etc.) is evident. |  |  |  |  |
| Seating arrangement supports student needs (e.g., proximity, safety, interaction, full access to instruction). |  |  |  |  |
| Full classroom accessibility to foster independence (e.g., accessing materials, activities, and personal space) is evident. |  |  |  |  |
| Stairwells/hallways are sufficiently lighted and labeled. |  |  |  |  |
| Safe, clearly labeled travel routes have been established to support independent mobility. |  |  |  |  |
| Accommodations for fire safety are available. |  |  |  |  |
| School materials are selected to support the student's sensory needs and foster independence (e.g., P.E. equipment, floor tape, lane markers in swimming pool, mat colors, wall colors, etc.). |  |  |  |  |
| Student has full access to all areas used in general education. |  |  |  |  |
| Outdoors, pavement and curbs are appropriately marked. |  |  |  |  |

Child’s Name: DOB:

Today’s Date: School: Observer:

## Instructional Strategies that Meet the Student's Needs

| **Instructional strategies that provide activities and build skills that are meaningful to the student** | **Observed** | **Not**  **Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student is provided with the opportunity to engage in enjoyable and preferred activities. |  |  |  |  |
| Student spends most of his/her time engaged in active learning activities, with "down-time" comprising no more than a few minutes at a time between activities. |  |  |  |  |
| Student is engaged in meaningful IEP-related learning activities supported by necessary adaptations for full participation. |  |  |  |  |
| Skills (therapeutic and educational) are taught within the context of naturally occurring activities, embedded in daily routines to promote generalization. |  |  |  |  |
| Instructional cues are designed to be closely related to natural cues. |  |  |  |  |

| **Instructional strategies demonstrate practices that are compatible with the child's sensory needs.** | **Observed** | **Not**  **Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The instruction provided to the student demonstrates effective strategies and approaches that teach missing environmental information to the student. |  |  |  |  |
| Devices selected to increase a child's use of sensory information are consistent with their needs and abilities. |  |  |  |  |
| **Orientation and Mobility** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| Instruction demonstrates student involvement in establishing a destination, recognizing a route, use of calendar conversation, and additional time to explore the salient parts of the route. |  |  |  |  |
| Instruction demonstrates inclusion of supplemental information about the environment to offset information not acquired through incidental learning. |  |  |  |  |
| **Data-Based Instruction** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| Student's program demonstrates the ongoing use of data collection systems. |  |  |  |  |
| There is evidence that decisions to adjust instruction are based on student performance data. |  |  |  |  |
| Data is collected and linked to the state's Alternate Assessment. |  |  |  |  |

Child’s Name: DOB:

Today’s Date: School: Observer:

## Preservation of the Student's Dignity

| **Educational staff's communications and interactions with the student and about the student** | **Observed** | **Not**  **Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Educational staff talks with the student in an age-appropriate and respectful manner. |  |  |  |  |
| The student is given opportunities to make meaningful choices, provide input/feedback, and express his/her preferences and feelings appropriate to his/her chronological age. |  |  |  |  |
| Educational staff uses people-first (child-first) language. |  |  |  |  |
| Educational staff does not discuss sensitive issues about the student in his/her presence as if he/she was not present or does not understand what is being stated. |  |  |  |  |
| Care-giver interactions and naturally occurring personal management routines (e.g., meals, restroom, personal hygiene, etc.) are utilized as instructional opportunities and are carried out in a chronologically age-appropriate (peer-referenced) and dignified manner. |  |  |  |  |

Child’s Name: DOB:

Today’s Date: School: Observer:

## Communication

| **Communication Forms** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The student has access to an appropriate AAC system that may include a communication book/board/device or other adaptive device along with gestures, sign, speech, and any other appropriate communication modes. |  |  |  |  |
| The educational staff uses communication modes appropriate for the student (e.g., gestures, sign, speech, objects, pictures, words, touch cues, etc.) during all educational activities and social interactions. |  |  |  |  |
| The educational staff communicates with the student in an age- appropriate (peer-referenced) and respectful manner. |  |  |  |  |

| **Communication Functions** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The student's communication system reflects a balance and variety of communicative functions including those that are determined by (important to) the student and those determined by others. |  |  |  |  |
| The educational staff uses appropriate communication approaches with the student to inform him/her of requests, directions, transitions, activities start/finish, etc. |  |  |  |  |
| The educational staff consistently allows for adequate response time, relative to the student's communication abilities. |  |  |  |  |
| Changes in routine, activity, position, etc., are communicated/explained to the student prior to these changes taking place. |  |  |  |  |
| AAC modes and adaptive devices are used across all settings. |  |  |  |  |

| **Communication Instruction** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The student is receiving systematic instruction in communication skills embedded across all instructional areas and daily routines. |  |  |  |  |
| The student is given multiple opportunities to communicate (use the communication system) throughout the school day. |  |  |  |  |
| Communication profiles and teaching plans addressing communication needs have been developed for the student. |  |  |  |  |

| **Communication Partners** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Others (including peers) in the student's environment are competent in the various modes of communication used by or being taught to the student. |  |  |  |  |
| The teacher instructs peers to persist in their communications with the student within instructional settings, social settings, and other natural settings. |  |  |  |  |
| The teacher provides instruction to peers regarding how to make requests of the student within instructional settings, social settings, and other natural settings. |  |  |  |  |
| The student is taught or has acquired communication and social skills necessary to interact with peers and make friends. |  |  |  |  |
| The student is provided opportunities to communicate and socialize with typical peers in order to foster friendships. |  |  |  |  |

| **Communication Content / Calendar System / Literacy Issues** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ecological inventory data has been used to determine the communication demands of the student's environment(s). |  |  |  |  |
| The student has a personal calendar system that is used to provide him/her a sense of time, typical daily routine, notice of upcoming steps, anticipation of what comes next in the familiar routine, and changes in the routine/schedule. |  |  |  |  |
| The student’s personal calendar system is further used to support goals and objectives in specialized curriculum areas such as communication, social/emotional, recreation/leisure, and positive behavior support. |  |  |  |  |
| The student's calendar system is used to support literacy with a linear arrangement that is accessed from left to right. |  |  |  |  |
| The student has been taught to spell and/or fingerspell. |  |  |  |  |
| If the student is using braille, he/she is using Grade One/Two (circle appropriate response). |  |  |  |  |
| The language complexity used is appropriate for the student whose primary language is sign language (ASL, PSE, SEE). |  |  |  |  |

| **Communication Evaluation** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Elements** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| An AAC evaluation has been performed/updated and was the basis for decision-making and program development with regard to communication instruction for the student. |  |  |  |  |
| On-going assessment of the student's communication skills is evident and is the basis for revisions to communication instruction. |  |  |  |  |
| The IEP incorporates AAC evaluation information and ongoing communication assessment information and strategies that appropriately reflect the student's developmental level in the areas of: 1) form, 2) function, 3) content, and 4) vocabulary. |  |  |  |  |

Child’s Name: DOB:

Today’s Date: School: Observer:

## Social Connections and Full Participation

| **Program philosophy supporting social connections and full participation** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The program philosophy emphasizes preparation for valued adult lifestyles in a typical neighborhood with supports as needed. |  |  |  |  |
| The program philosophy reflects a balance between achieving independence and developing typical interdependencies with others. |  |  |  |  |
| The program philosophy emphasizes the goal of maximum participation and equal contribution for all students in typical school and community activities regardless of skill level. |  |  |  |  |
| The program philosophy emphasizes the value of diversity and multiculturalism and promotes social inclusion and belonging for everyone. |  |  |  |  |

| **Access to social contacts and full participation** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The daily schedule reflects a variety of opportunities for the student to have access to peers including small/large group instruction, non-instructional free-time, and extracurricular activities. |  |  |  |  |
| The student attends the same school he/she would have attended if he/she did not have a disability. |  |  |  |  |
| Educational staff encourages typical peers to interact appropriately with the student during instructional time, when possible and during non-instructional time. |  |  |  |  |
| The student uses enrichment areas (computer lab, library/ resource center, etc.) with typical peers as part of the typical routine. |  |  |  |  |
| The student has been offered the option of full time placement with appropriate supports, in an age-appropriate general education setting that includes daily and longitudinal contact with typical peers. |  |  |  |  |
| The student participates in extracurricular activities appropriate for his/her age range along with typical peers. |  |  |  |  |
| Where applicable, accessible playground equipment is available to the student and located alongside or is part of the playground equipment used by typical peers. |  |  |  |  |

| **IEP development to assure social contacts and full participation** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The IEP includes a method to orient the student to new people. |  |  |  |  |
| The IEP addresses methods by which the student can locate and identify people in the environment. |  |  |  |  |
| The IEP addresses the student's need for bonding and building trusting relationships in order to learn and participate fully in the school community. |  |  |  |  |
| The IEP addresses ways in which the student can utilize his/her talents and abilities to be an equally contributing member of the school community. |  |  |  |  |
| When assessing the social skills of the student, there is evidence that the IEP team has considered the effects of deafblindness on social development when planning intervention approaches in this area. |  |  |  |  |

| **Instruction that supports social contact and full participation** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **NIA** | **Comments/**  **Explanations** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Instruction is provided to students of varied abilities in how to interact with other students in both structured learning situations and in spontaneous social situations. |  |  |  |  |
| All students are taught communication skills and social skills necessary to interact with others and build friendships. |  |  |  |  |
| Specific guidelines/strategies exist for facilitating social integration/belonging/contribution of students with disabilities within the general education program. |  |  |  |  |
| The student with deafblindness receives instruction regarding ways to improve his/her ability to initiate social contacts during free time. |  |  |  |  |
| The student receives independent living skills instruction to prepare him/her for life in his/her community. |  |  |  |  |
| The student receives instruction regarding ways to make social contacts in his/her community. |  |  |  |  |
| The student receives instruction with regard to developing leisure/recreational skills to prepare him/her for leisure/recreation opportunities within the community. |  |  |  |  |
| All instructional activities and materials are peer-referenced. |  |  |  |  |
| Natural supports are identified and utilized. |  |  |  |  |
| Educational staff provides opportunities for the student and his/her peers to share materials during instructional activities, extracurricular activities, and/or free time. |  |  |  |  |

Child’s Name: DOB:

Today’s Date: School: Observer:

## Positive Behavior Support

| **Functional Assessment** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Support team has identified and defined challenging behaviors in observable terms. |  |  |  |  |
| Support team has conducted a thorough functional analysis to ascertain what function(s) the behavior serves for the student. |  |  |  |  |
| Support team has identified skill acquisition needs of the student including communication skill needs. |  |  |  |  |
| Support team has identified the student's preferences, interests, and talents. |  |  |  |  |

| **Antecedent Interventions and Adaptations** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The student is actively engaged in all instructional activities (full or partial participation). |  |  |  |  |
| The student is provided with opportunities to make meaningful choices throughout the day. |  |  |  |  |
| The student's preferences, interests, and talents are considered when options are offered. |  |  |  |  |
| The student's efforts to communicate (both symbolically and non-symbolically) are responded to in a timely manner. |  |  |  |  |
| The student is provided with opportunities to have meaningful social interactions with typical peers. |  |  |  |  |
| Assistive technology is appropriately utilized to foster interactions and participation. |  |  |  |  |
| The student has access to natural supports during instructional activities and social interactions. |  |  |  |  |
| The student's daily schedule reflects a balance between high demand and low demand tasks and activities. |  |  |  |  |
| The student is provided with a personal schedule. |  |  |  |  |

| **Instruction and IEP Planning** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The student has been provided with appropriate communication instruction including the use of his/her personal schedule. |  |  |  |  |
| The student's challenging behaviors are viewed as instructional needs. |  |  |  |  |
| The student is provided with instruction in peer-referenced (age- appropriate) recreational/leisure skills to engage in during free time. |  |  |  |  |
| The student is provided with instruction in content/skill areas that are compatible with his/her preferences, interests, and talents. |  |  |  |  |
| The student's daily schedule includes a minimum amount of instructional down time. |  |  |  |  |
| Instructional objectives outline clear expectations of what the student "will do" rather than what he/she "will not do." |  |  |  |  |
| The student's IEP includes a Behavior Support Plan that is based upon a thorough functional analysis. |  |  |  |  |
| The student's IEP includes at least one objective addressing social interaction with a typical peer or group of peers. |  |  |  |  |
| Appropriate social skills are taught to the student to foster peer- referenced (age-appropriate) social interactions. |  |  |  |  |
| The IEP addresses the need for the student to bond and build trusting relationships with adults and peers in order to be successful in school. |  |  |  |  |
| The student is provided with instruction in self-management strategies including anger management, alternative ways of expressing emotions and feelings, and relaxation techniques. |  |  |  |  |

| **Crisis Management** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** | **N/A** | **Comments/**  **Explanations** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| There is evidence of a crisis management protocol to be implemented when the student exhibits challenging behavior. |  |  |  |  |
| The crisis management protocol preserves the dignity of the student while it also preserves the safety of the student and others in close proximity. |  |  |  |  |
| The crisis management protocol includes the use of strategies that are positive and supportive. In other words, these strategies are consistent with the philosophy of Positive Behavior Support. |  |  |  |  |

Child’s Name: DOB:

Today’s Date: School: Observer:

## Probing Questions for Technical Assistance

### Health Information and Implications for Instruction

1. What information is available to the team about the student’s health status?
2. Does the team have access to all current and relevant medical information?
3. Are there ongoing safety concerns?
4. What are the educational implications of these health/safety concerns?
5. **Sensory Information and Implications for Instruction**
6. What information is available to the team regarding the student’s sensory status/functioning?
7. Is the student’s available sensory status/functioning information current?
8. How does the student’s sensory loss impact instruction and access to and participation in the curriculum (academics), interaction with peers, mobility in the school environment?
9. **Collaborative Team information**
10. Who are the members of the student’s team, and what are their roles?
11. Are there other people closely associated with the student who may be able to contribute to the team process?
12. How does the team function throughout the school year (including conditions for meetings and structure of meetings)?
13. **Program Planning and Implementation**
14. What process does the team utilize to identify priority goals and objectives/benchmarks for the student’s IEP?
15. Describe how the student and his/her family participate in this process?
16. What are the short-term and long-term outcomes that have been identified for the student?
17. What transition issues/outcomes should be considered at the present time?
18. How is progress toward priority goals and objectives/benchmarks measured?
19. How is progress communicated to the student and family members?