

Deafblind

Deafblindness is a combination of sight and hearing loss. It is sometimes called dual-sensory impairment.

Some people with deafblindness may have some vision and hearing; others may have a total loss of vision and hearing. Many people will have a combination of the two, such as total deafness plus some loss of vision. An individual who is deafblind may need support and advice about mobility, alternative and augmentative communication systems, technology and available equipment.

The HSE recognises that there are more than 100 causes of congenital and acquired deafblindness. The causes of deafblindness can be divided into two main categories:

- **congenital**, where somebody is born with both visual and hearing problems, and
- **acquired**, where somebody loses some or all of their hearing and sight at some stage during their life.

If a parent discovers that their child has both sight and hearing loss, they should immediately seek the support that is available. This support can come from Public Health Nurses, GP's, specialist services from ophthalmologists and audiologists, local visiting teachers for the blind/visually impaired and deaf/hard of hearing, other parents/guardians who have children who are Deafblind and from family and friends.

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