



FACT SHEET

California Deafblind Services
 San Francisco State University
 1600 Holloway Avenue
 San Francisco, CA 94132-4158
 (415) 405-7558
 (415) 338-2845 FAX
cadeafblind.org

A Self-Evaluation Guide for Assessing the Quality of Your Interactions with a Student who is Deafblind

By Gloria Rodriguez-Gil and David Brown

When working with a child who is deafblind, the **quality** of the interaction between you and the child is as important as the **activity** the two of you do together. All interactions offer valuable opportunities to work on the development of general skill areas (e.g., communication and language, social and environmental awareness, self-regulation, positive self-image), as well as the teaching of specific discrete skills (e.g., fine motor hand manipulation in the motor domain or sorting and matching in the math domain). Through **appropriate interactions** the child can greatly increase their opportunities of learning on many different levels from these experiences.

You can use the following series of questions to evaluate the quality of your interaction with a child who is deafblind. The more questions you can answer with a “yes”, the more likely that the quality of the interaction will be good.

YES	NO	Not Sure	
			1. Do you start the “working session” by taking time to observe the child and get a sense of their physical and emotional states?
			2. Do you have a unique way—that the child can perceive—to let them know who you are and increase the likelihood that the child knows it is you?
			3. When introducing an activity, do you have an appropriate way to label the activity for the child so that pre-symbolic and symbolic understanding is being aided and extended?
			4. Once you have begun your interaction, do you follow a familiar routine with the child to help them warm up to you and to the activities you are presenting to them?

YES	NO	Not Sure	
			5. Do you remember to use language—at whatever level is appropriate for the child—to label the activity before it begins, during the interaction, and after it has finished?
			6. Do you moderate your pace so the child is able to perceive, attend, understand, and respond to the activities you are engaged in and to reduce the chances that the child will become bored because the activity is too slow or lasts too long or become confused because the activity is too brief or fast?
			7. Do you closely observe the child in order to respond immediately and appropriately to their spontaneous responses, which might be very subtle, and shift the interaction into an unexpected direction if necessary?
			8. Do you modulate your interaction with the child depending on their level of engagement, and honor the child’s attempts to both initiate and terminate the interaction?
			9. Do you create opportunities for the child to express their wants and needs throughout the session?
			10. Bearing in mind that the child may be able to perceive your own emotional state, do you try to convey that you are feeling an appropriate level of engagement, enjoyment, and pleasure in mutual achievement?
			11. Once an interaction is finished, do you review with the child what the two of you have done together and what is now different as a result of having shared this time with the child?
			12. Do you share with others what you’re doing to improve the quality of your interactions with the child so they can use these strategies in their interactions and understand the importance of these key concepts?

Notes: