

Training Manual



Your education pack to:

- > Communication
- > Guiding techniques
- > Companionship and support
- > Access and community involvement



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Able Australia
616 Riversdale rd, Camberwell
PO Box 2123
Camberwell, VIC 3124

Ph: 1300 225 369
Fax: 03 9882 9210
TTY: 9882 9210
www.ableaustralia.org.au

*Thank you to the Toni Kaye Foundation for their
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1. What is deafblindness?

- Deafblindness (also called dual sensory loss) is the combination of both hearing and vision impairment.
- People with deafblindness have varying degrees of combined hearing and vision impairment. Ie: A person may be hard of hearing and totally blind, or profoundly deaf and partially sighted, or have nearly complete loss of both senses.
- The support required for each person is highly individualised, depending on the degree of hearing and sight loss and their communication requirements.
- Approximately 90% of the information we receive about the world comes through our vision and hearing. A person with deafblindness experiences the world through using residual vision and hearing, and/or by using touch (ie tactile signing), smell and taste.
- A person with deafblindness may experience difficulty accessing the community (mobility), information and importantly, communicating with others.
- Professional staff from Able Australia provide specialised support to people who are deafblind in the areas of; Case Management, interpreting, community access, learning and leisure and counselling.
- Volunteers, family members and friends of deafblind people play a vital role providing participation in and access to the wider community.

2. What causes deafblindness?

There are many causes of deafblindness, which come under two categories. *Congenital deafblindness* and *acquired deafblindness*. *Congenital deafblindness* is when someone is born with combined vision and hearing impairment. If a person develops vision and hearing loss later in life this is called *acquired deafblindness*.

Causes of deafblindness can include:

- Usher syndrome: A genetic condition in which a deaf or hearing impaired person gradually develops Retinitis Pigmentosa
- Maternal Rubella
- Cytomegalovirus – CMV
- Toxoplasmosis
- CHARGE syndrome
- Pre and postnatal trauma such as asphyxia, prematurity or cerebral palsy
- Maternal alcohol and drug addiction
- Illness such as meningitis
- Infections such as encephalitis
- Brain tumor
- Head injury
- Ageing

2.1 An explanation of some causes of deafblindness

- **Usher syndrome:** A genetic condition in which a deaf or hearing impaired person gradually develops Retinitis Pigmentosa.
- **Retinitis pigmentosa (RP):** Is a group of genetic eye conditions. In the progression of symptoms for RP, night blindness generally precedes tunnel vision by years or even decades. Many people with RP do not become legally blind until their 40s or 50s and retain some sight all their lives. Others go completely blind from RP, in some cases as early as childhood. Progression of RP is different in each case.
- **Maternal Rubella,** German measles in a pregnant woman may cause developmental anomalies in the fetus when occurring during the first trimester.
- **Cytomegalovirus** – is a herpes viral genus of the Herpes viruses group: in humans it is commonly known as HCMV or Human Herpesvirus 5.
- **Toxoplasmosis** - is a parasitic disease caused by the protozoan *Toxoplasmosis gondii*. The parasite infects most genera of warm-blooded animals, including humans, but the primary host is the feline (cat) family.
- **CHARGE** syndrome the term "CHARGE" came into use as an acronym for the set of unusual congenital features seen in a number of newborn children. The letters stand for: Colombo of the eye, Heart defects, Atresia of the nasal choanae, Retardation of growth and/or development, Genital and/or urinary abnormalities, ear abnormalities and deafness.
- Illness such as **meningitis** or inflammation of the protective membranes covering the brain and spinal cord, known collectively as the meninges.
- Infections such as **encephalitis** which is an acute inflammation of the brain.

3. Impact of deafblindness

People with deafblindness have their own individual experience of living with a combined vision and hearing impairment. The impact of dual sensory loss varies for individuals and may include difficulties with:

- Communication
- Orientation and mobility
- Access to information and everyday experiences
- Independence and daily living skills
- Concentration and tiredness
- Education and training
- Relationships
- Financial access to aids and equipment
- Employment
- Grief and loss
- Isolation
- Frustration
- Fatigue
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Limited support

Impact on communication:

- Communication difficulties with members of the family and the community.
- Access to interpreters required when meeting with others who are not deafblind.
- Need for training access and support in using alternative methods of communication (ie: Auslan, tactile sign language, individual communication cards, Deafblind finger spelling).
- Funding for Aids and Equipment. ie; TTY (telephone typewriter), Computer programs, Email, fax, mobile SMS (short messaging service), CCTV (closed circuit television).
- Funding for a Support person to assist with accessing the community. i.e; communication and mobility, informing the individual about what is going on in the environment including the context, people involved and conversations taking place.

Impact on orientation and mobility:

- Difficulty getting around independently.
- Need of a support person as a sighted guide to access the community (home, transport, shops, etc.).
- Need of orientation and mobility instructors to provide training to access the community. i.e; education and training, social activities, employment, shopping.

Impact on information to access:

- Access to large print, braille, email, internet, subtitles on T.V, Talking books, support person, interpreter.

Access to aids and equipment:

- Funding for information and training in using specialised equipment and technology.
- Funding for vibrating and visual alert systems for doorbell, telephone and alarm clocks, smoke detectors, computers, low vision aids i.e; magnifiers, kitchen equipment, games.

Daily Living Skills:

- Access to banking, shopping, medical appointments, reading mail, phone calls, paying bills.

Despite the enormous challenges that deafblindness brings, it is important to note that with appropriate support, many people go on to lead fulfilling and independent lives. People who are deafblind have relationships, get married, have children, study for a degree, travel, go to work and enjoy a range of leisure experiences.

4. Communicating with a person who is deafblind

There are a wide variety of communication methods used by people who are deafblind. The following guidelines will assist in communicating with a deafblind person;

4.1 Making Contact:

- Do not make assumptions about the person's degree of deafblindness and their disability.
- Approach a person from in front rather than from behind. If the person has some vision they may see you coming.
- Gain the person's attention before you begin to speak by facing the person from a distance of approximately six feet apart, and waving your hand at chest level. This way, a person with residual vision is likely to see that you are attempting to make contact. **(Figure 1)**
- Let the person know when you enter and leave a room.
- Let the person know who you are and what you are doing.



Figure 1

Communication Introduction:

- The way you communicate will depend on the person's preferred communication and vision and hearing impairment.
- Identify yourself by name and state who you are.
- Address a person by their name if known, as the person may not know you are speaking to them.
- Always use clear speech with normal pace and tone.
- Do not shout as this sound maybe distorted and cause discomfort.
- Ensure there is nothing covering your mouth when you speak.
- If the person cannot hear speech you can approach by gently touching the back of the person's hand.
- Be patient and give the person time to initiate a response.
- If an interpreter is present, you should face the person who is deafblind and direct your communication at the individual rather than at the interpreter.
- If you are unsure of anything, please ask the person.

4.2 What to be aware of when communicating with a deafblind person

Environment:

- Always consider the physical layout of an environment including the positioning of furniture and any clutter that exists around the floor.
- Let the person know where things are by allowing the person to become familiar with the environment and it's surroundings.
- If there are changes made to the environment, ensure the person is informed and shown the changes.

Lighting and contrast:

- Position yourself so that any natural light is coming from behind the person with deafblindness, so that your appearance may be clearer for the person to see. **(Figure 2)**
- Avoid standing or sitting with your back to a window. **(Figure 3)**
- Check with the person whether the lighting is suitable.

✓ CORRECT WAY



Figure 2

✗ INCORRECT WAY



Figure 3

4.2 What to be aware of when communicating with a deafblind person continued...

Glare:

- Avoid glare and light that shines directly into the deafblind person's eyes.
- Glare may come in through windows or mirrors or through fluorescent lighting.
- The glare from outside can be a problem for a person who is deafblind. People need time to adjust to the changes in light when moving from inside to outside and vice versa. Keep this in mind if guiding a person between the two locations and check with the person as to when they are ready to move on.

Background Contrast:

- Create contrast between yourself and the background by positioning yourself against a background with high contrast if possible. For example, sit against a wall with neutral colour schemes rather than one with pictures and shelves. **(Figure 4 and 5)**

✓ CORRECT WAY



Figure 4

Signing within a small space using the contrast of the background.

✗ INCORRECT WAY



Figure 5

Signing outside the desired signing space and therefore losing the contrast of the background.

Background noise:

- Try to reduce any unnecessary background noise as this may be unpleasant, interfere with concentration and distort any verbal communication.
- Be mindful of any background noise both indoors and outdoors and its effect on the person's ability to hear. This includes other people conversing, music, television, computer, phone etc.

Locating personal belongings:

- Let the person know where their belongings are so they can better familiarise themselves with the surroundings.

4.2 What to be aware of when communicating with a deafblind person continued...

Anticipating what is happening next:

- Let the person know what is about to happen. Do not assume that they know. ie. show or get the person to feel blood pressure cuff or thermometer before applying it to the deafblind person.

Asking questions:

Questions such as “Can you hear me?” or “Is this print large enough for you to read?” are helpful and allow for the communication to be two way and inclusive of an individual who has deafblindness. Never say “guess who I am?” or “Remember me?” as this may offend a deafblind person.

If you are a service provider, take time to explain the specific nature of the service that you can or are providing. Check whether the person has understood the nature of the information and whether they have any questions.

Tactile cues:

A person with deafblindness may rely on touch to receive meaning about the world around them. Be mindful of this and think about the range of tactile cues in the environment to enhance understanding and meaning in the situation. (ie, presenting a coffee cup to ask a person if they would like a drink).

Choice:

It is essential to have inclusive communication with a person who is deafblind and this means encouraging two way communication where the person has opportunities to choose.

Explaining the outside world:

- Give the person additional information about what is going on in the setting. (ie; number of people present, type of flowers, weather patterns, timing of events etc).

Relaying non-verbal messages:

- It is important to inform the person about non-verbal cues in the environment such as other people’s facial expressions and the content of written material.
- Convey messages or meaning using facial expression and body language.

Group situations:

- A group discussion is very difficult for a person with dual sensory loss to follow. It is necessary to have one person talking at a time to allow the person to follow the discussion.

Appointment times:

- It is necessary to allow additional time for meetings and appointments because communication is slower for people who are deafblind. Give yourself time to think about what you want to say and give the person time to respond.
- Take your time and explain things fully at a pace the person can follow.
- Do not rush.

4.3 Communication methods

People who are deafblind use a wide variety of communication. The method used by a person depends on the degree of sensory loss, the ability to use the communication method and their choice of communication.

Some of the more common methods of communication include:

- **Auslan:** Sign language used by the Australian Deaf Community. Auslan is a gestural language which has its own rules about sign / word order.
- **Signed English:** Signing which directly represents spoken English. This mode of communication is a manual representation of English.
- **Makaton:** A vocabulary of 200 key signs taken from Signed English. Makaton is purely a vocabulary and not a language and is used to develop the receptive and expressive communication skills of people with an intellectual disability or delayed language development.
- **Tactile signing:** The person who is deafblind places their hands over the hands of someone who is communicating using Auslan or Signed English and receives the signed information through their hands. **(Figure 6)**
- **Deafblind finger spelling:** This is similar to the two handed manual alphabet used in Auslan and Signed English but is modified with information given on the palm and fingers of the person who is deafblind. **(Figure 7)**
- **Tracking:** Using Auslan the Deafblind person holds one or both of the signer's wrists. This helps keep track of the movement of the hands so the Deafblind person can more easily follow the signing space visually. **(Figure 8)**



Figure 6

Figure 7



Figure 8



4.3 Communication methods continued...

- **Print on palm:** Capital block letters are traced onto the palm of the person who is deafblind, using your index finger. (See figure 9)



Figure 9

- **Writing/ Typing:** The standard alphabet is used to write or type messages. Textas or thick black pens are recommended for writing and typing is often **large and bold (Arial bold size 16)**.
- **Co-active Signing:** The hands of the person who is deafblind are shaped by another person to form different signs. Co-active signing is used only to receive information and is not a means of expression. It is primarily used with people who have an intellectual disability for information giving and teaching of new signs.
- **Total Communication:** This involves signing and talking simultaneously so the person who is deafblind gains auditory cues from the speech as well as visual cues from the signs and oral movements.
- **On-body signing:** The body of the person who is deafblind is used to complete the sign formation with another person. i.e; chin, palm, chest. Used only to receive information and not a means of expression. On body signing is often used with people who also have an intellectual disability.
- **Clear speech and lip-reading:** Speech sound information is gained by watching the oral movements of a person talking. The person talking must be directly facing the person who is lip reading. The individual degree of deafblindness may determine how close they stand to the person talking, so they can use residual vision and hearing.
- **Computer Pictograph/ Picture Symbol Systems:** A visual representation of objects and concepts in the form of computer generated picture symbols. Messages are communicated by pointing to the picture symbols individually or in a sequence. This system is used by people who are deafblind, are unable to use more abstract forms of communication and may not have the physical capacity to use formal sign language.
- **Braille:** A system of raised dots is used to represent letters, words and numbers. Non electronic and electronic aids are available with options to translate braille into print text, and print into braille.
- **Object Symbols:** Real objects or part of objects which represent activities or concepts. Messages are communicated by touching or presenting the object symbol which represents the desired object, activity or concept. This system is used by people who are deafblind and are unable to use a more abstract communication method.

5. Making information accessible to people with deafblindness

People with deafblindness may have difficulty accessing information due to the format it is presented in. If you represent a service that produces written information for consumers, here are some practical ways to make the information accessible to people who are deafblind:

- Check with the individual or their support person what format they would like the information to be presented in.
- If a person uses Braille (raised dots which can be read by touch), the written information can be transcribed and produced by using a Braille embosser connected to a computer.
- If a person can read large print, it can be easily created by increasing the font size in a document, specific to their individual needs. i.e. **Large Bold Font.**
- If the organisation that you represent is distributing printed information, consider providing the information in large print or on computer disc for a person who is deafblind so that they can produce the information in large print for themselves. It is important to realise that braille technology cannot read PDF documents or images, it must be in MICROSOFT WORD document format.
- Some people with deafblindness have access to and make use of the Internet to access information. If this is the case you can ask for a person's address and send information to people via email. **(Figure 10)**
- People with deafblindness can contact other people and services using a telephone typewriter (TTY). This TTY has a Braille display **(Figure 11)** connected to it so that messages sent and received can be read. If the organisation that you represent has a TTY, and the person you need to communicate with also has a TTY, you can contact them direct using their TTY number. If you do not have a TTY and you would like to contact someone who uses a TTY or they would like to contact you, the NRS (National Relay Service) provides a relay officer who acts as the facilitator or link between two people to engage in a two way conversation. The NRS contact number is 133677.



Figure 10



Figure 11

5. Making information accessible to people with deafblindness continued...

- Adaptive technology is very popular for Deafblind people to assist them to stay in touch with the world. Computers can be adjusted to suit an individual's vision. Fonts can be enlarged and backgrounds can be changed. Some may need a black background with a white or yellow font.
- Another way to communicate with people are via a mobile phone that has SMS (Short messaging service). The two people who want to communicate must have access to the text message option via their mobile phone.
- Information can be taped onto a cassette or video tape so that an individual with residual hearing or vision can access the information.
- Auslan Interpreter and notetaking services can be used and need to be booked in advance. There are a number of Auslan Interpreter Services – please contact Able Australia for more information.
- Services can assist by providing clear signs at the front of the organisation, around and in lifts, toilets and reception areas. Make sure the signs have large letters, words with contrasting backgrounds.

6. Guiding a person who is deafblind

The following techniques are recommended for guiding a person around the community. The main things to keep in mind when assisting a person with guidance are safety and courtesy.

It is important to provide the individual with a sense of meaning and purpose about the environmental context, whilst ensuring that the person can feel safe and comfortable under your direction.

If you are a community member or service provider, and you think that a person needs or wants to be guided, ask her/him first and if she/he accepts, offer your arm.

Approaching a person

- Start by walking towards the person so that they have the chance to see you approaching.
- Inform the person that you are present by saying your name (e.g., "Hi it's Linda here. I'm here to guide you to your taxi"). Gently touch the back of your hand against the back of her/his hand. This is a cue for the person to take your arm. **(Figure 12 and 13)**



Figure 12



Figure 13

Posture

- As the guide, your arm should be relaxed and the individual's arm should also be relaxed.
- Bent at around 90 degrees.
- Both arms should remain in close proximity to the sides of the body.



Figure 14

The individual stands beside you at a half a pace behind. In terms of the speed of walking pace, it depends on individual choice and it is wise to check with the person if they are comfortable with the pace. Avoid hurrying or running for a tram or bus as this can be extremely frightening for an individual.

6. Guiding a person who is deafblind continued...

The Hold/ Grip

People like to be guided in a number of different ways including: holding onto your elbow or the arm just above your elbow, placing her/his arm inside yours and holding your forearm lightly or by linking arms or holding hands. The grip should be comfortable for both people. The person may position themselves on the side of you that is preferred in terms of comfort and any residual hearing they have. **(Figure 15 and 16)**



Figure 15



Figure 16

Narrow places

- Where it becomes too narrow or difficult to walk alongside each other, carefully change your position by moving your arm towards the centre of your back.
- The individual being guided then straightens her/his arm to step in behind you. Carefully walking in single file, both people should be one full step apart. **(Figure 17)**
- Inform the individual of the context when travelling through narrow spaces so that she/he has information about the environment. **(Figure 18 and 19)**
- When both people have passed through the narrow place, return to the usual walking position.



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19

6. Guiding a person who is deafblind continued...

Opening Doors

- It is necessary to have the person who is deafblind positioned on the same side as the door hinges.
- As you approach the door, inform or indicate to the individual whether the door opens towards you or away from you. (e.g., "the door opens towards us and to the left"). She/he then must move to that side of your body.
- You open the door with your right hand and ask or guide the individual to take the door and close it behind them as they walk through the door. **(Figure 20 and 21)**
- For doors opening away from you, the procedure is the same. For doors opening to the right, the direction should be reversed.



Figure 20



Figure 21

Stairs

- Inform the individual that you are approaching stairs and whether you are going down or up.
- Always approach stairs and curbs at right angles and stop at the edge of the first step.
- Guide the person's hand to the hand rail by placing your hand under the person's hand. **(Figure 22)**
- Walk one step ahead of the person, with her/his other hand on your arm.
- You should then continue together in rhythm until you reach the bottom or top. Stop briefly at the final step to indicate that you have reached the bottom or top, and then return to the regular walking position. **(Figure 23 and 24)**
- When stepping off or up a kerb, you can raise or drop your guiding arm slightly.



Figure 22



Figure 23



Figure 24

6. Guiding a person who is deafblind continued...

Getting into a chair

- Guide the individual's hand to the back of the chair by placing your hand under her/his hand. **(Figure 25 and 26)**
- Inform or indicate through touch which way the chair is facing. The individual can seat themselves down when they feel ready. **(Figure 27)**



Figure 25



Figure 26



Figure 27

Getting into a car

- Place the individual's hand on the door handle, and inform or indicate to the person which way the car is facing. **(Figure 28)**
- Allow the person to open the door and get in for her/him self. She/he will be able to feel the height of the roof and avoid banging her/his head. **(Figure 29)**



Figure 28



Figure 29

6. Guiding a person who is deafblind continued...

Overhanging trees/branches

- Slow the walking pace down to a comfortable, safe pace. (Figure 30)
- You can either position your guiding arm in the single file (narrow spaces) position, or bend down slightly to indicate to the person to protect her/his head from trees or branches. (Figure 31)



Figure 30



Figure 31

At all times when guiding an individual:

- It is essential to provide access to information about the context and the things present in the environment. You don't take a walk in the park without smelling the flowers or seeing the trees, so assist a person to be active in the process ensure they enjoy the experience.
- When guiding, always ensure that the individual being guided is in control of the situation by simply guiding, not forcing the person around the environment.
- Allow the person to set their own pace and ask the person if they are comfortable with your guiding.

Adapted from Senswide sensory resource material: How to guide a blind person (1997)

7. Do's and Don'ts

PLEASE DO

- Allow the Deafblind Person to decide the best distance for him/her to follow signing, lip-reading, finger spelling. (About 4-5 feet is reasonable distance.)
- Say your name when you start talking with him/her and do say you are leaving when the conversation is finished.
- Say the name of the person who wants his or her attention and try to let him or her know where that person is.
- Offer your arm for guidance in the dark. Hint to offer assistance (i.e. "Need Help?").
- Keep the direction of the light at the side or behind the person with RP.
- Confine your finger spelling and signs, preferably to chest level.
- Carry on the conversation in a well-lighted area, if possible.
- Specify and locate where and what you are referring to i.e. The bar is behind you.....Susan is sitting on your left side....
- Be ready to warn the person of the low furniture or any low obstacle and unexpected steps.
- Feel free to ask if he/she needs help.

PLEASE DON'T:

- Don't stand too close to the person when fingerspelling, signing and speaking.
- Don't wave at the person from the sides when you are trying to get his or her attention.
- Don't point at someone else who is trying to attract the attention of the person with RP.
- Don't grab the person's arm when he/she needs guidance in the dark.
- Don't talk with the light coming directly behind you (sunlight, brightness at the window, bright doorway, bright lamp etc.).
- Don't use large, wide movements when using sign language, confine signs to a compact area.
- Don't attempt to carry on a conversation in a poorly-lit, dim room.
- Don't point vaguely in the general direction of something you may be talking about.
- Don't assume that the person with RP sees the low furniture or other low obstacles.
- Don't be afraid to ask if she/he needs help.

Note: Do and Don't list created by members of the Victorian Deafblind Ushers Club (VUDBC)

8. Contacts for further information regarding sensory loss

Able Australia

Able Australia provides specialist support to children and adults in Victoria with deafblindness and other disabilities. Able Australia provides a variety of support services to enhance an individual's lifestyle of independence, dignity and empowerment. These include: Able living; lifestyle choices; Deafblind Services including case management, counselling, respite, recreation, email and internet training and volunteer programs; speech therapy and communication skills development.

616 Riversdale Road, Camberwell 3124

Tel: 1300 225 369

Fax: (03) 9882 9210

TTY: (03) 9882 6786

E-mail: info@ableaustralia.org.au

Website: www.ableaustralia.org.au

Vision Australia

Vision Australia provides a range of services for people with vision impairment. The services include training and support to assist people to live independently, low vision and community-based rehabilitation services that assist people to make the most of their remaining vision, residential care for people with sensory loss, and assistance with selecting a range of technological aids to assist with communication. People with vision impairment can access a library that provides Braille and talking books, plus a radio station for people who cannot read standard print. Vision Australia advocates for the rights of people with disabilities and provides consultancy services to improve access and safety in the community.

Information Line: (Australia wide) 1300 84 74 66

TTY: (02) 9334 3260

Fax: (02) 9747 5993

Head Office: 454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong. Vic 3144

Website: www.visionaustralia.org.au

Blind Citizens Australia

Blind Citizens Australia is the national organization of blind and vision impaired people, promoting the rights of individuals through advocacy support, to achieve high quality and accessible services. The service provides a peer support program that encourages self-help, opportunities for social interaction and systemic advocacy. Information is made accessible to over 2,500 members in the form of a quarterly newsletter, a weekly radio program (Horizons), SoundAbout (audio magazine) and the website.

Ross House, Level 3, 247-251 Flinders Lane
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
Phone: (03) 9654 1400 or 1800 033 660
TTY: (03) 9639 1728
Fax: (03) 9650 3200
E-mail: bca@bca.org.au

Victorian Deaf Society (Vicdeaf)

Vicdeaf provides a range of services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Case Management services, Independent living training and outreach support, interpreting, notetaking, mental health support services and sign language classes are provided as well as counseling and advice to individuals and families. Auslan classes, information on hearing assessments, hearing aid fittings, communication training, assistive listening devices display, tinnitus management and deafness awareness training are also provided.

Level 4, 340 Albert Street, East Melbourne
Tel: (03) 9473 1111
Fax: (03) 9473 1122
TTY: (03) 9473 1199
E-mail: info@vicdeaf.com.au
Website: www.vicdeaf.com.au

Victorian Council of Deaf People (VCOD)

VCOD, is a non-profit, consumer driven organization led and controlled by Deaf Victorians to provide a voice for Deaf Victorians by lobbying, advocating and sharing information to ensure that full access is achieved and liaison with educators, community workers, deaf people and others.

597 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Po Box 6186
TTY: (03) 9521 2466
1300 555 182 (country and interstate)
Fax: (03) 9525 2595
E-mail: info@vcod.com.au
Website: www.vcod.com.au

ComTEC Disability Communication and Technology Solutions

ComTEC is a service of Yooralla and offers services throughout Victoria to people of all ages with a disability who have communication and technological needs.

705 Geelong Road, Brooklyn 3025

Tel: (03) 9362 6111

TTY: (03) 9314 9001

Free call: 1300 885 886 (Vic only)

Fax: (03) 9314 9759

Email: comtec@yooralla.com.au

Melways reference: 40 J 10

Better Hearing Australia

Better Hearing Australia (Victoria) is one of 16 branches nationally, that provide services for adults with hearing disabilities. The range of services available include information, advice and assistance on hearing related problems for people with hearing impairment, family and friends, and members of the public. Courses in hearing loss management are conducted in suburban and rural areas. Hearing Awareness programs include free hearing screening, community education, and assistive devices demonstrations.

5 High street, Prahran

Tel: (03) 9510 1577

Fax: (03) 9510 6076

TTY: (03) 9510 3499

E-mail: bhavic@betterhearing.org.au

Website: www.betterhearing.org.au

Deaf Children Australia

DCA provides a range of services to meet the needs of deaf children, young people and their families who reside in Victoria. Services available through DCA include case management, accommodation for children whose families live in country Victoria and want their children to access specialist deaf education, independent living skills programs for students with additional disabilities, recreation programs, support for students in transition from school to employment and further study, information and advice, and educational support services such as audiology, Auslan tuition and speech pathology.

597 St Kilda Road, Melbourne 3004

Phone: (03) 9539 5300

Fax: (03) 9525 2595

TTY: (03) 9510 7143

Helpline: 1800 645 916

Email: helpline@deafchildren.org.au

Website: www.deafchildreinaustralia.org.au

Australian Hearing

If you are under 21 years, a pensioner or DVA beneficiary, then Australian Hearing can assist. The range of services and assistance provided includes hearing assessment, access to a wide range of hearing aid products, hearing aid fittings, repairs and assistance with technical problems. Advice and counselling are also available for individuals and their families. Australian Hearing has 70 hearing centres and over 200 visiting clinics throughout Australia. Please call 131797 to be connected to your nearest centre.

Tel: (02) 9412 6800

TTY: (02) 9412 6802

Fax: (02) 9413 3362

Website: www.hearing.com.au

Word of Mouth Technology

Word of Mouth is a retail shop providing information, equipment and services for Deaf and hearing impaired people. The range of equipment available includes telephone typewriters (TTY), Assistive listening devices, teletext/ closed captions for rented VCRs, Visual vibrating alarms, Audio Induction Loop testers and Tactum alarm systems.

2 Floriston Road, Boronia Vic 3155

Tel: (03) 9761 2211 (v)

Fax: (03) 9761 1834

TTY:(03) 9761 2184

Email: info@wom.com.au

Website: www.wom.com.au

Aurora School

Aurora school delivers quality programs to maximise the achievement of Deaf & Deafblind children. They offer 3 different programs:

- The Early Intervention Program is available to families with children aged from birth until school entry who have a confirmed bilateral hearing loss and who are eligible for hearing aid fitting.
- The Early Education Program is available for children from three years of age who have a confirmed moderate to profound bilateral hearing loss.
- The Deafblind Education Program is available for children with both confirmed vision and hearing impairments from the age of three to eighteen

96 Holland Road, Blackburn South 3130

Tel: (03) 8878 9878

Fax: (03) 8878 9800

TTY: (03) 8878 9899

Email: aurora.sch@edumail.vic.gov.au

Website: www.auroraschool.vic.edu.au

Technical Aid to the Disabled Victorian(TADVIC)

TADVIC is an organization whose volunteer members design, construct or modify equipment for people with disabilities, provided no commercially available product or service will meet their needs throughout the state of Victoria. There is no charge for TADVIC services. Clients are asked to reimburse the volunteer for any cost of materials and travelling expenses incurred. Clients or their representatives contact TADVIC office directly and outline their request.

TADVIC Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre
1 Yarra Boulevard Kew 3101
TEL: (03) 9853 8655
Or 1300 663 243
FAX: (03) 9853 8098
Email: www.tadvic.asn.au

Guide Dogs Victoria

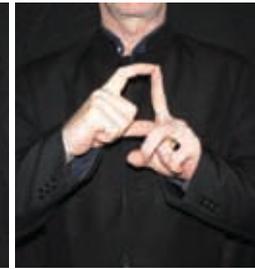
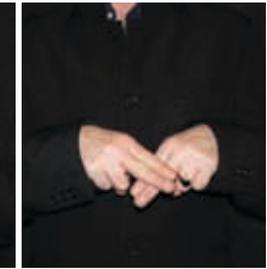
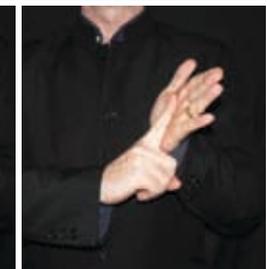
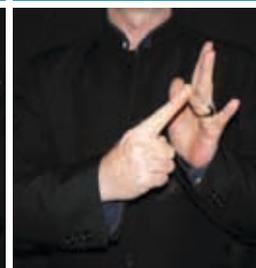
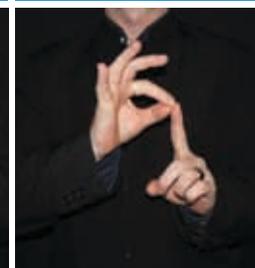
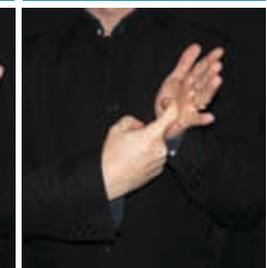
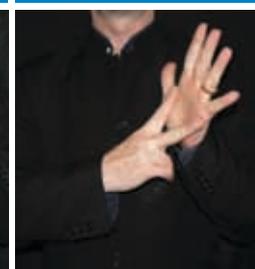
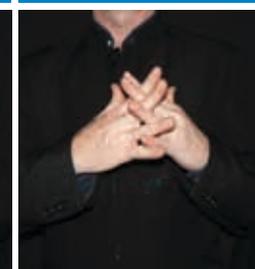
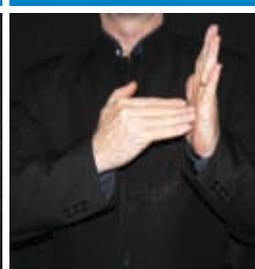
Guide Dogs Victoria offers a comprehensive range of free mobility services to help people travel confidently and safely outside the home. Through the centre for Mobility Assessment & Training, they can assist people of all ages living with low vision ranging through to total blindness.

- Services also include:
- Assessment & Referral
- Orientation & Mobility
- Children's Mobility
- Guide Dog Mobility
- Acquired Brain Injury Mobility
- Occupational Therapy
- Careers & Training
- Centre for Vision Independence

Chandler Highway, Kew Vic 3101
Private Bag 13, Kew. Vic 3101
Tel : (03) 9854 4444
Fax: (03) 9854 4500
Free Call: 1800 988 626
Website: www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au

Assessment & Referrals
Email: referrals@guidedogsvictoria.com.au
National Relay Service 133677 (voice/TTY)
1300 555 727 Speak and Listen (SSR)



					
Aa	Bb	Cc	Dd	Ee	Ff
					
Gg	Hh	Ii	Jj	Kk	Ll
					
Mm	Nn	Oo	Pp	Qq	Rr
					
Ss	Tt	Uu	Vv	Ww	Xx
		<p>Please note: This reference guide is of the Auslan Alphabet. The alphabet for tactile sign language (used by people who are deafblind) is slightly different. To learn more please contact us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1300 225 369 ■ info@ableaustralia.org.au ■ www.ableaustralia.org.au 			
Yy	Zz				