



Supporting infants,
children, and youth with
combined vision and
hearing loss

The Beacon



Newsletter of
The Wisconsin DeafBlind Technical Assistance Project
Volume I, Issue 1: March 2011

Counting Our Kids . . . Why the Wisconsin DeafBlind Census is Important

It is important for us at WDBTAP to identify and register any child under the age of 21 with combined vision and hearing loss on the annual Wisconsin census in order to continue to provide excellent services to the children and their families! If you are reading this and not sure if your child is on the census or if they qualify for the census, please fill out the form at www.wdbtap.wi.gov "Resources" and send it to Becky Hovde today. She will not only assist you with your questions about the census, she will also give you valuable information and tools that are available to you if your child is registered on the census. She can be reached at (608) 356-2023 or at rebecca.hovde@wesp-dhh.wi.gov. By registering on the census, the services and programs offered by WDBTAP will be made available to you at **no cost**. See the list below for information on these services.

Note: Children can be added to the census at anytime during the year.

What Types of Technical Assistance Does WDBTAP provide?

- Parent/Family trainings and assistance in connecting families with one another
- Statewide and regional workshops for service providers and families
- Observation, support and coaching in programming for children
- Intensive Deafblind training series for paraprofessionals who work one on one with children and youth who are deafblind
- Assistance in identifying children and youth who are deafblind
- Referral to relevant local, regional, and national agencies
- Lending library with materials, equipment, and toys to benefit deafblind children/youth on the Registry

WDBTAP is Now on Facebook!

Did you know that you can now find information from us on Facebook? WDBTAP is counting on you to make our Facebook page successful!

Find us, check out the resources and be sure to click **-Like-** to ensure that you receive our up to date information and insights! You can find us directly on Facebook by searching for Wisconsin Deaf Blind Technical Assistance Project or click on the Facebook link on our website, which is at www.wdbtap.wi.gov.

If you are new to our Facebook page, take a look at:

- The Wall - This is where we will post links, events, interesting facts, and our newsletters. We will also be highlighting items from our lending library.
- The Info Section - This is where you will find out more information about us, our contact information, and our website.
- Photos - We will be posting our lending library pictures here as well as any great photo opps from our staff and activities. Since FB is a very public site, we will not post pictures of anyone without their permission to be posted on our FB site.
- Events - We have spectacular events throughout the year and if you are wondering what and when some of our great WDBTAP activities are happening, check here.
- Favorites - Check out some of our favorite pages and links. We are always adding links and pages that you may find interesting.

Facebook is a great way to connect to all other deafblind projects around the country! We are also connected to many of the national projects, but if you are aware of a link or connection that is missing, please let us know.

Meet the New Staff

Meet.....Jolene Gruber Grant Coordinator

WDBTAP has added Jolene Gruber as the grant Coordinator in December 2010. As a former System Director for Employment and Training Programs in Wisconsin, Jolene comes with over 10 years experience in grant and project management. She is very excited about learning and working with the professionals and families and providing oversight and coordination of this grant. When not at work, she enjoys spending time with her family—husband Bill and daughters Katie (age 6) and Megan (age 5) and of course their dog, Buddy. Jolene is working at the WDBTAP office in Baraboo and can be reached at (608)356-0091 or jolene.gruber@wesp-dhh.wi.gov



“Luke is a person....he can learn and he has a right to learn! Nobody should be able to limit the possibilities for his future and education and training could make such an immense difference on what that future could mean.” - Luke’s mom

Link Lites

Each quarter, we will highlight a web page or program that we think may be of interest. This time, we chose the **Center for Deaf-Blind Persons in Milwaukee, Wisconsin**. The Center for Deaf-Blind Persons serves those who have some degree of loss in both hearing and sight. This organization understand the struggles confronting these individuals and their families and help people to achieve as much independence as possible and to experience the fulfillment of participating in meaningful work or leisure activities. Learn more about The Center by visiting their website at: www.deaf-blind.org

Meet.....Brenda Eberle Family Specialist

Brenda has been involved with the Wisconsin DeafBlind Technical Assistance Project for years and has become a vital part of our team since March 2010, when she became our WDBTAP Family Specialist. Brenda is the mom of four wonderful girls. She lives on a hobby farm in Elkhart Lake and enjoys animals and the outdoors. Brittany, the second oldest, is 14 and is deafblind with multiple disabilities. Brenda offers valuable insight to our team from her very real perspective. She also helps to develop and support parents in implementing educational support programs. Brenda oversees the planning of our deafblind strand for the Annual Family Conference and the Annual Deafblind Family weekend. She is a great support to parents and is the liaison to the Guide By Your Side program. Brenda can be reached at (920)838-1485 or brenda.eberle@wesp-dhh.wi.gov.

“I love to share my experience to help others find the tools that work for them and their families. I also enjoy the sharing of information because I still learn new things from everyone I meet.”

- Brenda

WDBTAP is looking for YOU at this year’s DB Family Weekend!

Deafblind Family Weekend will be held the last weekend of August at the Lions Camp in Rosholt, Wisconsin. We are looking for families to attend the weekend and who are interested in learning more! This year, we will be changing things up a little to include more information on topics important to our families, tied in with lots of fun activities and time for families to get together to learn and network with each other. For instance, **Do you have a deafblind child who is nearing the age of transition from school to adult? Are you a new parent and just discovering your child has dual sensory impairments?** Let us know that you are interested in learning more about DB Family Weekend by sending your name and address/email to:

Becky Hovde, Project Assistant
124 2nd Street, Suite 11
Baraboo, WI 53913
(608) 356-2023
rebecca.hovde@wesp-dhh.wi.gov



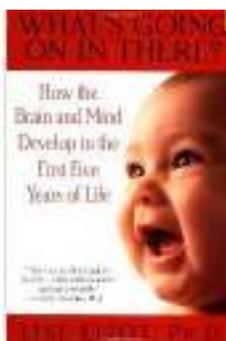
Did you know....

WDBTAP has a Lending Library? Yes, we do, and it keeps growing!

The items in our lending library can be checked out at no cost for up to 3 months by families whose deafblind child is on the Wisconsin DeafBlind Registry. Just one of many reasons you should be sure to ask if your child is eligible for the registry.

This is a great way to “**try it before you buy it**”. Several toys are pictured on our Facebook page and there will soon be a link to a downloadable catalog on our website at www.wdbtap.wi.gov.

Here are just a few examples of what we have available:



Books and Training Manuals:

How the Special Needs Brain Learns
Comprehensive Autism Planning
Communication: A Guide for Teaching Students with
Visual and Multiple Impairments
Child-Guided Strategies
Sensory Learning Kit Guidebook, Forms, and Routines
What's Going On In There? How the Brain and Mind
Develop
Remarkable Conversations
and many more.....

Toys and Equipment

HOPSA dress
Step by Step Switch
Wiggly Giggly Ball
Rolling Giggly Puppy
Textured Carousel Busy Box
High Striker
Ring Around Bells
Sunny Sunshine Switch
The Very Hungry Caterpillar book with Velcro storytelling characters
(with Velcro apron)
and many more.....



Scratch, Pull, Grab Board



*Textured
Carousel Busy
Box*

There is a link on the website for requesting materials.
Just fill it out and email or fax it back to Becky at:

rebecca.hovde@wesp-dhh.wi.gov or FAX (608) 355-2042

We also ask that you fill out a “short and sweet” Lending Library Survey form
after using the materials.

This will help us to maintain a current and user friendly lending library.

Calendar of Events

March 11-13, 2011

- 9th Annual Statewide Family Conference
Madison, WI
"From Caterpillars to Butterflies"

July 21-22, 2011

- Tips and Tools For Early Intervention
Wisconsin Dells
*"Cortical Visual Impairment -
Assessment and Resources"*

August 27-28, 2011

- DeafBlind Family Weekend
Lions Camp, Rosholt, WI
"Families Helping Families"



Wisconsin DeafBlind Technical Assistance Project
124 2nd Street Suite 11
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WDBTAP Staff

Marcy Dicker
Project Director

Jolene Gruber
Grant Coordinator

Becky Hovde
Project Assistant

**Heidi
Hollenberger**
DeafBlind
Consultant

Brenda Eberle
Family Specialist



Please Help Update Our Mailing List

- I would like my name added to the mailing list to receive future issues.
- I am no longer interested in receiving this newsletter; please delete my name from the mailing list
- I have moved; please change my address as indicated below.
- I would like more information on DeafBlind Family Weekend.

I would like to receive the newsletter in:

- Standard Print
- Large Print
- Email

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Mail to: Becky Hovde, WDBTAP Project Assistant
124 2nd Street, Suite 11
Baraboo, WI 53913

Or email info to: rebecca.hovde@wesp-dhh.wi.gov