



# The Arizona Deafblind Project

## NEWSLETTER

May 8, 2020



Image: Saguaro Cactus blooms against a blue sky, Credit Doug Kreutz, Arizona Daily Star

### **Educating Learners with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss during COVID-19**

The field of deafblind education places a high value on interaction, closeness and hands-on learning. During a time of school closures, distance and virtual learning can seem like a mismatch for our unique and diverse group of learners.

#### **The Arizona Deafblind Project acknowledges**

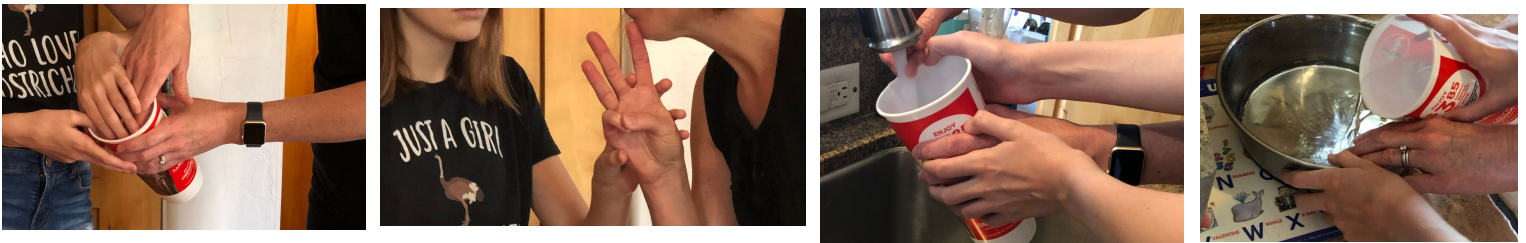
- Most of us are dealing with an overwhelming amount of incoming information
- New formats for learning will take time and patience
- We can try and do a little when we feel ready

# Tip of the Week **Everyday Routines**

When we stop to think about it, there are many daily household tasks which support a deafblind learner's fine and gross motor skills, independence, self-determination, literacy and communication. These jobs can be completed at different levels:

- **Hand-UNDER-Hand/Full Support** (adult's hands under child's hands)
- **Partial Participation** ("I do some, you do some")
- **Independence**

Here is an example of filling a pet's bowl with fresh water for a child who needs full hand-under-hand support:



In this series of images, a parent presents an empty plastic cup under their child's hands and then signs "water" to indicate what is coming next. This same cup is used every day for this task, so the child has built an association between the cup and the routine.

The parent and child walk over to the sink and together, with the parent's hands under the child's, they place the cup under the faucet and turn on the water.

Together they trail along the edge of the kitchen counter where the metal dog bowl sits at the base and they pour the water into the bowl. Consider the many concepts embedded into this simple routine including **cold/hot, wet/dry, empty/full, on/off, food vs. drink, dogs eat and drink from bowls on the floor!, first/next/last, etc.**

**Here are some other daily job ideas we can consider as potential opportunities for Concept and Communication Development:**

- Wiping off light switches, remotes, door handles, keyboards, and phones!
- Feeding pets
- Collecting/Sorting/Transferring/Folding/Putting away laundry
- Loading/Emptying the dishwasher or basin
- Getting the mail
- Transferring trash and recycling to a bin
- Washing and preparing produce from the store
- Cleaning toys in a kiddie pool or bathtub
- Hosing off a patio or walkway
- Watering plants



**Sandy Kenrick, parent of a deafblind son, blogger, and TVI, described how she made accessible chore charts for her kids at home in [this blog post](#)** [Image: A child carries a laundry basket which includes fluffy yellow blanket on top Credit: pathstoliteracy.org]



For deafblind learners who are early communicators, their daily “work” may involve building stronger sensory systems as they learn about the world around them. We can consider building routines around cuddling, lotion and massage, music, water play, bouncing, or playing with a vibrating toy. Image: A young child seated upright in a chair explores a tub of water on her lap using her hands. [Image Credit](#). TSBVI [guides educators in what this looks like in the context of educational programming](#), including example step-by-step activity routines.

Thank you to all who attended our May 6th Drop-In Zoom for Families. Our Family Engagement Coordinator Heather Joy led another beautiful discussion among family members. Stay tuned for our next Drop-In Zoom date/time announcement for the week of May 18th. **Here are some of our one- and two-word takeaways:**



“Connection,” “HOPE,” “Resilience,”  
“Respect,” “Gratitude”

If you have needs the newsletter does not address, Deafblind Project Specialists can be available by phone or through video conference during school closures in Arizona.

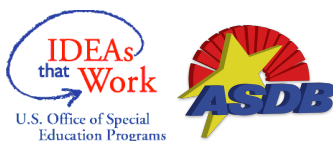
**Pat Jung**, Deafblind Specialist Maricopa County at [Patrice.Jung@asdb.az.gov](mailto:Patrice.Jung@asdb.az.gov) or 602-568-1944

**Amy Trollop**, Deafblind Specialist Maricopa County at [Amy.Trollop@asdb.az.gov](mailto:Amy.Trollop@asdb.az.gov) or 480-662-2657

**Megan Mogan**, Deafblind Specialist Statewide *except* Maricopa County at [Megan.Mogan@asdb.az.gov](mailto:Megan.Mogan@asdb.az.gov) or 520-260-2499

**Heather Joy Magdelano**, Family Engagement Coordinator Statewide at [azdbparent@gmail.com](mailto:azdbparent@gmail.com) or 602-300-5136

**Lisa Yencarelli**, Project Director at [lisa.yencarelli@asdb.az.gov](mailto:lisa.yencarelli@asdb.az.gov) or 520-833-8244.



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