

My Best Hearing with a Cochlear Implant

by Cathy Mouchka, CDBS Advisory Committee Member

I was born in 1965 with a severe hearing loss and low vision as a result of congenital rubella syndrome and was educated in the auditory-oral method. I attended regular schools from kindergarten through graduate school and always functioned successfully using bilateral hearing aids and FM systems until my sudden “change of hearing”.

On April 25, 2002, I returned home from a full workday and relaxed cross-legged in front of the TV to watch *Survivor*, one of my favorite reality shows. Sometime during the show, between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m. and happening within a split-second, I became unable to hear speech in my right ear. An occasional clicking and worse, an advancing train whistle-like sound, consumed what should have been my hearing. I called my parents and was unable to tell which of them was talking to me on the phone. I could barely understand my own speech, which was now almost like a

distant monotone. To my surprise I didn’t panic, thinking my hearing would just “get better” like a simple illness.

The first audiologist I saw really didn’t know what to say. A doctor suggested I might have a problem in my jaw that



could be backing fluid into my ears and that I should take some Aleve. Another audiologist and my mom argued about how I should be treated. But what was clear to me, as I tried to hide the tears, was that—after a lifetime of being “hearing impaired” and largely a

part of the “hearing world”—I had suddenly lost much of the remaining residual hearing in my once better right ear. What followed was a year of feeling like half a person without my right ear. I left a greeting on my work and home voicemail asking people to send email instead, and then I proceeded to withdraw socially.

The cochlear implant evaluation lasted several months because of my “borderline candidate” status. There was always some possibility that my hearing could return, and I also had to try three new hearing aids to boost hearing in my left ear. This time period didn’t pass without a few heated sessions with my audiologist, in which I swore I would do well with a cochlear implant and she then cautioned me with reminders about “realistic expectations”. My sound-booth scores with both ears hovered around 58%, just below the “best aided” cutoff of 60% to qualify for a cochlear implant. Yet my right ear speech recognition scores were 0%.

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On April 3, 2003 I finally had the cochlear implant surgery. My fears about the intravenous line and general anesthesia were worse than those of the surgery itself. My audiologist (and sometimes nemesis) surprised me by showing up for a brief visit prior to the surgery. Once in the operating room, I felt the promise of the moment and was “out” as though a blanket had been thrown over my eyes. After an overnight stay in the “hospital spa”, with an IV line for rehydration and massaging circulation booties, I enjoyed a routine recovery from surgery except for one occasion when I took too much pain medication for my petite size. I also endured a tight head wrap that wasn’t removed for three days, and light-headedness if I moved too quickly.

On May 7, 2003 I was hooked up with my first speech processor, a body worn device that looks much like a pager. My first experience hearing with the new cochlear implant was like listening to a tape recorder playing an old crinkled tape: garbled, warbling, mixed sounds that did not sound remotely like anything I had heard before. Even when spoken to, the sounds I heard were disconnected from speech. For ten entire minutes my cochlear implant had a life of its own! I shivered with the sensation. But then the strange sounds “flatlined” into normal sounding speech, although at times it was high-pitched.

The next day my audiologist performed an initial hearing test and found me, with the cochlear implant, to hear in the 90% range.

In those first days with the implant I heard a hotel door whooshing open and closed, the squeaky scratching of clothes hangers sliding across the bars in my closet, and an intense crackling whenever I crumpled up something.

Today I hear speech quite well, can hear my microwave beep two rooms away, and sometimes hear better than “hearing” people do in a noisy environment. But although my hearing seems better than ever, I do still miss things. Even if I’m “bionic”, I am still human.



Cathy has a B.A. in Communication Studies/Public Relations, and an M.A. in Education/Special Education. She works as a Consulting Analyst for Mission Consulting in Sacramento, California. She serves on the CD'BS Advisory Committee, as well as the Advisory Committee for the Children's Choice for Hearing and Talking Center-Sacramento. In her free time she tries to keep her bowling scores over 100! Cathy can be reached at mouchc@aol.com.

An excellent resource for comprehensive information about cochlear implants, including links to websites that simulate listening through a cochlear implant:

<http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/CIEC/>

The Cochlear Implant Education Center
at the
Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center

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Conservatorship: What's It All About?

by Jackie Kenley, CDBS Family Specialist

The familiar sayings “there are no handbooks for parents” and “children don’t come with directions” could be underlined and bolded for parents of children with disabilities. When our two older children became 18 years of age, my husband and I were mainly concerned with college, cars, and curfews. However, with our youngest child Laura, who has CHARGE Syndrome, there is always something looming for us to consider and about which we need to become educated.

Even though we parents are often supporting our kids at the age of 18 and beyond, it’s important to remember that they acquire certain legal rights upon reaching their 18th birthday. All persons—when they turn the age of 18—are presumed to be competent for making decisions in their lives. For our daughter who is deaf-blind and has developmental disabilities, her 18th birthday meant making decisions about conservatorship.

One of the questions we faced was determining whether or not our daughter possessed the capacity to take care of herself. In Laura’s case the need for assistance is evident to all who meet and work with her. Laura is charming, somewhat communicative and somewhat self-sufficient, but she will need 24/7 care for the rest of her life. We hope as a family that we have encouraged self-reliance over the years by presenting her with choices and freedom, and we will continue to do so. We also are aware, however, that she will always need our care or the care of people who know her needs and know her communication systems.

I attended a workshop at Support for Families, our local Family Resource Center, that covered the pros and cons of conservatorship. It became more and more apparent that conservatorship was something we needed to do if we were to provide the best for our daughter. Laura needs someone to make medical and financial decisions for her, and help with making decisions about adult services and where she will live. We were not comfortable with leaving the decisions about her care to the Regional Center.

We decided as a family to be Laura’s conservators. Her father and I are the co-conservators at present, and we

have asked that her brother and sister take this on as remaining conservators when we are no longer able to serve in this capacity. We knew that we could have applied for conservatorship prior to her 18th birthday, but we decided to wait and apply after she turned 18 years old. **By waiting until after her 18th birthday, the court fees were waived because she became eligible for SSI.**

The application process began with a visit to an attorney who took our information and submitted a petition to the court to establish conservatorship. At some point after that visit and after the petition was filed, we received notice of a court date in the mail. We also received notice that a court investigator would be coming to visit Laura. The

Regional Center had to be contacted by the attorney. We had told our case manager at Laura’s IPP meeting that we intended to seek conservatorship, but formal contact with the Regional Center had to be made.

The court investigator came to our home and met with us and with Laura. We showed the investigator how we sign and communicate with Laura, and the court investigator soon learned that Laura was interested in the process of making

her afternoon snack of waffles and not so interested in this visit! The investigator told us that the visit had been very pleasant and uncomplicated compared to many situations she is faced with. (Conservatorship is often undertaken with older adults and the investigator’s visit can be emotionally charged.) She then wrote a report that was sent to our attorney as well as to the judge.

On a sunny day in May, Laura, my husband and I dressed up for court. Laura looked quite cute in her blue sweater and black leather jacket and liked going down to the Civic Center with Mom and Dad. She did quite well as we walked over to the court building and through the guarded security entrance. Fortunately, we only had a short wait after meeting our attorney outside the courtroom; he had requested in advance that we not have to wait too long for our hearing as Laura’s patience might wear thin with the whole process. We were then ushered into the courtroom

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with about 20 other people and told to watch a video on conservatorship. The judge came in and we were called after only two other cases. Laura was quite calm as the four of us marched up to the desk. The judge informed us that all of the paperwork was in order, but that we had to have written information sent to the Regional Center, and after this was sent the conservatorship would be granted. She also smiled and told us we would not have to come to court again! Then the three of us left the courtroom, along with our attorney, and marched straight to the closest coffee shop where Laura enjoyed a delicious pastry!



Jackie Kenley can be reached at cbsjk@pacbell.net.

For more information about conservatorship:

www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/family/special-child/special1.html

This pamphlet, **Planning for your Special Needs Child**, was produced by the MetLife Consumer Education Center and reviewed by the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as well as Exceptional Parent Magazine.

www.eparent.com/lifeplanning/guardianship.htm

This excellent, brief fact sheet, available at the website of Exceptional Parent Magazine, covers the basics of guardianship and conservatorships, including who to choose as the conservator and alternatives to the conservatorship process.

Coalition of Parents and Educators Deaf-Blind
in collaboration with
California Deaf-Blind Services

Invite you to the Upcoming COPE D-B

PICNIC



Fun, Food, Swimming,
and time to share with other families and educators

(at two locations!)

RSVP and/or questions? Call Jackie or Myrna at 1-800-822-7884.

LOS ANGELES

When Saturday, August 28, 2004

Where Foundation for the Jr. Blind, Los Angeles, tel. 323-295-4555

Time 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Directions 5300 Angeles Vista Boulevard, Los Angeles. Eastbound 10 Santa Monica Freeway, take Crenshaw Blvd. exit, go south on Crenshaw, right on Vernon, and immediate left on Angeles Vista, go 1/2 mile, FJB on left. OR South on 110 Harbor Freeway, Vernon exit, go right on Vernon to Crenshaw, immediate left onto Angeles Vista, 1/2 mile, FJB on left. OR South on 405 San Diego Freeway, Slauson exit, left on Angeles Vista, 1/2 mile, FJB on left.

RSVP and/or questions? Call Jackie or Myrna at 1-800-822-7884.

BAKERSFIELD

When Saturday, September 18, 2004

Where Rio Bravo Resort, Bakersfield, tel. 661-872-5000

Time 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Directions 11200 Lake Ming Road, Bakersfield. From State Route 99, take State Route 178 exit, go 12 miles east, then 2.5 miles north on Alfred Harrell Highway.

Intervener Training Begins This Fall

WHAT

Four days of training for persons who currently serve as one-one-one assistants for children who are deaf-blind, and training for educational team members who will be in the position of training one-on-one assistants in the future.

WHY

This training initiative addresses a need that was identified by families, teachers, and administrators throughout California as CDBS prepared to submit its application for continued funding to the U.S. Department of Education. Interveners provide a vital service to many infants, children, and young adults who are deaf-blind, and we believe that student outcomes will improve if interveners are provided comprehensive training and support.

HOW

CDBS staff has traveled the state meeting with interveners, educational teams and family members to identify needs and successful strategies that can be shared with others throughout California, and this information will guide the training. Training content will be based on the nationally recognized Competencies for Training Interveners to Work With Children/Students With Deafblindness that have been developed by the National Intervener Task Force. Upon successful completion of the four-day training series, participants will meet the requirements for Level 1 Intervener Core Competencies. CDBS staff is currently in negotiation with a public university in order to offer university credits for the training series for participants who choose this option.

WHEN and WHERE

Training will be conducted in four regions of the state to reduce transportation time and costs as much as possible. These four locations have been chosen because they are centrally located to the majority of students in California who currently receive the services of one-on-one classroom assistants or interveners.

For teams that prefer four Saturday sessions throughout the school year, training will be conducted on the following dates for the 2004/05 school year. Training hours will be 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on each date.

**Please share
this flyer
with all
interested
persons!**

Day One	Fall	November 6, 2004 November 13, 2004	Los Angeles and Fairfield San Diego and San Jose
Day Two	Winter	January 29, 2005 February 5, 2005	Los Angeles and Fairfield San Diego and San Jose
Day Three	Spring	April 9, 2005 April 16, 2005	Los Angeles and Fairfield San Diego and San Jose
Day Four	Summer	June 18, 2005 June 25, 2005	Los Angeles and Fairfield San Diego and San Jose

This entire training course will be repeated in a block of four consecutive days during the summer of 2006 for teams that prefer a more compressed and intensive summer institute format.

For registration information, please contact Maurice Belote at mbelote@pacbell.net or at 800-822-7884 ext. 23 (voice/TTY).



San Francisco State University

presents a workshop in Spanish:

I WANT TO LEARN HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU

For:

Family members and educators, including teaching assistants

Of:

Infants, toddlers, children and young adults who have significant visual impairments and who may also have additional disabilities including multiple disabilities and/or hearing impairments

Participants will learn to:

- Communicate effectively with children using the sense of touch
- Promote communication with children
- Apply—in practical ways—strategies for use in homes and/or schools
- Develop and maintain effective and positive communication with families and educational teams

Place: Riverside County Office of Education
Conference Center

Address: 3958 – 12th Street, Riverside, CA 92502

Date: Saturday, September 11, 2004

Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Presenters:

Gloria Rodriguez-Gil

Educational Specialist

gloria.gil@gte.net

Myrna Medina

Family Specialist

magutierrez66@aol.com

Or you may contact them at 1-800-822-7884.

Childcare will not be provided.

This training is sponsored by California Deaf-Blind Services and is provided at no cost to participants.



San Francisco State University

presenta un taller en Español:

QUIERO APRENDER A COMUNICARME CONTIGO

Para:

Padres de familia y
educadores incluyendo
asistentes de maestro

De:

Niños o jóvenes con ceguera y
discapacidad múltiple incluyendo
sordo-ceguera

Los participantes aprenderán a como:

- Comunicarse efectivamente a través del sentido del tacto con su niño o joven.
- Promover la comunicación de su hijo o joven.
- Aplicar—de manera práctica—estrategias para usar en el hogar o la escuela.
- Desarrollar y mantener una buena comunicación con la familia y el equipo educativo de su hijo o joven.

Lugar: Riverside County Office of Education
Conference Center

Dirección: 3958 – 12th Street, Riverside, CA 92502

Fecha: Sábado, 11 de September del 2004

Hora: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Presentadoras:

Gloria Rodriguez-Gil

Especialista en Educación

gloria.gil@gte.net

Myrna Medina

Especialista Familiar

magutierrez66@aol.com

o se les puede hablar al 1-800-822-7884.

No se proveerá cuidado de niños.

Este entrenamiento está patrocinado por California Deaf-Blind Services y se proporciona sin ningún costo a los participantes.

Suggestions for Creating Successful Transitions from School to Adulthood

by Maurice Belote, CDBS Project Coordinator

While this is not an exhaustive list of steps towards successful transitions, it represents a few of the things I've learned over the years.

Mind the gap. The subways in London remind you, as you step off the trains, to mind the gap—the space between the subway car and the platform. In the same way, mind the gap between the end of a school career and the beginning of adult services. We know that the longer the gap in services, the greater the likelihood that persons who are deaf-blind may not have meaningful employment, adequate housing services, and/or community access to recreational and social opportunities. For example, if you can find a permanent job placement for an individual a few months before that person would otherwise age-out of special education services, why not take it? If the IEP can be modified so that services can be provided in this new environment, all the better. But if it can't, don't regret the little bit of missed school. A seamless transition into adult services may be more important than those last few weeks of school. Of course, major transitions cannot be rushed but must be thoughtfully planned so the individual has time to prepare for the changes.

Plan early. The law states that at age 14 IEPs must include transition service needs and at age 16 IEPs must contain needed transition services. (Yes, even educators are confused by this wording.) Don't let this requirement be satisfied with the attachment to the IEP of a single sheet of paper with a few boxes checked. By this time in students' lives, educational programs should be leading to clearly defined outcomes. All components of educational programs should be preparing students for success beyond school—at home, at work, and in the community (see next paragraph).

Does every step lead towards the desired outcome? Ask yourself at IEP meetings: does each goal and objective move this child towards a concrete and functional outcome? If a student is 20 years old and hasn't mastered tying shoelaces after years and years of trying, let it go; the student will probably be just as relieved as you are. The same goes for writing a signature, spreading on bread, or any other skill that has been worked on for years with little or no success. There may be other things for the child to learn that are more important, such as personal hygiene skills. Employment and housing personnel report that this is one area they would really like the persons they serve to take care of themselves—if they can. And remember the importance of cleanliness when it comes to social interactions (see next paragraph).

The importance of social skills. Social skills are just as important—if not more important—than competence. People will put up with a lot of incompetence if you have good social skills. Think about your own experiences.

Fact sheets from California Deaf-Blind Services are to be used by both families and professionals serving individuals with dual sensory impairments. The information applies to students 0–22 years of age. The purpose of the fact sheet is to give general information on a specific topic. More specific information for an individual student can be provided through individualized technical assistance available from CDBS. The fact sheet is a starting point for further information.

Have you ever worked with someone who, although he or she wasn't the hardest worker at your place of employment, was friendly, brought fresh-baked cookies on Fridays, told good jokes, or pitched in for the office parties? Imagine that same person, who wasn't the hardest worker, if he or she hadn't contributed positively to the work environment. Stopping at the donut shop once a week on the way to work to bring a box of donuts to the office may contribute more to longevity and social relationships than performing flawless work tasks day after day.

Document everything. It is important to document everything that might someday be necessary to know. This includes tasks at which the person who is deaf-blind excels, their expressive and receptive communication systems, preferences and dislikes, favorite leisure time activities, etc. This documentation will be useful as video resumes and/or personal communication dictionaries are compiled. Consider the following example. A student paddles a kayak across a lake at age 16, has a great time, is good at it, and then doesn't have the opportunity to do it again for years. By the time the student is 22 years old, will anyone remember this event and the fact that kayaking might be a great recreational activity for this person? They will if it has been documented. This can be accomplished with videotape, photographs, journal entries, or any other method that works for those involved.

The "readiness model" might impede success. There was once a belief that students had to prove they were ready for jobs, living situations, etc. by demonstrating readiness. Consider the following example. A student wants a work experience placement at a plant nursery watering plants. Under the readiness model, the student would have to prove his or her readiness by successfully watering plants in the classroom for a period of time, which would then be followed by a trial placement watering plants on the school grounds. If all of this goes well, the student would then graduate to watering plants at an actual nursery. The problem with the readiness model is that the student may never get past watering in the classroom for reasons that have nothing to do with the ability to water plants. Perhaps the student is bored with the classroom because he or she has spent too many years there. The student may be loud and unfocused while watering in the classroom, and the assumption is that the student will behave in a similar way out in the real world. But given the opportunity to do this job in a natural environment, the same student might very well succeed. The student's behavior might have been saying "I'm sick of the classroom", but in a real environment with natural motivators and consequences, the student may pleasantly surprise the doubters.

It's all about who you know. It's true that much of what we have in life, e.g., jobs, apartments, significant others, we got through someone we know, or through someone who knows someone we know. For example, when considering work experience placements for students, think about people you know who have small businesses such as restaurants, hair salons, offices or warehouses. When looking for apartments, think about people you know who live in desirable buildings and may know of unpublished vacancies, or people you know who work as property managers or real estate agents. Even if it's a friend who knows someone, have him or her make an initial call on your behalf. It will make your subsequent call much easier and will probably make the person more interested in what you have to say because they know you're a friend of a friend. This is something we need to learn from people in the private sector who practice this well: never underestimate the power of personal contacts and connections.

Get the relevant facts. Make sure you know everything there is to know about the individual who is deaf-blind: likes, dislikes, activities in which he or she excels, dreams, fears, social connections, and anything else that might impact future success. Gathering this information might be accomplished through processes such as personal futures planning, MAPS, person-centered planning, etc. Parents, siblings, extended family members, neighbors, and former teachers are all vital sources of useful information. These same people are also vital sources of information about interpreting the individual's wishes if the person has limited formal communication skills.

Hoja de Datos

Sugerencias para Crear Transiciones Exitosas de la Escuela a la Vida Adulta

por Maurice Belote, Coordinador del Proyecto CDBS

Aunque esta no es una lista completa de los pasos a seguir hacia una transición exitosa, si representa unas cuantas cosas que he aprendido con el paso de los años.

Poner cuidado al espacio. Los trenes subterráneos en Londres nos recuerdan que en cuanto se sale del tren, hay que tener cuidado con el espacio que existe entre el tren y la plataforma. De la misma manera, hay que poner cuidado al espacio que existe entre el final de la carrera escolar y el principio de los servicios para adultos. De antemano sabemos que entre más larga sea la espera para recibir los servicios, será mucho más probable que las personas con sordo-ceguera no tengan un trabajo con sentido, servicios adecuados de vivienda y/o acceso a sus comunidades para oportunidades sociales y de recreación. Por ejemplo, si usted pudiera obtener un empleo permanente para una persona unos meses antes de que terminen los servicios de educación especial, ¿por qué no tomarlo? Si el Plan de Educación Individualizado (IEP) puede ser modificado para que los servicios sean provistos en el nuevo ambiente, tanto mejor. Pero si no se pudiera, no se arrepienta de la pequeña pérdida de tiempo en la escuela. Una transición fluida a servicios para adultos quizá sea más importante que esas pocas últimas semanas en la escuela. Por supuesto, las transiciones mayores no se pueden apresurar sino que deben ser cuidadosamente planeadas para que así el individuo tenga tiempo de prepararse para los cambios.

Planear temprano. La ley dice que un IEP para alguien de 14 años debe incluir necesidades de un servicio de transición y que un IEP para alguien de 16 años debe incluir los servicios de transición que se necesiten. (Sí, aún los maestros se confunden con esta frase). No deje que este requisito sea satisfecho sólo con añadir al IEP una hoja de papel con algunas casillas rellenas. Para este momento en la vida de los estudiantes, los programas educacionales deberían conducir a resultados claros y definidos. Todos los componentes de los programas de educación deberían estar preparando a los estudiantes para el éxito mas allá de la escuela –en la casa, el trabajo y en la comunidad (vea siguiente párrafo).

¿Se dirige cada paso del camino hacia el resultado deseado? Pregúntese usted mismo durante la junta del IEP: ¿Cada meta y objetivo encaminan a este niño hacia un resultado concreto y funcional? Si el estudiante ya tiene 20 años de edad y todavía no domina el amarrarse las cintas de los zapatos, después de años y años de tratar, no insista en la actividad. El estudiante probablemente se sentirá liberado al igual que usted. Lo mismo aplica para la firma, untar mantequilla en el pan o alguna otra destreza, que se haya trabajado por años con poco o nada de éxito. Probablemente habrá otras cosas mas importantes que el muchacho aprenda, tales como las de la higiene

Las hojas de información de California Deaf-Blind Services están disponibles para que las usen tanto las familias como los profesionistas que dan servicio a los individuos con impedimentos sensoriales duales. La información corresponde a estudiantes de 0 a 22 años de edad. El propósito de las Hojas de Información es ofrecer información general en un tema específico. Se puede proporcionar más información específica para un estudiante en particular a través del apoyo técnico individualizado disponible en CDBS. La Hoja de Información es un punto de inicio para empezar a reunir más información.

personal. El personal de las agencias de trabajo y vivienda reportan que ésta es una área en que a ellos realmente les interesaría que las personas que ellos atienden se valieran por si solos –en caso de que lo pueden hacer. Y recuerden la importancia de la limpieza cuando se trata de interacciones sociales (ver siguiente párrafo).

La importancia de las destrezas sociales. Las destrezas sociales son tan importantes, si no más importantes - que el ser competente. La gente pasa por alto mucha de la incompetencia si usted tiene una buenas destrezas sociales. Piense un momento en sus propias experiencias. Alguna vez usted ha trabajado con alguien que aunque no era el mejor trabajador, era amigable, los viernes traía galletas recién hechas, bromeaba y cooperaba en las fiestas de la oficina. Imagínese esta misma persona, la que no era el mejor trabajador, si no hubiera contribuido positivamente al ambiente de trabajo. Parar en la tienda de donas una vez a la semana de camino al trabajo para traer una caja de donas a la oficina puede contribuir más a la duración y a las relaciones sociales, que hacer el trabajo sin errores día tras día.

Documente todo. Es importante que documente todo lo que en un futuro pueda ser necesario saber. Esto incluye tareas en que la persona sordo-ciega se destaca, sistemas de comunicación expresiva y receptiva, lo que le gusta y disgusta, el tiempo preferido para actividades recreativas, etc. Esta documentación será útil cuando currículos en video y/o diccionarios de comunicación sean recopilados. Considere el siguiente ejemplo. Un estudiante cruza un lago en canoa a la edad de 16 años, él es bueno para eso y se divierte, y luego no tiene la oportunidad de hacerlo por años. ¿Podrá alguien recordar este evento cuando él tenga 22 años, y que el hecho de navegar en canoa sea una actividad recreativa para esta persona? Ellos lo recordarán si lo han documentado. Esto se puede hacer por medio de un video, fotografías, diarios, o algún otro metodo que funcione para las personas involucradas.

El “modelo de estar listo” pudiera impedir el éxito. Hubo una vez la creencia de que los estudiantes tenían que probar que estaban listos para trabajar y vivir solos, etc. demostrando estar listos. Considere el siguiente ejemplo. Un estudiante quiere coger experiencia trabajando en un vivero regando plantas. Bajo el modelo de estar listo, el estudiante tendría que probar que está listo para hacerlo regando exitosamente las plantas del salón de clase por un período de tiempo, luego seguiría colocarlo a prueba regando las plantas del patio de la escuela. Y si todo va bien, el estudiante se graduaría para regar plantas en el vivero. El problema con este modelo, es que el estudiante talvez nunca pase de regar las plantas en el salón de clase por razones que no tienen nada que ver con la habilidad de poder regar las plantas. Puede que el estudiante está aburrido con el salon porque ha estado demasiados años ahí. El estudiante pudiera sea ruidoso y no que no esté enfocado mientras riega las plantas en el salón de clase, y se pudiera asumir que se comportaría igual afuera, en el mundo real. Pero si se le diera la oportunidad de hacer este trabajo en un ambiente natural, puede ser que el tenga éxito. El comportamiento del estudiante puede que haya estado diciendo “Estoy cansado de salón de clase” pero en un ambiente real con motivadores y consecuencias naturales, el estudiante podría sorprender agradablemente a las personas que dudaron.

Todo tiene que ver a quien conoce usted. Es verdad que mucho de lo que tenemos en la vida, por ejemplo empleos, apartamentos, parejas, los tenemos por medio de alguien que conocemos, o por medio de alguien que conoce a alguien que conocemos, etc. Por ejemplo, cuando se está considerando algún trabajo para los estudiantes, se piensa en alguien conocido que tenga algún negocio chico así como un restaurante, peluquería, oficina o una bodega. Cuando se esta buscando un apartamento, pensamos en gente conocida que vive en edificios que nos gustan, o pudieran saber de alguna vacante que no se haya publicado, o gente que conocemos que trabaje como gerente de propiedades o agente de bienes raices. Aún si es un amigo quien conoce a alguien, haga que él o ella haga la llamada inicial por usted. Esto hará que la siguiente llamada sea mas fácil y probablemente haga que la persona se interese más en lo que usted tenga que decir, porque usted es el amigo de su amigo. Esto es algo que debemos aprender de la gente que sabe mucho de esto: Nunca subestimen el poder de los contactos personales y las conexiones.

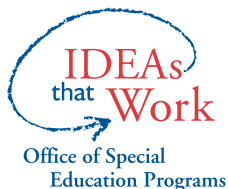
Obtenga los hechos mas importantes. Asegúrese de saber todo lo que pueda acerca de la persona sordo-ciega: sus gustos, aversiones o lo que le cause disgusto, las actividades en las que se destaca, sus sueños, sus miedos, sus conexiones sociales, todo lo que pudiese impactar éxito futuro. Reunir toda esta información puede lograrse por medio de procesos tales como el planeamiento personal para el futuro, MAPS, planeamiento enfocado en la persona, etc. Padres, hermanos, miembros de la familia, vecinos, o antiguos maestros son recursos vitales para obtener información valiosa. Estas mismas personas son tambien fuentes vitales de información para interpretar los deseos del individuo si este tiene un modo de comunicación limitado.

California Deaf-Blind Services
reSources

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