

## How deafblind children communicate

Some deafblind children may not yet be aware that their actions can influence what others do. These children communicate unintentionally, through others interpreting their actions and giving them meaning. Many children who communicate intentionally do so in very concrete ways - for example, pulling an adult towards something they want. Still others understand and use symbols, signs or words. These are hugely demanding for deafblind children, because children get so little information about the links between a symbol and its meaning. Developing communication in deafblind children is a highly skilled process.

A huge range of communication modes are used by deafblind people - speech, gesture, body movement, changes in facial expression, objects and many more. Some of these are readily understandable to other people. Others require good observation skills and knowledge of the individual. Still others require training to be used effectively.

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