



Mental Health Mondays

DeafBlind Awareness
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Each June people worldwide come together to spread awareness for DeafBlindness, which is often considered a Developmental Disability. The term **deafblindness refers to a combination of visual and auditory impairments that over 15 million people worldwide are estimated to be living with.** This month is your chance to raise awareness and make the world more deafblind friendly.



The following is an excerpt from Barbara Miles, M.Ed. and the Helen Keller National Center:

Though deafblindness presents many unique challenges to those with visual and hearing impairments and to their caregivers and friends, these challenges are by no means insurmountable. Many persons who are deafblind have a quality of life that is excellent. The persons who are deafblind and have high-quality lives have several things in common.

- They have each, in their way, come to accept themselves as individuals who have unique experiences of the world and valuable gifts to share.
- They have had educational experiences which have helped them maximize their abilities to communicate and function productively.
- Finally, they have friends, relatives, and co-workers who value their presence as individuals with significant contributions to improve the world around them. For these persons with limited sight and hearing and those near them, deafblindness fosters opportunities for learning and mutual enrichment.



Where can you go for DeafBlind Resources?

- An overview and resources for deafblind youth can be found here: <https://msb.dese.mo.gov/outreach-services/assistance-project.html>.
- Contact information for state organizations that provides resources to the deafblind for independent living, teaching communication methods, education, and public awareness can be found here: <https://lovecolumbia.org/info-resources/tqx8oww4nr6i9aawbtie393s2p32b9>.
- A regional network with resources, programs, and services for individuals, families, and providers can be found here: <https://www.helenkeller.org/locations/great-plains-region/>.
- A non-profit agency providing 24-hour crisis intervention, advocacy, case management, interpreting, and mental health services for the deafblind population—including 988 call numbers for the deafblind can be found here: <https://deaflead.com/about-deaflead/>.

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