# HKNC Logo Helen Keller National Center for Youths and Adults

# Functional Vision Assessment Guide

## Purpose of This Guide

This simple guide helps direct support providers understand how a person with combined hearing and vision loss may use their residual vision in everyday activities. It is not a substitute for a professional assessment but can help in making practical adjustments to support the individual.

## Visual Acuity (Clarity of Vision)

### What to Look For:

* Can the individual see objects up close? At a distance?
* Do they recognize people or items better when they are large or high contrast?
* Do they prefer a specific text size or color?

### How to Check:

* Show objects of different sizes at varying distances.
* Try high-contrast materials (e.g., black background with yellow or white text).
* Observe if they move closer to see better.

## Visual Field (Range of Sight)

### What to Look For:

* Does the person notice things in front of them but not to the side?
* Do they turn their head to look at things?
* Are there areas where they don’t respond to objects?

### How to Check:

* Move an object or light around their field of vision and observe their response.
* Note if they only react to items in a specific area (e.g., directly in front, to one side).

## Light Perception (Sensitivity to Light & Dark)

### What to Look For:

* Do they react to light turning on or off?
* Are they sensitive to bright lights or glare?
* Do they use light changes to navigate?

### How to Check:

* Use a flashlight or turn room lights on/off and watch their reaction.
* Try different levels of brightness and see if they have a preference.

## Shadow Perception

### What to Look For:

* Do they respond to shadows moving across a surface?
* Can they use shadows to understand object placement?

### How to Check:

* Move objects in and out of the light and see if they react.
* Observe if they use shadows to find objects or navigate spaces.

## Functional Vision in Daily Activities

### What to Look For:

* How do they find objects or people?
* Do they use vision to assist with tasks (e.g., eating, playing, dressing)?
* Do they rely on touch or sound more than vision?

### How to Check:

* Observe them during routine activities.
* Present familiar objects and see how they locate them.
* Watch if they visually scan an area or rely on other senses.

## Lighting and Glare Preferences

### What to Look For:

* Do they squint or turn away from bright light?
* Do they struggle more in dim lighting?
* Are certain lights or positions easier for them to see in?

### How to Check:

* Test different lighting conditions (bright, dim, natural light).
* Observe behavior in different environments (indoors, outdoors, different times of day).

## Recommendations for Support

* Use high-contrast materials (e.g., bold colors, large fonts).
* Adjust lighting based on their comfort (e.g., avoid glare, use consistent lighting).
* Use tactile and auditory cues along with visual information.
* Organize environments to make navigation easier (e.g., clear pathways, labeled items).
* Avoid white backgrounds and

## Conclusion

This simple assessment helps you understand how a DeafBlind individual with intellectual disabilities uses their vision. The information gathered can guide adjustments to improve their daily experiences and independence.

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