National Consortium
on Deaf-Blindness

# Strategies for Inclusion of Children with Multiple Disabilities, including Deaf-Blindness

## *The National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute*

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IDEAs that Work
Office of Special
Education Programs

<u>Outcome</u>:  Participants will be aware of a conceptual framework and strategies for including children with multiple disabilities, including deaf-blindness in community preschool and child care programs.

<u>Objectives</u>:

■ Awareness of the learning challenges related to combined vision and hearing loss

■ Awareness of strategies that facilitate inclusion and emergent literacy based on defining features of access, participation and supports

■ Awareness of resources available related to supporting children with deaf-blindness

# Children Who Are Deaf-blind

- Deaf-blindness is a condition in which the child experiences a **combination** of hearing and vision losses

- The range of sensory impairments included in the term "deaf-blindness" is great

- More than 90% of children who are deaf-blind have one or more additional disabilities or health problems.

# Reported Vision Loss in Children Identified as Deaf-blind

- 17% - totally blind or light perception only

- 24% - legally blind

- 21% - low vision

- 17% - cortical vision impairment

- 21% - other

# Reported Vision Loss in Children Identified as Deaf-blind

- 39% - severe to profound

- 13% - moderate

- 14% - mild

- 6% - central auditory processing disorder

# Additional Disabilities in Children with Deaf-Blindness

- 66% - cognitive disabilities

- 57% - physical disabilities

- 38% - complex health care needs
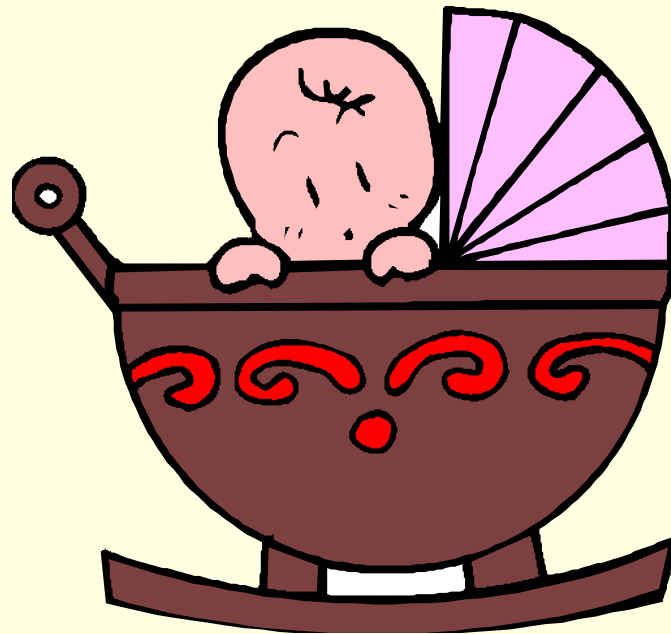
- 9% - behavior challenges

# Educational Settings for Preschool

- 72% - special education classrooms, separate schools or residential facilities

- 20% - inclusive settings

- 5% - home
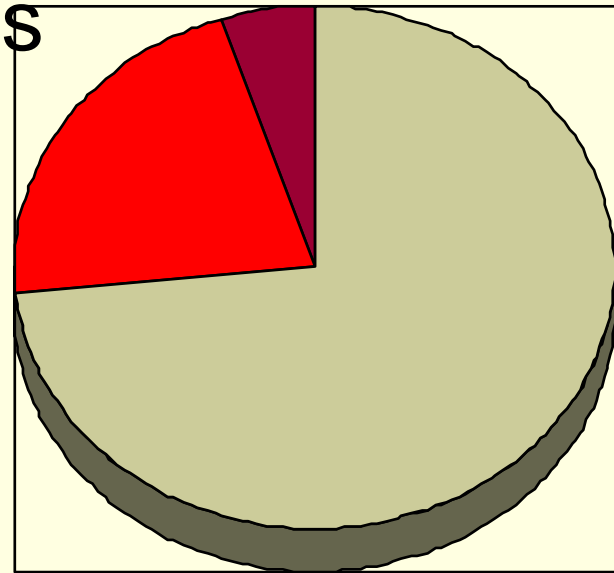
# Early childhood learning

Watching and listening to what's going on around them

# **Early childhood learning**

Touching, tasting, smelling, reaching, moving, climbing, singing, dancing, yelling

# Early childhood learning

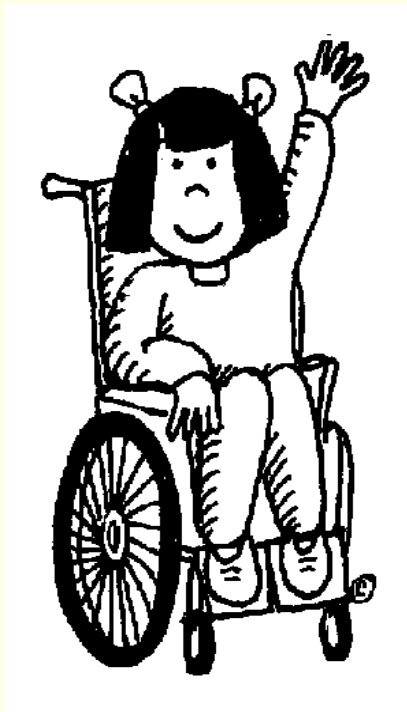Being surrounded by people who provide a safe place to learn

# Early childhood learning

Trying things out – repeating things that worked or brought pleasure – avoiding activities that did not

# Early childhood learning

Asking lots and
lots of questions

**Young children who have both vision and hearing loss learn the same way . . . only different!**

# Deaf-blindness is a disability of access

- Vision and hearing = Distance Senses

- Information and responses are absent, limited or distorted

- Multiple disabilities affect ability to seek information

- Impacts incidental learning

# Movement and Exploration

*The world can be a scary place!*

- Body awareness
- Space awareness
- Reaching and movement
- Locomotion
- Safe, predictable, responsive environments

# Trustful Relationships

*Success begins here!*

- Bonding
- Respect
- Security
- Consistency
- Connection to the world

# Defining Features of Inclusion

- **Access**
  - Communication systems
  - Sensory accommodations and adaptations
- **Participation**
  - Trustful relationships
  - Cues and prompts
  - Consistent Routines
  - Calendar System
- **Support**
  - Team approach
  - Training and technical assistance specific to deaf-blindness

# Factors Influencing Inclusion

- Care and Education Providers' confidence and comfort level

- Care and Education Providers' professional development and training

- Administrator support

- Required related services

- Family concerns

# Touch Cues for Personal Identification

- ***Unique personal cue*** to identify yourself

- ***Needed by everyone*** in regular contact with the child

- Used ***each time*** you greet and leave

- Familiar trusted individuals should introduce someone new

# Personal Identifiers

# Cues and Prompts

# Tactile Cues

- **Touch Cues-** Specific signals that are executed on the student's body

- **Object Cues**-Everyday objects that are presented to the student as cues and that may be touched on the body

# Touch Cues

**Touch cues should reduce startling, help develop anticipatory responses and provide clearer information about your expectations**

# Touch Cues

- Directly onto body
- Immediately precede an action/activity
- Consistent – each time, each person
- Alerts child that something will follow cue
- Leads to anticipation
- Facilitates association between a specific action and its consequence
- Can expect response from child over time

# Object Cues

- Presented to child as cues for particular activities
- Provide information or directives
- Allows child to ready self
- Consistent and predictable
- Facilitates development of expectation and anticipation

# Types of Object Cues

- Actual object

- Partial or associated object

- Arbitrary object

# Actual Objects

Spoon or fork
to indicate
time to eat

# Partial or Associated Object Cue

# Arbitrary Object Cue



LANGUAGE ARTS

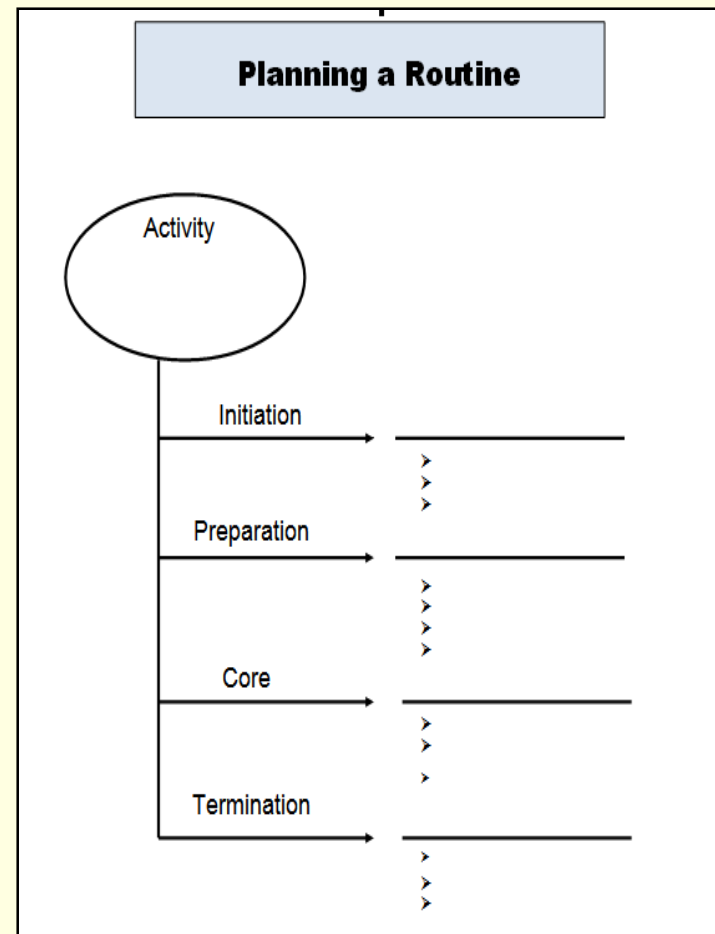# Routines
# and
# Schedules

# Routines

- Provide predictability, meaning, organization and security

- Opportunities for communication

- Build anticipation

- Reduce stress, increase confidence

# Components of a routine

- Clear signal activity is starting
- Each time:
    - Same place
    - Same steps
    - Same sequence
    - Same materials
    - Same person
    - Same pacing
    - Same delivery of assistance
- Clear signal activity is finished

# Routines

- **Initiation**

- **Preparation**

- **Core**

- **Termination**

# Calendar systems

- Anticipation schedules

- Daily schedules

- Weekly, monthly, annual schedules

# Calendar Components

- Set of symbols representing activities

- Format for presenting and sequencing the symbols (a calendar routine)

- Time built in for communicating about activities

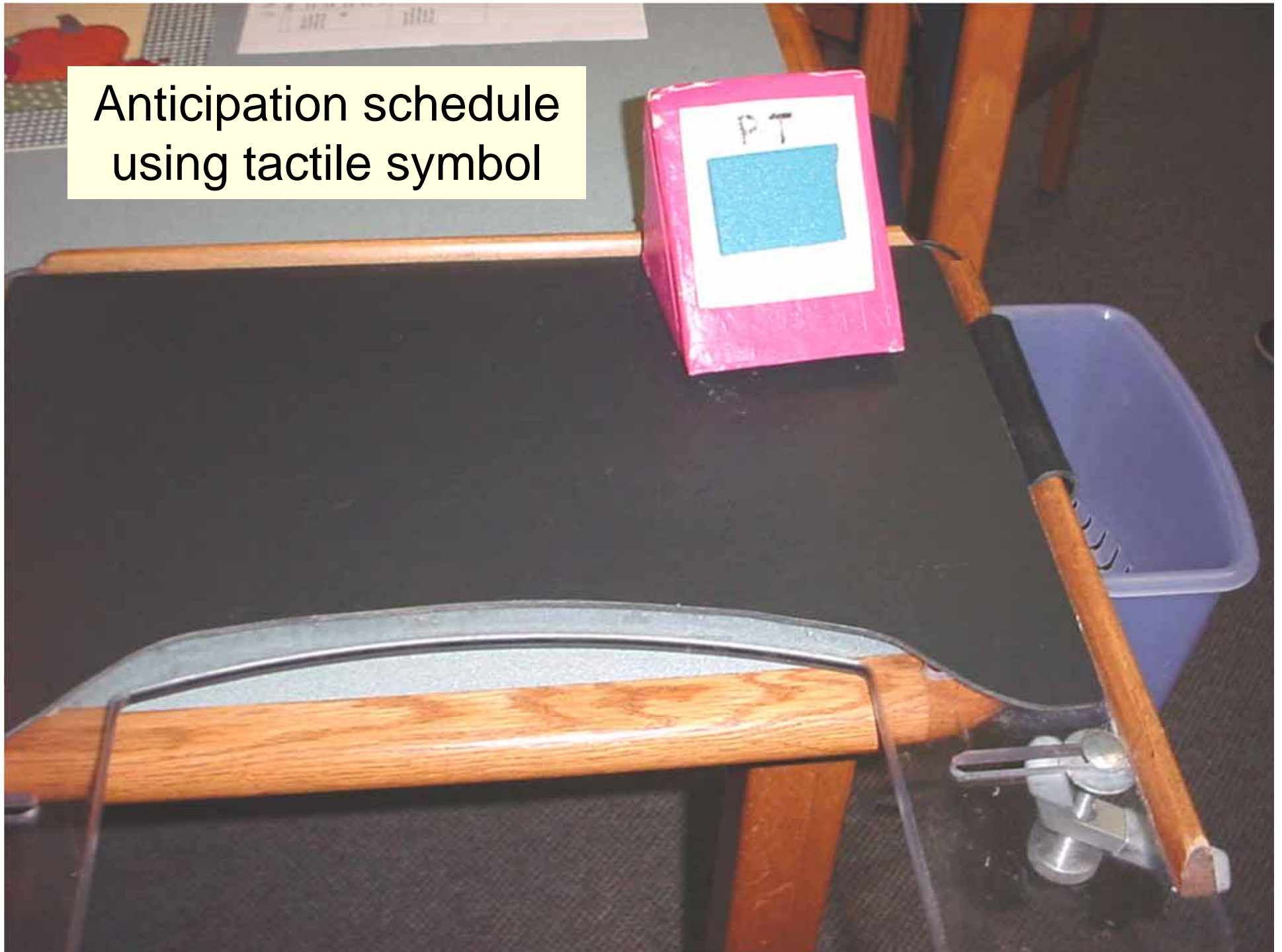- Accessible storage place for symbols

# Anticipation schedules

- Introduction to calendars

- Learn that activities are represented by symbols

- Time concepts - past and future

- Left to right

- Sense of security and control
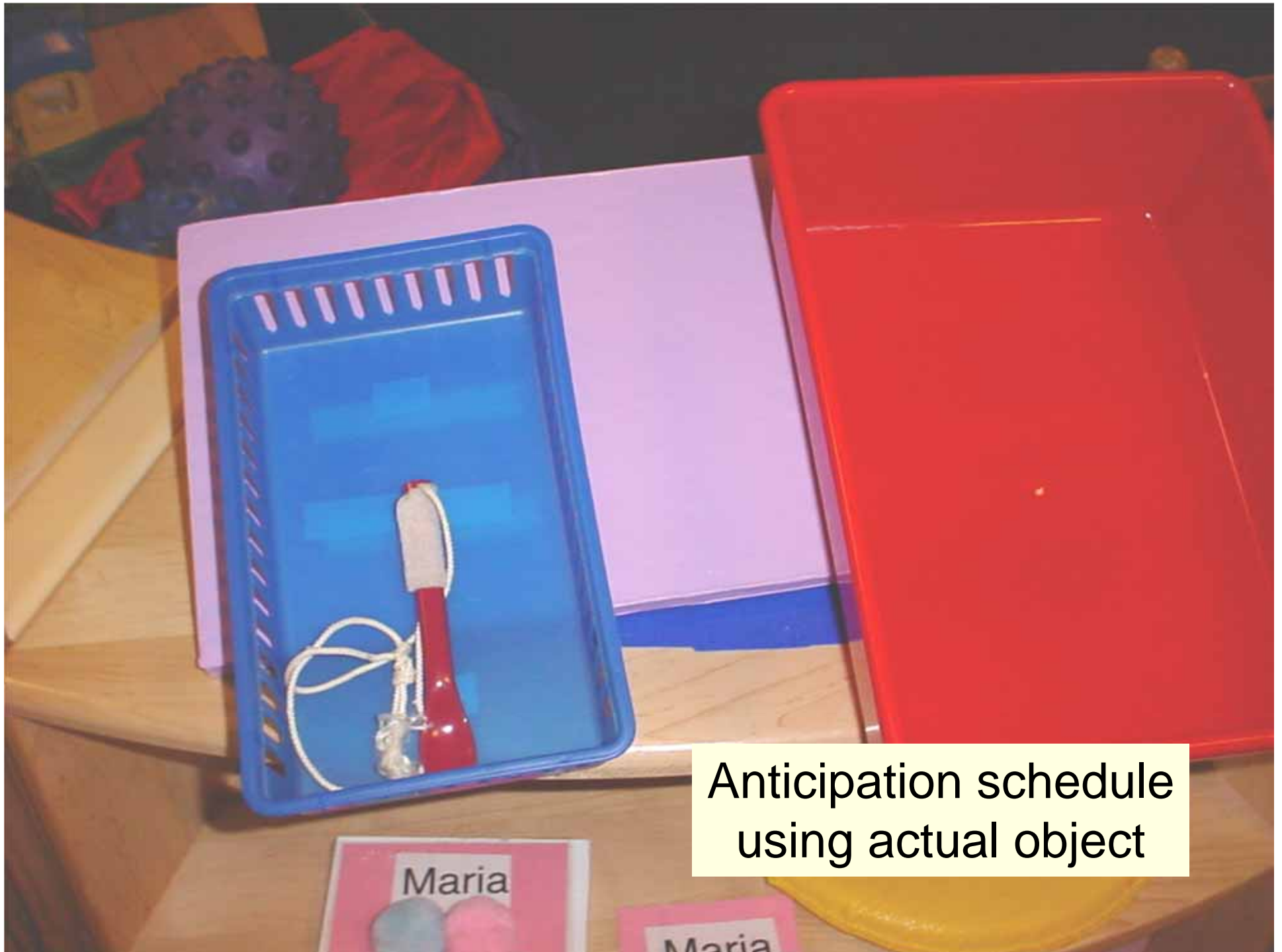
Anticipation schedule using actual object

Anticipation schedule using tactile symbol

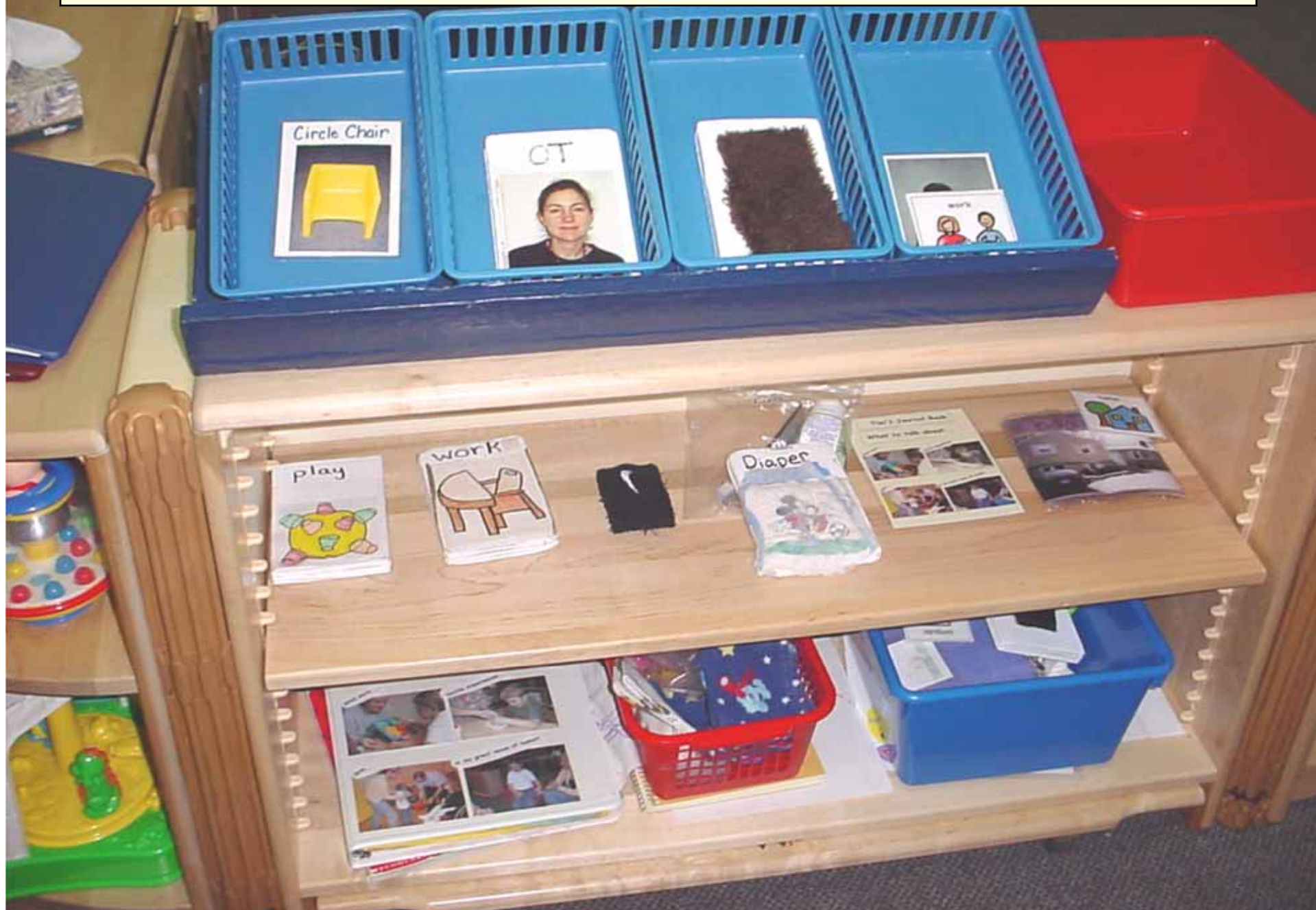# Calendar Systems

# Daily schedules

# Daily Schedule using actual objects

Daily Schedule using actual objects

Daily schedule using a mix of symbols – objects, photos, line drawings

Weekly schedule using photos, line drawings and sign language pictures

Monthly schedule using tactile symbols

# Concept Development

# Concept Development

- Limited visual and auditory information creates challenges
- Difficult to integrate experiences and make connections
- Hands-on, holistic approach
- Multiple opportunities and repeated involvement

# Consider the child's perspective

- Motivating and meaningful

- Involve child from beginning to end

- Multi-sensory approach

- Limit voice – but not communication

- Practice "tactile" conversations

# Tangible Concepts affected by deaf-blindness

- Objects exist
- Objects have permanence
- Objects differ
- Objects have names or labels
- Objects have characteristics
- Objects have functions or use

# Concept Development

■ What is a car?

OM2-05.mpg

■ Getting a drink of water

OM3-08.mpg

# Literacy Development

Building a foundation

- Trustful relationships
- Communication
- Preferences and interests
- Concept development
- Exposure to books, print and writing materials

# Exposure to ~~books and~~ writing materials

# Exposure to books and writing materials

- Need similar experiences before jumping into formal literacy instruction
  - Opportunities to observe print and Braille
  - Opportunities to explore traditional and adapted writing materials
- Need age-appropriate materials
- Need method for accessing materials
- Need to "see" others reading and writing
- Need consistency, repetition and multiple opportunities

# Support and Resources

- Training and Professional Development

- Ongoing support and consultation

- Deaf-Blind Network

  Individual State Deaf-Blind Projects

  National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness

  National Family Association of Deafblind

# NATIONAL CONSORTIUM ON DEAF-BLINDNESS

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Text Only Version
en Español

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**Technical Assistance**

**Personnel Development**

**DB-LINK Info Services**

- Selected Topics
- DB-Library
- People and Programs
- NCDB Products
- Conferences and Trainings
- Research to Practice
- Deaf-Blind Perspectives
- New Publications

## NCDB & State Deaf-Blind Technical Assistance Network

Click on a state for more information.

**Focus on Family Stories**

# NCDB2.0  Literacy Website
## http://literacy.nationaldb.org/

Contact Us

Literacy for Children with
Combined Vision and Hearing Loss

Home

About the Website

Shifting the Perspective

Building a Foundation

Early Emergent Literacy

Emergent Literacy

Writing

References

**Topics Under Development**
Vocabulary
Fluency
Comprehension
Expanding Literacy

DEAF-BLIND

North Dakota
Dual Sensory Project

LDOE
DEAF-BLIND PROJECT

## ALL children CAN read…let us show you how!

## STRATEGIES | PRACTICAL EXAMPLES | RESOURCES

Designed to give children with deaf-blindness, multiple disabilities and
complex challenges expanded learning opportunities.

# Thank you!