

THE DEAFBLIND POPULATION IN COLORADO

This information is derived from a study conducted by the Molloy College in 2015 using aggregated data derived from the 2013 U.S. Census Bureau. The Census estimated that approximately 0.8% of the United States populations from birth to 99 years of age were reported to have varying degrees of limited vision and hearing. The Colorado population calculation was formulated by using the DataFerret tool for determining estimates.

Colorado Estimated Deafblind Population		
2013 ACS Data using DataFerret	Total U.S. Population	Total Colorado Residents
0 Years to 20 Years of Age (5.25%)	2,446,542	34,931
21 to 40 Years of Age (6.52%)	129,501	1,834
41 to 60 Years of Age (20.53%)	160,868	2,278
61 to 80 Years of Age (32.82%)	506,579	7,171
81 to 99 Years of Age (34.86%)	809,553	11,464
	860,041	12,177

The term "deafblind" may also be referred to as dual sensory impairment or dual sensory loss or spelled as deaf-blind. In Colorado, we use the term deafblind to connote it as a unique condition and not simply a disability of vision loss plus hearing loss.

Deafblind is a combination of vision and hearing loss. Deafblindness encompasses a spectrum from mildly hard of hearing plus mildly visually impaired to totally deaf and blind or combinations with varying degrees of vision and hearing acuity. It is rare that an individual who is deafblind to be completely blind and completely deaf. Either the vision and/or the hearing loss may be present at birth or acquired. (Colorado Department of Education, 2017)

Facts about Deafblind

- ✓ Communication method and language preferences are vastly diverse and adaptive.
- ✓ Experience far greater adverse consequences, such as barriers more prominently in communication and mobility, than individuals who are blind, deaf, or hard of hearing.
- ✓ Can and do hold competitive jobs in challenging fields, however job opportunities are limited.
- ✓ May not be aware that they have a progressive vision loss as the change is often gradual.
- ✓ Adaptive skill training is crucial to overcome communication and mobility barriers.

General Etiological Facts about Deafblind

- ✓ People may become deafblind at any age, from birth to the end of life. Causes may be prenatal, congenital and adventitious including illness, injury and genetics.
- ✓ Vision loss may be related to decreased peripheral vision or visual acuity. Situational obstruction in vision may occur including color contrast, glare, night blindness and optic atrophy.
- ✓ Onset of hearing and vision decline vary. For example individuals with same syndrome may have one lose significant vision early while the other experiences changes later in life.

COLORADO COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING
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Updated on: 11/13/2017

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