

# PRESCHOOL SERVICES

For children who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind and visually impaired

Services are available to preschool children with diagnosed or suspected blindness or visual impairments who live in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island.

A preschool program is designed to provide home-based programs and/or Centre based consultation for children prior to school entrance. Programs are developed following consultation with parents, other professionals working with the child, and appropriate educational assessment.

Services are intended to focus on the child's individual needs and assist parents/guardians and other professionals in creating an optimal learning environment for their child. Emphasis is placed on visual development and its relationship to:

- Other sensory development (hearing, touch, etc.)
- Gross motor development
- Fine motor development
- Language development
- Intellectual development
- Social/emotional development
- Self-help skills
- Play skills

## **Preschool and Parent Education Services (BVI)**

- **Direct Instruction**

A teacher trained in the education of children who are blind or visually impaired will visit the home and/or preschool program on a regular basis. Parents and preschool staff will receive programming suggestions and consultation to develop skills required to promote the learning and development of children who are blind or visually impaired.

- **Parent Education Weekend Workshops**

Two-day workshops focusing on topics of interest are held each year at the APSEA Centre. Opportunities for parents to share their experience and knowledge with one another is a valuable aspect of these workshops.

- **Assessment**

Assessments are conducted at the APSEA Centre by professionals (e.g., teachers, psychologists, physiotherapists, speech pathologists, residence counsellors) trained in the education of children with visual impairments.

- **Short Term Programs**

Children and their parents may participate in programs designed to address specific needs such as

developmental issues or behaviour management.

- **Resources**

The APSEA Centre has a professional library with a large collection of books, videos, and pamphlets addressing the developmental needs of children who are blind or visually impaired. A toy library lends an array of toys, kits, and learning materials for use by parents and other service providers.

Services are available to preschool children with a diagnosed or suspected hearing loss who live in the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

The preschool parent education program is designed to serve the individual needs of preschool children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind and their parents. Through regular home visits and support in preschools, a teacher trained in the education of children who are deaf or hard of hearing works with the family and other professionals to create the optimal learning environment for each child.

This program assists in building a communicative system for the child who is deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind and the family. Natural parent-child interactions and conversations are used to encourage normal language development. With appropriate and consistent amplification, the child is taught to use and develop his/her residual hearing. Effective language practices are incorporated into daily living activities which help create a natural, stimulating home environment.

## **Preschool and Parent Education Services (DHH)**

- **Parent Education Weekend Workshops**

Two-day workshops focusing on topics of interest are held each year at the APSEA Centre. Opportunities for parents to share their experience and knowledge with one another is a valuable aspect of these workshops.

- **Assessment**

Assessments are conducted at the APSEA Centre by professionals (e.g., audiologist, academic language evaluator, psychologist) trained in the education of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Assessments are conducted on children entering school.

- **Parent Association**

The APSEA Parent Association, which is an interprovincial association, offers support and information to parents and families with children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

- **Resources**

The APSEA Centre has a professional library with a large collection of books, videos and pamphlets addressing the developmental needs of children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. A toy library lends an array of toys, kits and learning materials for use when teaching a child with a hearing loss.

## Referrals for Services

Referrals can be made by parents, pediatricians, ophthalmologists, optometrists, public health nurses, social workers, audiologists, speech pathologists, and otolaryngologists.

### Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority

The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) is an interprovincial agency established in 1975 by joint agreement among the Ministers of Education of New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

APSEA provides educational services, programs, and opportunities for persons from birth to 21 years of age who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind or visually impaired.

The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority provides a Preschool Parent Education program designed to serve the individual needs of preschool children who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind or visually impaired and their parents. Through regular home visits and support to preschool programs in the child's local community, trained teachers work with the family to create the optimal learning environment for each child.

*For further information, please contact:*

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