

**Children Who Are Deaf-Blind  
With Cochlear Implants  
Partners:**

The Teaching Research Institute  
Western Oregon University

Cincinnati Children's Hospital  
Medical Center

East Carolina University

In collaboration with the University of  
Kansas-Life Span Institute at Parsons

**For more information  
Contact:**

Kathleen Stremel Thomas  
The Teaching Research Institute  
Western Oregon University

**E-mail:**

stremelk@wou.edu

**Telephone:**

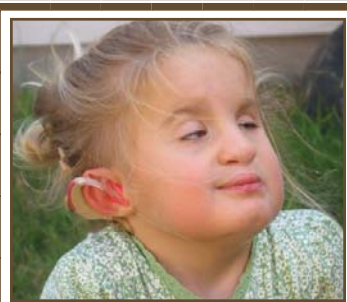
877-660-2432 or 913-449-0313

**Website:**

www.kidsdbci.org



This project (Grant #H327A080045) is funded by the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, to the Teaching Research Institute. Opinions expressed herein are those of the project and do not necessarily represent the position of the US Department of Education.



**Children  
Who Are  
Deaf-Blind  
With  
Cochlear  
Implants  
Project**

**About The Project**

**A** project to learn about the impact of cochlear implants for children with combined hearing and vision loss is seeking young children to participate in a research study. If you are considering a cochlear implant for your child younger than 8 years of age who is blind or has a vision loss, we would like to talk to you about our project.

Parents of children who have combined hearing and vision loss know how difficult it is to make the decision whether to get a cochlear implant for their child. Common questions parents ask include:

- *How do we know the implant will work?*
- *What results should we expect?*
- *Will it destroy any hearing my child has left?*
- *What therapies or interventions are available after implantation?*
- *My child has additional disabilities. Will my child benefit from a cochlear implant too?*

This project is conducting research with children 8 years and younger throughout the United States to determine the benefits and challenges of cochlear implants. The project will work to identify effective strategies following implantation that enhance communication and language development.



### What We Have Learned So Far

This research study builds on the findings of an earlier study with more than 100 children by the same researchers. It and other studies on cochlear implants for children with multiple disabilities suggest that there are a number of factors that influence whether a child will benefit from a cochlear implant. These include:

- Age at the time of implantation (younger is usually better).
- Length of time a child has had an implant.
- Consistency of use of the implant and regular updating of device mapping.
- Amount of time family members talk to a child at home.
- The frequency and quality of services to increase communication and language.

### Ways That You and Your Child can Participate in the Study

This study involves both assessment and intervention phases. Families can participate in the following ways:

#### Assessment Only

A number of assessments will be used to determine each child's level of communication, listening skills, and use of speech and language. This can be done in your home or at your child's school.

#### Assessment & Intervention

An exciting phase of the study will be the use of the Language ENvironment Analysis (LENA) to measure children's use of vocalizations/verbal language and their language environments. This remarkable tool is able to record up to 16 hours of conversation between children and their parents or teachers at home and at school.

During the intervention phase, some families will also be invited to participate in other ways such as learning new strategies to promote their child's communication development. Contact the project if you would like more information about these opportunities.

### Benefits to Participation

Each family will receive \$100 each time their child is assessed in appreciation for their participation. Parents who participate in assessment *and* intervention using the LENA device will receive additional payments. Participation is voluntary and all information that families provide is confidential.

### When to Contact the Project

The project is seeking pre-implant children only. Please contact the project *before* your child is implanted.



*We are so glad that cochlear implants with children who are vision impaired are being studied. The decision making process is a difficult one and ours had many unexpected turns that we wish to share.*

*-Parent from Pennsylvania*

### Participating Deaf-Blind Projects

- Arizona
- California
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Massachusetts/Perkins School for the Blind
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Carolina
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- Washington

For contact information for your state's deaf-blind project go to [www.nationaldb.org/ppStateDBProjects.php](http://www.nationaldb.org/ppStateDBProjects.php) or contact the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness: 800-438-9376; 800-854-7013 (TTY); [info@nationaldb.org](mailto:info@nationaldb.org).