

Deafblind Studies

Miss(ed) Communication

*"Everyday, strangers pass me by
without saying a word.*

*They use their voices to speak OF me,
- but don't take the time to speak WITH me.
I wonder why."*

Above is the first paragraph of a poem by Lisa Kozlik taken from Deaf-Blind Perspectives Newsletter (2000) Vol 8, Issue 1 (www.tr.wou.edu/tr/dbp)

Communication is the key to developing and maintaining relationships whether this is on an educational, emotional, or social level; or as a means to accessing information.

The complexity of deafblindness or acquired dual sensory impairment presents enormous challenges to children and adults who face barriers affecting all aspects of their daily lives. Communication is such an important aspect of everything we do. The restrictions to effective communication are multiplied for people with combined sight and hearing impairment.

A recent study commissioned by Senses Foundation titled "*Unseen and Unheard*" revealed that approximately 8,800 people in Western Australia in 2003 were deafblind.

People who are affected by impaired vision and hearing often experience lack of confidence and low self-esteem leading to social isolation; often as a result of those around them having limited knowledge or understanding of deafblindness.

To address this gap in knowledge Senses Foundation will be offering places on a training course to be held in May 2010 to celebrate Deafblind Awareness Week. We have secured two internationally renowned experts in the field of deafblindness to deliver two modules taken from the first year of the UK accredited Deafblind Studies course.

Training of this nature is not currently available anywhere in Australasia.

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