

Severe and Multiple Disabilities Constituent Committee Monthly Message

The DCDD Board members prepare briefs about topics of interest for our members. As a DCDD member, you are receiving this brief on the topic of resources for professionals who work with students who have communication disorders and/or who are deaf or hard of hearing. We appreciate your continued membership with DCDD! Please feel free to discuss this article on DCDD [Linkedin](#) or [Twitter](#).

I thought we might embark on a series of monthly messages about assessment and assessment instruments that are appropriate to use with children who have severe and multiple disabilities or for children who are deaf with disabilities (especially concentrating in the area of communication). In attending a recent conference I happened to attend a wonderful session on a functional hearing evaluation. Such evaluations are not intended to diagnose a hearing loss. They are essential because often what we read in the audiological report is not a good match to what we observe in the classroom or home. Functional hearing reports also can provide nuanced information about how the child uses his/her hearing in various contexts.

So, I'd like to spread the word about the *Informal Functional Hearing Evaluation* (IFHE) developed by the Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired (which has a great deal of experience working with children and youth who are deafblind). This instrument includes interviews and an observation checklist. The checklist includes sections on general functioning and awareness, making meaning of sounds, use of hearing in different settings, localization, auditory feedback, short-term auditory memory, and linguistic auditory processing. If you're interested in locating a free copy of this assessment instrument, please go to the website for the Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired, www.tsbi.edu, and do a search for the *Informal Functional Hearing Evaluation*.

Please join us in the coming months to talk about assessment instruments, approaches, and strategies you have found to be beneficial.

Susan M. Bruce
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