

Abstract No. 5.8

Wednesday 6th September 2017 at 14:15-15:00

Title: Research programme Communication and Deafblindness: Overview and new research

Presenter: Marleen Janssen, University of Groningen, The Netherlands
Co-presenters: Saskia Damen

Main focus: Both research and practice/Congenital deafblindness

Abstract: Three ongoing PhD projects focused on communication and language in people with congenital deafblindness (CDB). A short overview will be given: Bodily Emotional Traces in intervention (Bloeming-Wolbrink, in progress); Follow-up Model for Communication (Wolthuis, in progress) and Fostering Influence in Communication and Language.

In earlier studies we found that few people with CDB were able to communicate at an advanced level, using symbolic communication to share thoughts and ideas and communicate about past events. Furthermore, we found that support partners often communicated at levels lower than that of the person with CDB (Damen et al., 2015).

Our new research focuses on advanced levels of communication and on agency in tactile bodily communication and tactile sign language (Janssen & Damen, proposal 2016).

The main questions in this new project are:

- Is use of the intervention associated with an increased agency in communication by people with CDB?
- Is use of the intervention associated with enhanced communication and language use between people with CDB on the one hand and support partners on the other?
- How do communication coaches implement core components of the program with regard to fidelity and how well are they able to apply different coaching forms live and on-line?

Because we are at the start of the project, we want to show some video recordings and discuss with the audience the following points:

1. Are the chosen categories for agency in communication the right ones: initiative in directing attention, making choices, initiating topics of conversation, aspects of negotiation?
2. Can the intervention be improved with regard to competences of the people with CDB, partner competences and dyadic aspects?
3. Do you have experience with on-line coaching, and can you advise us?