

Touch Base: Center for the Deafblind



For people with deafblindness, and those who support them, to build connections with the community, promote self-respect, and improve communication and daily living skills, while creating moments of joy.

Policies and Procedures Manual 2016

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Touch Base: Center for the Deafblind Policy and Procedure Manual 2016

Mailing Address: 15 Azalea Trail Lane, Bellaire, Texas 77401
Phone: 832-877-3333
Fax: 713-666-9335
Email: contact@touchbasecenter.org
Website: www.touchbasecenter.org

Board of Directors

Robbie Blaha	robblaha@gmail.com
Diana Dinn	dianadinn@yahoo.com
Grace England	gracengland@juno.com
Chris Hartman	chris.hartman@cbrands.com
Vivecca Hartman	hartmanfam28@sbcglobal.net
Fareed Khan	fkhan@bcm.edu
Rubina Khan	rfkhanusa@gmail.com
Zarir Sethna	zarirs@sbcglobal.net
David Wiley	wileyd@tsbvi.edu

Program Coordinator

Ashley Davis adavisCTRS@gmail.com

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday 9:00 AM- 3:00 PM

Mission Statement

For people with deafblindness, and those who support them, to build connections with the community, promote self-respect, improve communication and daily living skills, while creating moments of joy.

Principles of Touch Base

1. Touch Base has been created to give continuing structure, purpose and enjoyment to people who are deafblind, and to provide ongoing training to their interveners or caregivers. For the purposes of this document, the word intervener will be used to mean a person who works consistently one-on-one with a deafblind individual, providing a bridge to the world, whether that person be a trained intervener, a caregiver, or a family member. This person will need to be present with the deafblind client at all times while participating in the program at Touch Base. He/she will be responsible for implementing

the goals and objectives planned for the client, under the supervision of the Touch Base Program Coordinator.

2. Every deafblind client will receive individualized attention and training based upon his/her needs. The assumption is that everybody can learn and improve. The expectation is that there will be meaningful participation by the client and the intervener. It is understood that each person has his/her individual learning style. The client, his/her guardian and the intervener will be treated as a team and, together with the Touch Base Program Coordinator, will be responsible for designing an Individual Program Plan (IPP) for the client.

3. Upon registration of a deafblind individual at Touch Base, the Program Coordinator will meet with the team and together they will create an Individual Program Plan for the year. The Program Coordinator will be responsible for supervising the IPP along with the client's intervener. Under this model, the Program Coordinator will have the authority to guide and train the intervener. If the intervener refuses to comply, this will be discussed with the client's guardian, and an attempt will be made to resolve the situation. It is imperative for the client's comfort and progress that everybody works together as a team. If there are any concerns among the team-members, these need to be addressed immediately.

4. Each deafblind client's IPP will include regular excursions into the community with their intervener, to give them the opportunity to increase their socialization and communication skills, and to build relationships within their neighborhood. The client will be encouraged to participate in community activities, such as Farmers' Markets, social affairs and sports events.

Annual Paperwork and Materials Fee

Upon joining Touch Base, families will receive a registration packet to complete for the following year. It is critical for Touch Base to receive current information to ensure maximum health and safety for the clients.

Should information change during the year, please notify Touch Base of these changes to keep our records up to date. Upon registration, and each January, a \$50.00 fee will be assessed to all clients to cover the costs of special projects, activities, and materials. Fee is due no later than January 31 each year.

Participation Fees

Fees for services may be remitted via cash, check, or credit card at Touch Base during regular business hours.

Payment for day habilitation service is based on the following fee schedule: \$13/hour
If the client has Day Hab covered by DBMD or a similar Medicaid waiver plan through the state, please submit that information to the Touch Base staff.

Services funded by outside funding sources will be billed by the 15th of the month following the month of service. Payment is due the last day of the month. Private pay tuition will be invoiced at the end of the month of service.

Late payments will be assessed \$10 per day for each day payment is delinquent (30 days beyond invoice date).

Non payment of invoices older than 60 days may result in dismissal of client from the program.

Touch Base closes promptly each day at 3:00 PM. A \$10.00 fee will be assessed for every 10 minute period or portion thereof for time after 4:00 PM. Repeated violation may result in dismissal from the program.

Families are responsible to let Touch Base know when they change service providers or start with a new provider. Any unattainable funds for services billed to provider due to non-notification will be billed to the family.

Attendance Schedule

Families will submit a completed Attendance Schedule upon enrollment and each year with annual paperwork. The schedule may be amended as needed by completing a new form available at Touch Base.

The minimum requirement for attendance at Touch Base: Center for the Deafblind is at least four hours daily for eight days every month. The recommendation is for six hours daily, five days/week. This is important because of the need for sufficient attendance to make the program a success for the deafblind individual.

For similar reasons, any client who is absent for a 30 day period may be dropped from enrollment. To resume attendance, the client would be placed on the waiting list and would have to re-enroll the same as any new client. Serious health issues requiring hospitalization, surgery, etc, will be handled on an individual basis. Please contact Touch Base Administration to discuss special situations related to attendance.

Families/caregivers are responsible for contacting Touch Base to let the staff know a client will be absent.

If you know you will be picking up a client during the day for an appointment, please let the staff know ahead of time so that we can make sure the individual is ready for your arrival (making sure individual is on-site versus a community outing)

Arrival/Release of Clients

On a daily basis, from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM, staff will be available to receive clients for the day. Parents/caretakers are not to drop off an individual without their intervener.

Administering Medications

Individuals who need to take medication daily while in attendance at Touch Base will participate in supervised administration of medication. The Program Coordinator will be responsible for administering the medication.

Clients will not be permitted to share medication with other clients or to borrow medication at any time.

Violation of medication policy or any Texas law will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

Field Trips

The client's IPP may include field trips, such as shopping trips or trips to the park. These trips will always be made with the client's intervener, and in their vehicle, under their responsibility. Touch Base: Center for the Deafblind will not be responsible for any incident outside of the facility itself.

Emergency Medical Treatment

Legal guardians are required each year to complete a Medical Information and Authorization form that is kept on file in Touch Base. Up-to-date emergency care information (name of doctor, emergency care information, other persons to contact, phone numbers, etc.) can be of critical importance in the case of an accident or other emergency. If this information changes during the year, please provide the updated information in writing to Touch Base administration.

Client Illness

To discourage the spread of germs and disease, clients who are ill will be sent home. If a client has a temperature over 100 degrees, has experienced repetitive vomiting or diarrhea, or shows indication of an infection, the client will be requested to leave with their intervener. Clients must not return with a fever.

Personal Items

The schedule at Touch Base will provide clients with a wide variety of stimulating learning opportunities, vocational opportunities, and social opportunities. Clients are discouraged from bringing extra materials with them that would be distracting to others at Touch Base as there will be plenty of materials at the center. Clients should not bring large sums of money, valuable electronic items, or other expensive items with them. In the event these items must come with them to Touch Base, staff request that the legal guardian/parents come inside with the client to request the items be placed in the office area to assure their safety. Clients will have a regular location to place lunches and

coats. Touch Base will not be held responsible for the loss, damage or theft of personal items in client's possession.

All clothing, changes of clothes, and any other article that comes with the client to Touch Base must be clearly labeled. All lunch kits must be clearly labeled on the outside where it can be easily seen.

Dress Code

Clients are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing to Touch Base. Appropriate dress and grooming are important factors in the safe and orderly operation of Touch Base. It is important for each of our clients to present a positive image at the center and in the community. Clients should refrain from wearing items that are revealing, display slogans or images that are offensive to others, or items that present a danger to themselves or others. Together, the staff and parents/care takers will encourage clients to make clothing selections that promote dignity and respect for themselves and their peers. If an individual wears inappropriate clothing to Touch Base, he/she will be requested to go home and change to more appropriate clothing.

Smoking Policy

Touch Base is a tobacco free agency. Individuals are not permitted to smoke on the property.

Communication

The staff at Touch Base will keep parents/guardians/care takers informed of planned activities, upcoming events, and other relevant information about programs at the center. If concerns arise, staff will contact the parents/caretakers in a timely manner so our clients remain safe, healthy, and happy. Please contact Touch Base staff with any concerns or comments that you feel may affect our clients.

The primary method of communication between Touch Base and parents/guardians is our monthly e-mail. Please be sure we always have your current e-mail address at all times. All information such as special activities, center closing dates, etc. will be in the e-mail.

If you would like your name added to the distribution list please send a request to contact@touchbasecenter.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

Touch Base is fortunate to have a wide variety of individuals who provide volunteer services throughout the year for classroom support, special activities, community based activities, and potential trade operations.

Anyone interested in providing Touch Base volunteer service should contact the staff at the center.

Third Party Fundraising

Touch Base has outlined policies and procedures for third parties wanting to raise funds for the organization.

Information about requesting permission for third party fundraising can be found on our website. For additional information, please contact us at contact@touchbasecenter.org.

Visitors

Touch Base: Center for the Deafblind encourages visits to the facility by family members, friends, and community members. Frequency of visits is not limited unless it begins to interfere with training and programming.

All visitors are expected to sign in at the front desk every time they visit and obtain a name badge. Staff has been instructed to ask all individuals without a name badge to leave the instructional areas immediately. This policy will be strictly enforced to maintain the safety of our clients.

Challenging Behaviors

The staff at Touch Base wants every client to feel happy, healthy, safe, and productive. In the event any aggressive behavior occurs, the legal guardians/care takers will be immediately notified and the incident put under review by the Interdisciplinary Team. Individuals that pose a threat to themselves or others may be removed from the program.

While every care is taken to maintain a safe environment, each client participates at their own risk. Touch Base cannot be held responsible for the actions of every participant in the program. If any guardian or participant knows of a potentially unsafe situation, he or she should bring it to the attention of the administrator immediately.

Code of Conduct

Levels of Student Misconduct/Violations

The Code of Conduct provides a description of a broad range of behaviors considered to be client misconduct.

The behavior described should be viewed as representative of the misconduct which most frequently causes a disruption to the orderly learning process. The acts of misconduct listed in Levels I, II, and III are not exhaustive. The client who commits an act of misconduct which may be classified into any of the three levels will be subject to the disciplinary action assigned by the instructor or administrator.

Level I

Level I violations:

These include infractions that are generally violations of classroom or organization rules. These are typically violations that can be corrected by the instructor. Instructors and other staff members may keep a written record of the violations.

Level I violations include such behaviors as, but not limited to:

- Eating or drinking in an undesignated area
- Possessing and/or using nuisance items
- Behaving in a manner that is dangerous to the building, and/or facilities

Level I Disciplinary options:

- Administrative/client conference
- Behavior contract to include a redirection plan
- Confiscation of a prohibited nuisance item
- Environmental change
- Communication plan for addressing disciplinary action (to include the appropriate mode of communication for correction, time-out, etc.)
- Parent and/or provider contact: note, call, or conference
- Supervised service assignment
- Instructor/student conference
- Withdrawal of various student privileges
- Other appropriate disciplinary options

Level II

Level II violations:

These include those infractions that are more serious in nature and/or a continuation of Level I.

These infractions will result in a referral to an administrator. The infractions may occur on campus property or during any campus-sponsored or campus-related activity.

Certain Level II violations may be elevated to Level III violations based on the severity or context of the misconduct.

Level II violations include such behaviors as, but not limited to:

- Any repeated violation cited in the previous levels or chronic or repeated instances of misbehavior
- Engaging in inappropriate public displays of affection
- Exhibiting any unacceptable physical contact which could result in injury
- Leaving or returning to the classroom, building, or grounds without permission
- Loitering
- Lunchroom or restroom misconduct
- Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or damage to property
- Unwanted touching of others
- Verbally or physically taunting other clients
- Any other acts which interfere with the orderly educational process.

Level II Disciplinary options:

These may include:

- Administrator/instructor/client/parent conferences
- Facility or community service assignment
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Instructor removal of client from activity
- Withdrawal of various student privileges
- Other appropriate disciplinary options

Level III

Level III violations:

These include those infractions, in which the effect or potential effect of the misconduct is disruptive and more serious in nature than Level I or II. Infractions may occur on campus property or during any campus-sponsored or campus-related activity. A violation of this magnitude may result in a client being suspended. The administrators will determine the disciplinary consequence used.

Level III violations include such behaviors as, but not limited to:

- Any reported violations cited in the previous levels based of level of severity or chronic or repeated instances of misbehavior
- Acts of disobedience or disorderly behavior which are detrimental to the campus, harmful to health and safety, or inhibit the rights of others such as: harassment, bullying, or creating or possessing a hit list
- Being disrespectful toward facility personnel or visitor
- Failure to comply with assigned disciplinary consequences
- Destruction of property
- Throwing objects that could harmful
- Physical abuse to self or others
- Stealing
- Possession of weapons, drugs, or other contraband
- Cursing, vulgar language, suggestive sexual remarks, or other verbal abuse
- Harassment of others

Level III Disciplinary options:

These may include:

- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Campus or community service assignment
- Suspension for up to 3 days per occurrence of misconduct (suspensions at home)
- Other appropriate disciplinary options