



IOWA
DEAFBLIND
PROJECT

January 7, 2019

Happy New Year!

My name is Rita Fredericks and I recently started as the Family Engagement Coordinator for the Iowa Deafblind Project. I want to introduce myself and provide my contact information so I can offer my support to you and your child.

My son Miles is three and is deafblind. His vision and hearing impairments are what is referred to as cortical, cerebral or central in nature. When Miles was between eight to 15 weeks old, we received several diagnoses including epilepsy, physical and cognitive disabilities and cortical vision and hearing impairments. It was an overwhelming and confusing time for our family. We had a hard time understanding why the hospital let us take him home when we had no experience. I remember thinking, "How will we know what Miles wants or needs? and What does communication look like with a child who can't see or hear?" Over the last 3 years, our family has gained a lot of knowledge by attending trainings, working with our educational team, and especially by connecting with other families. Through my own experience I understand that caring for a child with combined vision and hearing loss can be a challenging experience. I hope that I can provide you with some helpful tips and resources.

I look forward to getting to know your family and supporting you as your child grows. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or to let me know how I can best support you.

Sincerely,

Rita Fredericks

rita.fredericks@iaedb.org

515-380-1782

<https://www.iowadeafblind.org/>