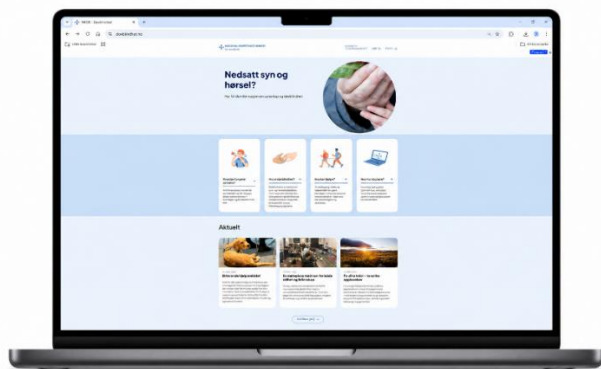


News from Norway 2026



New Website



Our new website has now finally been launched. In a new layout, updated and new content, and a modernized visual expression. The website is optimized for use across multiple devices, including mobile, tablet, and desktop, and adheres to universal design principles as well as search engine optimization standards.

New modules have been implemented to enhance usability and navigation, enabling a more intuitive user experience. In addition, visitors are now able to provide feedback directly through the site.

Social Media Rebranding

In addition, we are strengthening our social media profiles with an updated design, and new routines for publishing to ensure a more consistent and recognizable identity across all channels. New guidelines are being implemented for cohesive visual expression.

Instagram, in particular, has strong potential for growth and engagement.



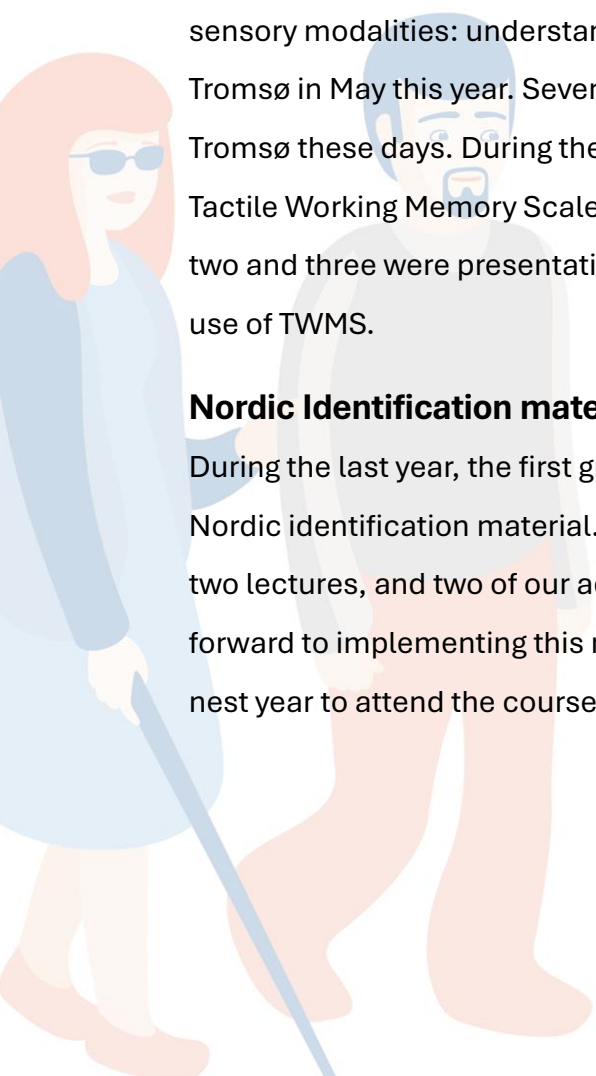
Advisory Centre for The Deafblind – Tromsø

Assessment and intervention across the sensory modalities: understanding the importance of the tactile modality

We are proud to tell you that our symposium Assessment and intervention across the sensory modalities: understanding the importance of the tactile modality, took place in Tromsø in May this year. Seventy professionals from all over the world found their way to Tromsø these days. During the first two days, Dr. Paul Hart moderated lectures about Tactile Working Memory Scale and how professionals use TWMS in their practice. Day two and three were presentations from participants and shared experiences from the use of TWMS.

Nordic Identification material

During the last year, the first group of students have completed the course on the new Nordic identification material. The Advisory Unit for the Deafblind has contributed with two lectures, and two of our advisors have participated as students. We are looking forward to implementing this new material in our practice. We will send more advisors next year to attend the course.



Specialization

Three advisors from the Advisory Centre for the Deafblind are currently involved in professional specialization. Our psychologist is pursuing her specialization in habilitation psychology, one of our social workers is specializing in vision pedagogic, and the third advisor is a student at the University of Groningen pursuing a master's degree in communication and deafblindness.

Lectures

The Advisory Centre for the Deafblind teaches about the consequences of living with deafblindness at several university courses. This center contributes to the understanding of combined visual and hearing impairment for students of psychology and clinical psychologists. We also have students in practice, and we supervise students in their bachelor's and master's degrees. Last year we had lectures and students from bachelor health care (nursing), bachelor social work, bachelor and master special needs education.

Møteplassen

This spring we also arranged Møteplassen. This is course in health literacy for people with deafblindness, a place to share lived experience and a social gathering. The topic this year was mindfulness, and the social activities included a visit to a sauna and outdoor swimming, gong bath, bowling, and quiz. Thirteen participants with deafblindness met in Tromsø.



Publications

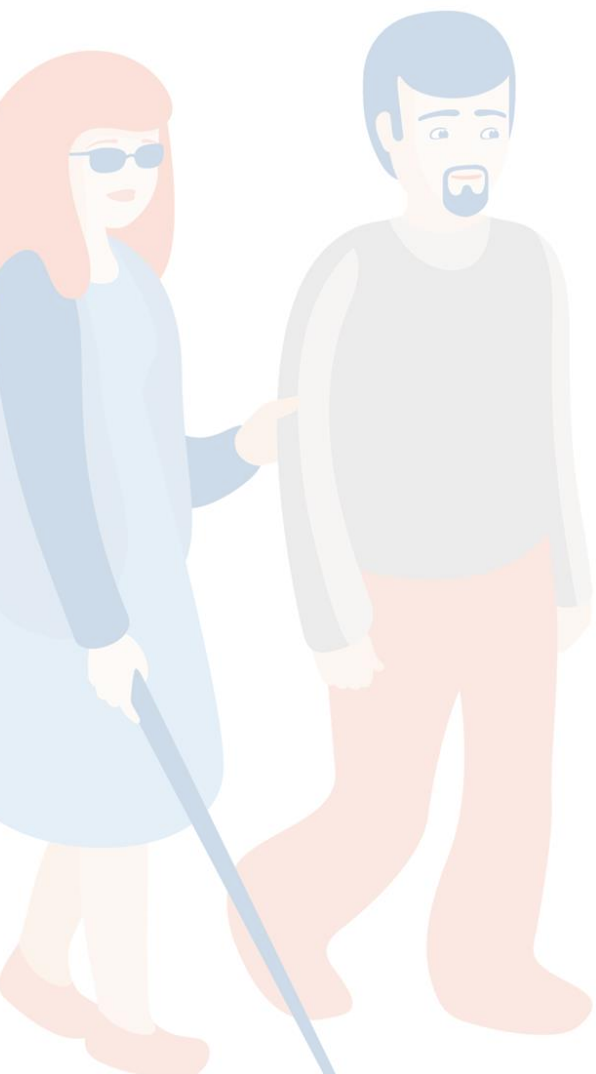
Related to the symposium, a supplement to the TWMS has been developed and published as a booklet. This supplement gives an overview of the learning strategies described in the Tactile Working Memory Scale. The booklet is available in English and Norwegian, and can order by sending an email to gro-anita.nummedal@unn.no

Two of our advisors are authors of a chapter in the book Learning, education, and support of deafblind children and adults (Oxford University Press) published in October 2025.

At the end of this year, Jude Nicolas in collaboration with John Ravencroft (Edinburgh University), Christine Sauvé Guindon (University Ottawa) and Anne Schoone (Kentalis, Netherlands) will publish the checklist regarding Brain related Auditory and Vision Impairment (BAVI).

The research project on validation of the TWMS has ended, and an article on this research project has been submitted.

RSDB was a part in writing a booklet regarding age-related sensory loss. This booklet is to be distributed to all municipalities in Norway in their learning strategy enhancing their competence in geriatrics.





Statped, Department of combined sensory loss and acquired deafblindness

Research on Parent–Child Relationships in Deafblindness

Within the last year Statped has worked on developing the knowledge on several issues within acquired deafblindness. One of our counsellors, Stine R. Winciansen, finished her master thesis about parent/child relations when the parent has deafblindness. Stine will present the results at the Nordic conference on Deafblindness this autumn.

New Project on Usher Syndrome and Identity

A new project on experiences in living with Usher syndrome exploring the theory of self has also started, and our counsellor, Linn Solli, is in charge of this work. Linn is also a member of the Nordic Usher network, where the life adjustment model is revisited. These two theoretical perspectives will be taken into consideration in the project.

Developing Support for the Transition to Tactile Sign Language

Last year Statped terminated a project constituting a course in facilitating the transition from visual to tactile sign language. There have so far been no offers in Norway in how to facilitate this transition. In addition to instructions and practice in tactile sign language, the course has included subjects such as accepting the situation and the consequences for one's identity. The participants experienced the course to be highly beneficial, and Statped will make this course available to others in need of this transition.

Service Provision for Individuals with Deafblindness

Statped provides services to individuals with deafblindness independent of age, including youth. Youngsters will not necessarily have deafblind specific services additional to this. However, they may be involved in services provided for deaf or hard of hearing youth and/or blind or visually impaired youth.

The Need for Improved Youth-Focused Services

Nonetheless, initiatives from Statped attempting to target young individuals with acquired deafblindness have not succeeded in reaching this group. We consider new knowledge on how to reach young people with deafblindness crucial to being able to develop well targeted services in the future.

Statped, Department of Combined Sensory Loss and Congenital Deafblindness

Competence dissemination

Development of Bodily-Tactile Communication

Development of Bodily-Tactile Communication is a newly developed e-learning course based on the book Communicative Relations by Anne Nafstad and Inger Rødbroe. The course introduces how individuals with congenital deafblindness or related complex disabilities communicate through movement and touch.

Structured around the Diamond Model, the course explores the development of bodily-tactile communication and concludes with a module on video-based interaction analysis. The e-learning course will be launched in both Norwegian and English.

TAKOM

TAKOM is a practice-oriented course in tactile communication for professionals working with individuals with complex communication needs.

The course combines theory and practical training and provides a foundational introduction to communication in the tactile modality. It is offered in Bergen and Oslo

and consists of three modules. What's new this year is a refresher workshop for former participants.

Competence Package for Educational Psychological Services (PPT)

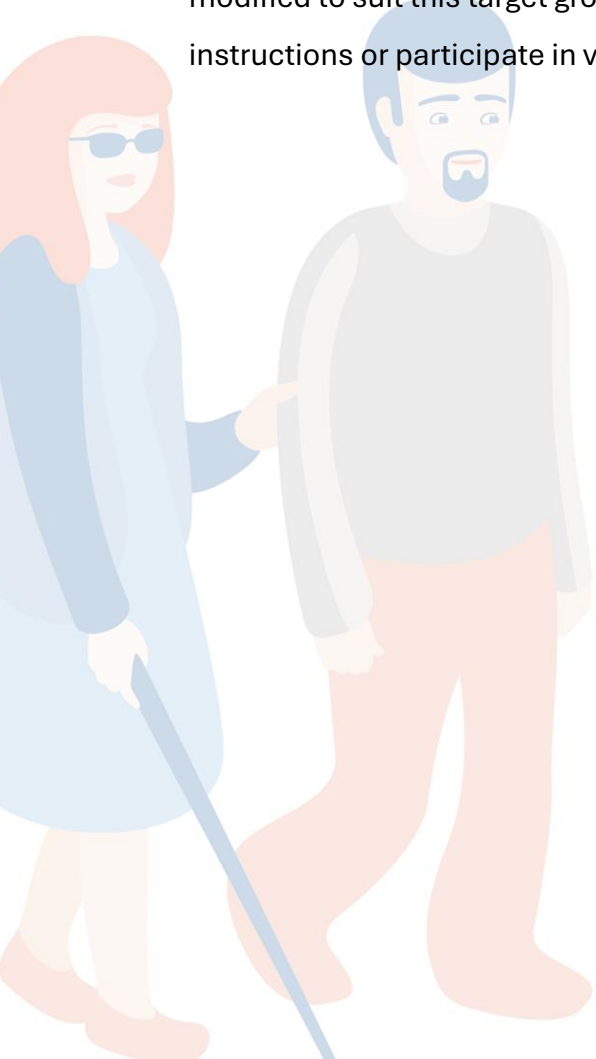
This competence package is designed to strengthen the identification and referral skills of advisors working in the Educational Psychological Service (PPT), a municipal/regional service that supports kindergartens and schools in adapting education for children, young people, and adults with special needs.

Early intervention depends on PPT's ability to identify combined sensory impairments in children as early as possible. Statped therefore offers nationwide training courses to enhance PPT's detection competence and support timely and appropriate follow-up.

The Pling project

The Pling Observation Test is a non-diagnostic hearing observation tool designed to assess sound attention in pre-linguistic children and young people with congenital combined visual and hearing impairments and multiple disabilities.

The test is adapted from the British Society of Audiology's Distraction Test (2018) and modified to suit this target group. It is intended for children who are unable to follow instructions or participate in visual reinforcement audiometry (VRA).





Signo Resource Center

New Research: Uncovering Hidden Potential in CHARGE Syndrome

In late January 2026, neuropsychologist Lynn Skei defended her doctoral thesis: *“Intellectual abilities and learning potentials of individuals with CHARGE syndrome: Atypical paths to knowledge construction.”*

Her findings challenge traditional assumptions, showing that individuals with CHARGE syndrome often possess cognitive resources that standard tests fail to capture. By highlighting these "hidden" abilities, Skei's work emphasizes the need for early, tailored support—not only for personal development but as a matter of legal protection for a group that has historically been underestimated.

The "Spor" Project: Strengthening the Foundations of Touch

Building on the legacy of the 2004 film *Spor*, this project explores how we can communicate more effectively through touch with people born deafblind. By analyzing video recordings of daily interactions, we have documented how vital elements—such as pacing, repetition, and shared focus—form the very basis of mutual understanding.

Key highlights from the past year:

- **E-learning Development:** We are currently finalizing content for a new digital course, while ensuring all privacy and ethical standards for video material are met.
- **Academic Growth:** The project has become a vital link for professional development. In 2025, we supervised a master's thesis on using objects to enhance participation, and we continue to host collaborative workshops with the University of South-Eastern Norway and the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences.

The Signo Model: A Unified Approach to Tactile Sign Language

In 2022, Signo launched a new framework for internal sign language training. Our goal was to create a consistent learning experience that reaches every corner of our foundation.

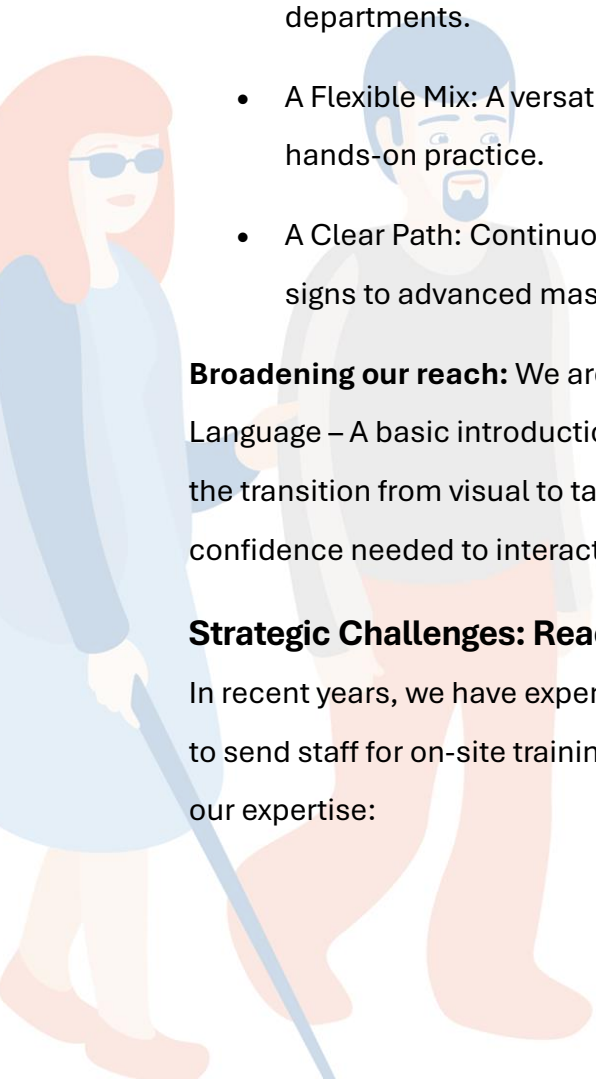
The Signo Model rests on three pillars:

- **A Shared Standard:** Unified training that guarantees high quality across all departments.
- **A Flexible Mix:** A versatile blend of digital modules, face-to-face sessions, and hands-on practice.
- **A Clear Path:** Continuous support that follows the employee from their very first signs to advanced mastery.

Broadening our reach: We are now applying this model to our latest course: Tactile Sign Language – A basic introduction for networks and professionals. This training supports the transition from visual to tactile communication, providing the expertise and confidence needed to interact with ease and security.

Strategic Challenges: Reaching the Municipalities

In recent years, we have experienced many municipalities lack the time and resources to send staff for on-site training. This has prompted us to rethink how we share our expertise:



- **New Training Solutions:** Following a survey in the Agder region, we have launched a new project to develop a foundational course in deafblindness. By combining digital modules with in-person sessions, we aim to make high-quality training more accessible, regardless of local budget constraints or staffing pressures.
- **Systemic Engagement:** Getting public agencies involved in long-term, preventive collaboration remains a challenge. This underscores the need for us to find new, creative ways to strengthen our collaboration across the public sector and work more effectively at a systemic level.



Targeted rehabilitation with audiovisual training



speech understanding. It is this test that has revealed new possibilities. Together

This innovative project aims to develop a training programme that makes it easier for people with hearing loss to understand speech, especially in situations with background noise. Audiologist Rolf Mjølnes is the project manager. Rolf has previously developed [The Eikholt test](#), a test of audiovisual

with [The Hearing Society](#) and funds from [The Dam Foundation](#), the project is now underway.

Read more about the project on our website: [Targeted rehabilitation with audiovisual training - Eikholt](#)

Architecture for all the senses – from ambition to human rights

How do we create environments where all people can experience accessibility, inclusion and real participation? This is the core of the project *Architecture for all senses* at Eikholt.



Through the project, we explore what it takes for people with deafblindness, and thus also many others, to orient themselves, participate and experience mastery in everyday surroundings. When we develop solutions that work for people with combined sensory loss, we also contribute to better solutions for everyone.

The project is developing a series of three books that together will contribute to increased knowledge about universal design with a particular focus on sensory perception, orientation and mobility:

Book 1 provides a scientific basis and introduces key concepts, perspectives and models – including how the interaction between people and their surroundings affects accessibility and mobility.

Book 2 will focus more on application in practice, with a focus on planning, design and concrete solutions in different types of environments.

Book 3 will highlight user experiences and case-based knowledge and show how solutions actually work in reality.

Read more about this project on our website:

[Eikholt - Architecture for all senses - inclusive for all](#)



Haptics: Pocket Edition, project funding secured

Eikholt, in collaboration with the National Federation for Combined Visual and Hearing Impairment (LSHDB), has received project funding from the Dam Foundation for the further development of *Haptics: Pocket Edition*. The project has a total budget of £400,000, with LSHDB as the responsible organisation for the application. Eikholt values this partnership and the trust placed in our expertise.

Haptics: Pocket Edition is an app designed to teach standardised haptic signals. The new project will expand the app with additional languages and new content, including haptic cues for guide dog users and football matches, with user testing planned for spring 2026.

Read more about this project on our website:

[Haptics: Pocket Edition has received project funding! - Eikholt](#)

Focus on youth, young adults and families

In our work at Eikholt, we focus on youth, young adults and families in courses, projects and dissemination. We have conducted group courses *Young and promising* and for the fall of 2026 we have planned courses such as *Student with combined sensory loss* and *Family course: Life with Usher syndrome*. In addition, all our individual Information and Communication Technology courses (ICT courses) are popular among younger people.

In addition to providing knowledge and sharing experiences, the group courses also serve a networking purpose. We recognize the significant value of bringing together people in similar life situations. Courses specifically aimed at younger individuals have been highlighted as important by User organizations and will also be planned for 2027.

We also have a collaboration with the organization Life with Combined Sensory Loss (LMKST). They run a Snapchat channel that they view as a community space. Once a month, we take part as guest contributors from Eikholt, sharing photos, videos, and communicating about our work. This provides us with an opportunity to reach a younger audience.

