

# OHOA Modules

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## **Module 1: An Overview of Deaf-Blindness and Instructional Strategies**

Module 1 gives learners an overall sense of the population of students who are deaf-blind and describes approaches for teaching and interacting with students who are deaf-blind.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Identify important facts that can be learned from the National Child Count of Children and Youth Who Are Deaf-Blind.
  - Understand the importance of gathering information about a student's etiology to guide the development of an effective educational plan.
  - Recognize that deaf-blindness is a disability of access to information that results in significant challenges in interactions and learning.
  - Be aware of basic team dynamics
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## **Module 2: The Sensory System, the Brain, and Learning**

Module 2 gives learners an overview of the sensory systems and the ways that students access information in the world around them.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand the importance of each of the seven senses.
  - Understand the brain-senses connection and its impact on learning.
  - Understand some general strategies for supporting a student's learning.
  - Understand basic information about all seven senses.
  - Know how to identify additional resources to learn more.
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## **Module 3: The Role of Interveners in Educational Settings**

Module 3 orients learners to the role of the intervener and the process of intervention.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Be able to explain the role of an intervener.
- Understand the Principles of Intervention.
- Be able to describe intervention as team process.
- Be aware of basic team dynamics.



#### **Module 4: Building Trusted Relationships and Positive Self-Image**

Module 4 lays the foundation for successful intervention for all students - harmonious interactions and trusting relationships.

##### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand that trusted relationships and a positive self-image are the foundation for well-being and development.
  - Describe key strategies to create reciprocal interactions from a deaf-blind perspective.
  - Apply a consistent approach using turn-exchanges for starting, maintaining, and ending interactions.
  - Apply affirmation of a student's initiative or response.
  - Analyze indicators of a student's processing time.
  - Learn to match observations of a student with strategies to share emotions with him or her.
  - Describe specific strategies for establishing joint attention.
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#### **Module 5: Availability for Learning**

Module 5 provides learners with ways to understand what may be impacting a student's ability to engage in the environment and how to support the student's successful participation in learning.

##### **Learning Outcomes**

- Recognize the internal and external factors that influence a student's availability to learn.
  - Be able to identify a student's state of arousal and how to influence it so the student is available to communicate and learn.
  - Be able to identify a student's likes and dislikes and know how to use those preferences to support the student's availability to learn.
  - Be able to identify the strongest sensory channels for a student and know how to adapt activities and actions in ways that take advantage of those channels.
  - Be able to identify a student's stress level and identify strategies that can support the student's availability for communicating and learning.
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#### **Module 6: Understanding Communication Principles**

Module 6 supports learners in understanding the dynamics of all communication exchanges and how to gather useful information for building successful communication plans with teams.

## Learning Outcomes

- Understand the meaning of the terms "communication form", "sensory mode", "communication function", "expressive and receptive communication".
- Understand the role of the intervener as a competent communication partner for students who are deaf-blind and be able to identify strategies that encourage communication.
- Discover that students with deaf-blindness always express themselves in meaningful, concrete, and purposeful ways from their deaf-blind perspective and that this expression is the starting point for communication development.
- Discover that the presence of an intervener alters the intent of a student's behavior.
- Use video analysis forms to gather information about a student's communication, develop insight into a student's communication, and assist other educational team members with communication assessment and IEP development.



## Module 7: Emergent Communication

Module 7 helps learners recognize and document emergent communication functions and forms in natural environments.

## Learning Outcomes

- Understand the role of the intervener as a competent communication partner for students who are deaf-blind and be able to identify strategies that encourage communication.
- Discover that students with deaf-blindness always express themselves in meaningful, concrete, purposeful ways from their deaf-blind perspective and that this is the starting point for communication development.
- Develop knowledge about "movements," "sounds," and "touching objects," and recognize them as meaningful, concrete, purposeful behaviors.
- Know how to establish "shared experiences" with a student.
- Gain insight into how experiences leave bodily-emotional traces in the memory and how students express these memory traces in their behavior.
- Understand strategies that can be used to co-create shared meaning of a student's expressions and develop gestures, meaningful sounds, and objects of reference (object cues).
- Understand strategies that can be used used to develop gestures, meaningful sounds, and objects of reference (object cues) based on the intervener's forms of communication.

- Understand the steps that need to be taken to expand concrete communication forms before moving on to abstract communication forms.



### **Module 8: Progressing From Non-Symbolic to Symbolic Communication and Complex Language**

Module 8 expands upon learners' knowledge of communication forms and how to support the student as she makes progress in using more symbolic communication forms.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand the value of observation in determining where a person who is deaf-blind is on the communication continuum.
- Describe communication modes used by students who are deaf-blind.
- Describe strategies to support a student to become a more proficient communicator.
- Describe strategies to support a student to develop complex language skills.
- Understand the role of the intervener and other team members in communication development, instruction, and assessment.



### **Module 9: Routines for Participation and Learning**

Module 9 unpacks the richness of routines as a framework for learning and participation.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Describe routines as a foundation for early learning, concept development, and interactions.
- Describe how routines support and organize learning for students who are deaf-blind by compensating for sensory gaps.
- Explain the importance of collaboration with family members and the use of routines in both home and school environments.
- Identify how routines support the student, the intervener, the teacher, and the family.
- Identify how routines are a framework for assessment and intervention.
- Describe the intervener's role in the development of routines.
- List the prerequisites and considerations for designing and using routines.
- Identify the steps of reviewing routine materials with a student and the process for developing a dialogue for communication.
- Create and evaluate an effective routine for a case-study student.

- Describe ways to expand on routines to help a student make progress.
  - Summarize the importance of routines for learning all types of skills.
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### **Module 10: Concept Development and Active Learning**

In this module, participants explore more about the role that active learning and exploration play for students who are deaf-blind - incorporating activities that support concept development for students every day.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Recognize the impact of deaf-blindness on an individual's development of concepts and incidental learning.
  - Compare and contrast skill development and concept development.
  - Recognize that trusting relationships are essential for the development of concepts about the self (and concepts about the self are essential for learning).
  - Recognize the role of touch and exploration in the development of concepts and active learning.
  - Identify the role of language and communication in the development of concepts.
  - Describe methods for incorporating experiential learning and functional tasks.
  - Apply deaf-blind strategies in the development of routines which support active learning and concept development.
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### **Module 11: Intervener Strategies**

Within this module, the learner delves deeper into the essential role and function of the intervener. Come learn how to refine your observational skills. Learn about the key principles of how to: "do with and not for"; "be a 'bridge' not a barrier" for students; use hand-under-hand techniques, and how to apply the techniques of wait time and pacing for processing.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Demonstrate observation skills that promote understanding of the intervener strategies covered in this module.
- Describe the principle of "do with not for" and identify ways to "do with" students who are deaf-blind.
- Describe the challenges of being a bridge, rather than a barrier. Identify possible solutions to these challenges.

- Explain the importance and rationale of hand-under-hand technique and demonstrate the technique.
  - Understand the importance of "pace, process and wait."
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### **Module 12: Maximizing Vision and Hearing**

Most students who are deaf-blind have access to some vision or hearing. Some have some access to both senses. As the person who works most closely with students in everyday school routines, it is vital for the intervener to know the basic functions of medical devices. Explore more uses of assistive technologies for support students' access to information and find out how these may help individuals maximize vision and hearing within busy classroom environments.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Demonstrate understanding of instructional modifications and strategies that maximize vision and hearing.
  - Demonstrate understanding of medical and assistive devices used to maximize vision and hearing.
  - Understand when you need to adapt a vision or hearing device or strategy to accommodate both sensory needs.
  - Understand the role of the intervener during the assessment process.
  - Know how to use and maintain amplification, cochlear implants, and assistive listening devices as directed.
  - Know how to make adaptations for auditory needs as directed.
  - Know how to make adaptations for visual needs as directed.
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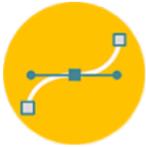
### **Module 13: Calendars**

Calendars for children with deaf-blindness are individualized time pieces that help them make sense of and participate in their environment. Calendars also provide a rich way of accessing information and having conversation. In addition to providing individuals with a sense of safety, they can also provide a way for individuals to share their opinions with others.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Explain why a student with deaf-blindness might have difficulty learning time concepts, time vocabulary, and understanding traditional timepieces.
- List the continuum of time frames in calendar systems and identify several student characteristics that are prerequisites for each.

- Identify ways that calendar systems are individualized for students with deaf-blindness.
  - Describe strategies to depict and discuss the past events for each time frame.
  - Describe how calendars move from concrete to abstract across the time frames to teach vocabulary about the future.
  - List example of how calendars support communication for students with deaf-blindness.
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### **Module 14: Introduction to Orientation and Mobility for Interveners**

Orientation and mobility skills are essential for all people and must be taught directly to students who are deaf-blind. To work effectively with an O&M instructor, an intervener needs to understand the role of O&M and how she can effectively support plans that are created for the student to develop O&M skills.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Describe the role of the intervener in supporting a student's orientation and mobility.
  - Describe the role of the orientation and mobility specialist.
  - Describe the 5 levels of the Spatiotemporal Development Framework as it relates to students who are deaf-blind.
  - Identify ways to support students who are deaf-blind within the 5 levels of development.
  - Identify basic O&M tools and techniques.
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### **Module 15: Orientation and Mobility in Everyday Routines**

Part two of the O&M modules takes us to the practical world of O&M in everyday life. Learn more about how interveners provide deeper insight for all team members in the ways that students are motivated to use these skills in the world around them.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand how an effective travel routine can support a student's practice of O&M skills.
- Understand the "10 Principles of Effective Travel Routines" and how to apply intervener strategies to support student learning related to each principle.
- Understand how environmental features help a student learn about the concepts of space and distance.

- Understand how environmental features can be sequenced to help a student know where he or she is in space (orientation).
  - Understand that the skills a student acquires in the context of travel routines have a direct, positive impact on his or her inclusion in family, school, and community life.
  - Understand that the skills acquired in the context of travel routines lead to higher levels of safe, efficient, and independent travel.
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### **Module 16: Self-Determination**

Self-determination is an essential skill for all people. Students who are deaf-blind need specific supports and opportunities to develop self-determination. Come and learn how people can develop their "choices" and "voices" through supportive intervention and planning.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Learners will be able to describe four components of self-determination as they relate to the specific needs of students who are deaf-blind.
  - Learners will be able to define basic vocabulary, as it relates to self-determination.
  - Learners will identify opportunities for self-determination within video-based case studies.
  - Learners will conduct environmental analyses to determine what opportunities there are for students with deaf-blindness to develop self-determination skills with partners in actual school settings.
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### **Module 17: Social Skills**

Academic skills are often prioritized as the most important for students. Developing social skills and interacting with peers are vital skills that we can teach our students for building a successful and happy life. For students who are deaf-blind, these subtle skills can be overlooked in fast-paced educational environments. This module provides some practical ways to build these 21st Century skills with diverse students who are deaf-blind.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand the important role that social skills play in school and post-school success.
- Understand how deaf-blindness and decreased opportunities for incidental learning can impact the development of social skills.

- Describe how to support natural social interactions based on shared activities and interests within the framework of family culture and local norms.
  - Describe how the intervener can facilitate friendships and interactions between the student and others in the school and community.
  - Understand how the Circle of Friends process can be used to identify challenges and strategies to support social connections.
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### **Module 18: Collaborative Teaming and Family Partnerships**

Teaming and collaboration are words that are used often in education and special education. For students who are deaf-blind, effective teaming and partnerships with families are the foundation for student success. Students who are deaf-blind often have a wide variety of team members with different types of training. This diversity, the student's need for consistency, and complex schedules can make it hard to implement educational goals in a truly collaborative way. Come and learn, not only how to avoid conflicts, but to develop teaming skills that allow the student and all members of the educational team to be successful.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand the importance of clear communication for the team dynamic.
  - Describe strategies to support good team communication.
  - Recognize the role and responsibilities of each member of the team, including the family.
  - Understand the importance of role release.
  - Describe strategies for conflict resolution.
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### **Module 19: Accessing the Curriculum and Environment**

What does access mean to you? Getting in touch with your friends and family from any location? Come explore the what it means to support diverse students who are deaf-blind to have access to instruction and vital information in school. Discuss practical ways with fellow “taste testers” to offer support to students you may know.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand the role of the intervener in the assessment process and ongoing decision-making practice for assistive technology.
- Know components of both the general education and expanded core curriculum.

- Describe factors that challenge access to curricula for students with deaf-blindness.
  - Describe materials, equipment and strategies that provide physical access for students with deaf-blindness and physical challenges.
  - Describe modifications and accommodations that support access needed for students with deaf-blindness and intellectual disability.
  - Understand the range of equipment used to provide communication access and the factors that influence choices to use/not use specific equipment materials
  - Describe how and why assistive communication provides access (communication, learning, socialization, etc.) at school and at home.
  - Describe the collaborative nature between family and school team members to ensure access to curriculum.
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### **Module 20: Values, Ethics, and Professionalism**

Our values guide everything about what we do as individuals. Some may consider the topic of ethics to be an easy one, but in real life situations with real students, making ethical decisions can be complex. In this module, we explore this important issue with real world examples, guidelines and discussions that will help you work through how to apply ethics in educational settings with students who are deaf-blind.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Apply ethical decision-making skills.
  - Recognize the need for ongoing professional development to ensure that skills match the support needs of the student.
  - Recognize the need for self-reflection and self-care.
  - Describe how personal bias affects listening skills, and reactions to people and situations.
  - Recognize the need for and the importance of receiving feedback from others.
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### **Module 21: Sexuality**

Having good information about sexuality is not only a part of growing up, it is important part of life. For students who are deaf-blind, who don't have the same access to environmental information, this topic may be avoided because educators and family members may not know how to address it or may feel uncomfortable in talking about sexuality. Come and learn about how to approach this topic with diverse learners who are deaf-blind and their teams.

## Learning Outcomes

- Understand that sexuality is a natural and healthy part of the human experience.
- Understand that issues of sexuality are relevant across the lifespan.
- Describe sexuality education content for various ages (i.e., infant/toddler, preschool, school age, middle and high school, transition).
- Know how to distinguish sexuality myths from facts and understand the importance of sexuality education that is factual, medically accurate, age appropriate, and free of bias.
- Describe the important role that self-esteem plays in self-determination and making healthy, informed choices.
- Understand the importance of being proactive with sexuality education and providing instruction before it is needed or becomes a problem.
- Understand how sexuality education may be governed by laws and policies and must be conducted in collaboration with educational teams and families.

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## Module 22: An Introduction to Sign Language and Braille



Sign language and braille are two vital but distinct communication systems that support access, literacy, and language development for many people who are deaf-blind. This module on sign language and braille presents a basic overview of each system and offers some case examples of students who use both to access the world around them. The goal of the Sign Language and Braille module is not to make learners fluent in these complex systems but to give learners an awareness, an appreciation and hopefully to spark their curiosity for learning more!

## Learning Outcomes

- Understand that language development exists along a hierarchical continuum.
- Understand the intervener's role in supporting sign language and braille development.
- Know that consistent use of strategies and modalities across communication partners and environments is essential to the learner who is deaf-blind.
- Know that students who are deaf-blind are multi-modal communicators.
- Understand the role of touch and how it is re-prioritized as an access point by students who are deaf-blind regardless of the use of functional vision (i.e. touch for communication, touch for information, touch for emotions, etc.).



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## Module 23: Behavior and Environmental Supports

Providing behavioral and environmental support to individuals can be

complex. In order to change behavior, we must understand it. In order to promote positive behavior, we must respect individuals that we serve. This module will help you understand the behaviors of children who are deaf-blind. You may find this information useful in creating more supportive learning environments and relationships with your students.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Understand that all behavior has a purpose, and how to identify that purpose.
- Recognize that a child's behavior is a functional strategy to cope with a given situation.
- Be able to describe how expectations, both high and low, impact behavior.
- Be able to describe how the environment impacts behavior, and can be modified.



### **Module 24: Transition to Adulthood and Community Living**

In any culture, transitioning to adulthood is an exciting, rich, and multi-layered journey. For individuals who are deaf-blind, having support, mentoring and encouragement to develop a vision for their future, a vocation for their lives, and a voice in their communities is vital. This module explores opportunities to encourage young adults who are deaf-blind in visioning, finding meaningful vocations, and developing self-determined voices.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Envision transition for deaf-blind youth as moving towards personally meaningful adult lives with multiple possibilities.
- Understand that transition is a life-process that takes place over time, and that preparing for transition needs to start well before transition actually occurs.
- Develop an understanding of the intervener's role in supporting the voice of the student during the transition process.
- Understand the need for a student to actively participate in the transition process through self-discovery, self-direction, and self-advocacy.
- Reflect on one's own values and ones student's values, and how these values impact choice-making.
- Utilize opportunities at school, at home, and in the community to facilitate a student's vocational exploration and exposure to deaf-blind adults who lead meaningful lives.
- Describe and document your student's likes, dislikes, and aptitudes, including conditions leading toward success and barriers to success.

- Recognize the importance to the transition process of working with the student, other professionals, and family members towards common goals and objectives.
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### **Module 25: Touch for Connecting and Learning**

Touch is one of our most important senses, yet there is little written about how the touch sense supports learning and communication. For students who are deaf-blind, touch provides access to people, to information, and communication in a multitude of ways! Come and learn about ways to support and respect the touch sense as a foundation for learning.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Reflect on your own experiences with touch and learn about the varying cultural, personal, and physical boundaries that affect other people's relationship with touch.
  - Be able to explain the importance of touch as an access point for students who are deaf-blind and how to implement it in all environments for the student.
  - Discover the spectrum of touch support needs and how to provide the appropriate amount of touch support to students on an individual basis.
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### **Module 26: Touch for Connection and Communication**

In the second module on touch, you will have the opportunity to explore essential techniques for supporting students to use touch everyday. Trusting relationships, practice, and observing students' responses are vital for supporting the touch sense. Listen to leaders who are exploring touch as a support for richer communication, empowerment, and information in the world. Reflect upon touch as an integrating sense that supports connection and communication throughout a person's life.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Observe specific ways a student who is deaf-blind can use touch to gain access to the world that will lead to communication and learning.
- Understand how mutual tactile attention, tactile modeling, and joint tactile attention lead to communication and language development.
- Evaluate the variety of ways touch can be used for communicating and learning.
- Analyze the tactile ways the students who are deaf-blind and the intervener access and engage in communication and learning and especially in conversation even prior to formal language development through touch.

- Find out more about techniques for supporting language, communication and mutual attention to reduce isolation, and to promote access to environmental information. Learners may explore topics such as Pro-Tactile, haptics, and neuro studies based upon the touch sense
- Understand why, when, and how to use tactile symbols with students who are deaf-blind who may not yet be ready for abstract symbol systems.



### Module 27: Putting it all Together

In this last OHOA module, we explore the journey of intervention. The module is both a review and a celebration of the role of interveners. In our calendar box within OHOA, it is a way to remember where you have been and to think about where you are going in using the intervention principles to support students at home, at school and in the community.

#### Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an ability to recognize the positive aspects of your own intervention skills as well as those that require modification.
- Demonstrate insight into practical strategies that will assist you as an intervener to maintain a standard of practice commensurate with that of a skilled intervener.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the 11 principles of intervention as the guiding values for your practice.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the CEC competencies as a framework for the knowledge and skills for interveners applied in practice.
- Apply the 11 principles of intervention and CEC competencies within a self-reflection activity.
- Use the 11 principles of intervention and CEC competencies to create and evaluate an artifact idea from one's practice.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of self-reflection for improving one's practice.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of constructive feedback for improving one's practice.