

Overviews and Objectives of All Modules

Module: **Family-Centered Practices
for Infants and Toddlers With Visual Impairments**

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Module Overview

The Early Intervention Training Center for Infants and Toddlers With Visual Impairments, in partnership with families, faculty members, and practitioners from throughout the United States, developed the *Family-Centered Practices* module to prepare personnel to serve infants and toddlers with visual impairments and their families. The content for this module was drawn primarily from the fields of visual impairment and early childhood special education.

We believe that family-centered practices are the foundation for effective early intervention. The *Family-Centered Practices* module relies as well upon the following assumptions.

- Early intervention takes place in the context of relationships. Therefore, learning about early intervention in partnership with multiple disciplines, human service agencies, and family members is important. The module is designed to promote the relationships and skills that are essential for building and sustaining reliable alliances.
- Early intervention is an evolving and complex field. Acquiring information now may not be as important as learning how to find information about new developments in the field.
- Effective practitioners are questioners, critical thinkers, and life-long learners who continuously strive to engage in effective practices and seek innovative methods for addressing issues and concerns.

The purpose of the module is to provide participants with the basic knowledge and skills required to provide effective early intervention and to collaborate with other professionals in the field of early intervention.

The module consists of seven sessions. Four sessions have sufficient content for two 3-hour classes while three sessions have approximately 3 hours of content each. The entire series of seven sessions should provide sufficient content for a 3-semester-hour graduate level course.

Session Titles

- Session 1: Building Reliable Alliances
- Session 2: Teams and Service Coordination
- Session 3: Support-Based Early Intervention and Developing Ecomaps
- Session 4: Eligibility and Routines-Based Assessment
- Session 5: Functional Outcomes and the IFSP Process
- Session 6: Effective Home Visits
- Session 7: VI-Specific Issues

Session 1: Building Reliable Alliances

Introduction

In Session 1, “Building Reliable Alliances,” of the *Family-Centered Practices* module, participants will acquire the knowledge, skills, and expertise required to demonstrate competence in building effective alliances with families. In addition, participants will be able to identify and describe the legal, theoretical, and research bases for family-centered early intervention. Finally, participants will recognize and implement recommended practices upon which reliable alliances are built—knowing themselves, knowing families, honoring diversity, affirming and building on strengths, promoting family choices, affirming great expectations, communicating positively, and warranting trust and respect.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe the legal basis for family-centered practices in the context of early intervention.
2. identify and implement the key features of family-centered practices: focusing on family strengths, promoting family choice, and collaborating with families and other professionals, while respecting and honoring diversity within the context of families, communities, and cultures.
3. describe the rationale for using family-centered practices and demonstrate the ability to initiate and sustain a reliable alliance with families based on effective help-giving practices.

4. describe their overall philosophy for working with families including the basic assumptions and principles that guide their approach. Participants will develop self-awareness of personal values, assumptions, and biases related to childrearing and interactions with families and understand how those affect relationships with families and children.

Session 2: Teams and Service Coordination

Introduction

Welcome to Session 2, “Teams and Service Coordination,” of the *Family-Centered Practices* module. In this session, participants will acquire the knowledge, skills, and expertise required to be effective service coordinators and members of teams using a family-centered approach.

Objectives

After the completion of this session, participants will

1. identify, observe, and describe factors that contribute to effectively functioning teams.
2. contrast the three team models and cite the advantages and disadvantages of each.
3. recognize families as key members of teams and describe factors that contribute to family participation on early intervention teams.
4. identify, observe, and describe the possible collaborative roles of TVIs on early intervention teams. Identify their own strengths and areas of potential growth regarding teamwork and collaboration.
5. describe the potential roles of the official service coordinator and the required elements of service coordination.

Session 3: Support-Based Early Intervention and Developing Ecomaps

Introduction

In Session 3, “Support-Based Early Intervention and Developing Ecomaps,” participants will acquire the knowledge, skills, and expertise needed to demonstrate competence in planning and implementing support-based early intervention. Because exemplary early intervention is family centered and based on family ecology, practitioners will learn how to develop an ecomap—a graphic portrayal of a family’s informal, formal, and intermediate supports. Developing the ecomap helps determine the supports that will be important in developing and implementing the in for the IFSP.

Objectives

After this session, participants will

1. describe why all high-quality early intervention practices are considered support; contrast support and services; and describe the three types of support that early interventionists should provide families.
2. discuss the importance of focusing on family strengths.
3. describe why a teacher of children with visual impairments (TVI) in early intervention should learn about family members, friends, and other natural supports.
4. demonstrate the completion of an ecomap and describe its advantages.
5. describe how TVIs work in collaboration with other professionals in the early intervention system to provide support to families.

Session 4: Eligibility and Routines-Based Assessment

Introduction

In this session participants will acquire knowledge, skills, and expertise regarding eligibility for early intervention services and assessment of both children and families. This knowledge and expertise will enable participants to effectively implement Part C of IDEA while also addressing the priorities of families and needs of children. Participants will acquire the skills necessary to conduct a routines-based assessment (RBA) in which families share their concerns and identify priorities for early intervention within the context of everyday activities and routines.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe the eligibility criteria—established condition, developmental delay, atypical development, or being at risk for developmental delay—for children entering Part C.
2. describe what IDEA says about multidisciplinary assessment and assessment of the child's current level of functioning.
3. describe the difference between evaluation for eligibility and assessment for intervention planning.
4. describe what IDEA says about assessment of families' priorities and concerns as related to their capacity to meet the developmental needs of the child. Describe the difference between assessment of families' needs and priorities and assessment of families.
5. contrast the benefits and drawbacks of using questionnaires and interviews to assess families' priorities.

6. describe the rationale for routines-based assessment (RBA) and identify and demonstrate sensitive and appropriate interactions with families in the process of RBA. Review major concerns and help parents select their priorities.
7. identify and demonstrate the six questions to ask caregivers in the context of each routine.
8. describe the role of the TVI in determining eligibility and conducting an RBA.

Session 5: Developing Functional Outcomes and the IFSP Process

Introduction

In this session, participants will acquire the knowledge, skills, and expertise needed to develop functional outcomes in the context of an individualized family service plan (IFSP), and to develop and monitor an IFSP in an effective, efficient, and family-centered manner. Participants will also be able to plan and implement effective transitions and contrast IFSPs and individualized education programs (IEPs).

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. identify and describe the benefits and required components of an individualized family service plan (IFSP).
2. describe the importance of functional outcomes and strategies for children and families. Describe functionality—engagement, independence, and social relationships within daily activities and routines—for very young children.
3. describe the importance of assessing current level of functioning in developing functional outcomes.
4. describe the role of the team in developing the IFSP according to IDEA (1997).
5. describe the process by which the IFSP is monitored and reviewed.
6. use ecomaps and routines-based assessments (RBAs) to identify functional outcomes and strategies and the natural environments in which they are most likely to be implemented.
7. develop a successful IFSP that includes functional outcomes; strategies for achieving the outcomes; specification of any necessary early intervention services and supports; and requirements for coordination and accountability.
8. describe the transition process from Part C (infant and toddler) to Part B (preschool) services.
9. describe the structure of effective and efficient IFSP meetings, including preparing families.
10. describe differences between an IFSP and an individualized education program (IEP).

Session 6: Effective Home Visits

Introduction

Welcome to Session 6, “Effective Home Visits,” of the *Family-Centered Practices* module. In this session, participants will become familiar with the major goals for home visits and with recommended practices for making effective home visits. Additionally, we will share information about the role of the teacher of children with visual impairments (TVI) in making home visits. The TVI may serve as the primary home visitor or as a consultant to the primary home visitor, other team members, and the family. We will contrast the differences in these two roles, as well as suggest strategies for implementing each role.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. identify the major goals of home visits—providing informational, material, and emotional support that promotes functional outcomes based on family priorities within the context of daily routines and activity settings.
2. describe the importance of developing an awareness of cultural diversity and cultural reciprocity.
3. describe the rationale for a transdisciplinary, collaborative, routines-based approach to home visits; the difference between regular home visits and consultative home visits within the transdisciplinary approach; and the role of the TVI in each.
4. use modeling appropriately to facilitate the acquisition of functional outcomes.
5. structure home visits around family priorities as identified in a routines-based assessment (RBA) in order to promote the acquisition of functional outcomes for the child and family within the context of daily routines and activity settings.
6. identify situations when outside assistance must be sought.

Session 7: VI-Specific Issues

Introduction

Welcome to Session 7, “VI-Specific Issues,” of the *Family-Centered Practices* module. The purpose of this session is to review the basic knowledge and skills that are required to provide effective early intervention through the implementation of family-centered practices, including collaboration with families and other professionals. Family-centered practices provide the foundation for effective early intervention. In this session we will synthesize key concepts and provide VI-specific examples of the topics listed below.

1. Building Reliable Alliances
2. Teams and Service Coordination
3. Support-Based Early Intervention and Developing Ecomaps
4. Eligibility and Routines-Based Assessment
5. Functional Outcomes and the IFSP Process
6. Effective Home Visits

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe strategies that will assist TVIs as they build reliable alliances with families and professionals and implement family-centered practices.
2. describe strategies that TVIs use as members of teams to effectively communicate and collaborate with families and other professionals; and identify the benefits of the transdisciplinary method of service delivery and the responsibilities of the service coordinator.
3. describe the three types of support that are important for families of young children with visual impairments and explain the advantages of developing an ecomap, a graphic representation of a family's existing supports.
4. describe the criteria for eligibility for Part C services under IDEA (1997) and the rationale for family-centered, routines-based assessment and identification of the family's priorities, strengths, and concerns.
5. identify the eight required components of individual family service plans (IFSPs) and strategies for developing functional IFSP outcomes and assuring smooth transitions from Part C to Part B services.
6. contrast the roles of TVIs who serve as primary home visitors to those of TVIs who serve as consultants to primary home visitors and families.

**Module: Visual Conditions and Functional Vision:
Early Intervention Issues**

Irene Topor, Ph.D.
L. Penny Rosenblum, Ph.D.
Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Overview

Families and other members of the early intervention team typically view teachers of children with visual impairments (TVIs) and orientation and mobility specialists (OMS) as experts on issues related to visual conditions that impact development and learning. In addition, team members expect TVIs and OMS to be knowledgeable about the implications of visual conditions, including how the visual condition impacts children's functioning in daily routines and activity settings. Consequently, TVIs and OMS must continuously seek out accurate and current information about the most prevalent visual conditions in young children with visual impairments. Furthermore, TVIs must know how to access information and resources about relatively rare visual conditions. TVIs and OMS must also be able to work collaboratively with eye care professionals, families, and other early intervention team members to conduct functional vision and age-appropriate learning media assessments and to use the results of these assessments to plan and implement intervention that will facilitate the child's optimal use of vision and other senses in the context of natural learning opportunities and daily routines.

Information from the fields of pediatric ophthalmology, visual impairments, early intervention, and developmental psychology have been synthesized in five sessions of this module that are listed below. The objectives for each of the five sessions are then provided as a framework for understanding the organization of this entire module, *Visual Conditions and Functional Vision: Early Intervention Issues*.

Session Titles and Authors

Session 1: Working With Families and Eye Care Professionals

Irene Topor, Ph.D., Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D., and L. Penny Rosenblum, Ph.D.

Session 2: Visual Capacity

Irene Topor, Ph.D., Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D., and L. Penny Rosenblum, Ph.D.

Session 3: Visual Conditions in Infants and Toddlers

Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D., Irene Topor, Ph.D., and L. Penny Rosenblum, Ph.D.

Session 4: Functional Vision Assessment and Developmentally Appropriate Learning Media Assessment

Irene Topor, Ph.D., L. Penny Rosenblum, Ph.D., and Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Session 5: Using Assessment Results in Intervention

Irene Topor, Ph.D., L. Penny Rosenblum, Ph.D., and Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Session 1: Working With Families and Eye Care Professionals

Introduction

In this session, participants will acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to work collaboratively with families, eye care specialists, and early intervention team members. In addition, participants will identify roles of various eye care specialists and learn how to support and prepare families for their interactions with eye care specialists.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. compare and contrast the roles of different eye care professionals.
2. describe the components of an eye care examination and information families should expect to receive following the exam.
3. describe strategies that teachers of young children with visual impairments (TVIs) use to support families who seek to understand their children's visual diagnoses.
4. discuss factors such as learning styles and language and cultural barriers that affect families' abilities to access and understand information and describe strategies for providing support to overcome these barriers.
5. describe strategies for facilitating interactions and communication between eye care specialists and families.
6. describe the role of TVIs when working with eye care specialists and other professionals using the transdisciplinary model.

Session 2: Visual Capacity

Introduction

In Session 2, participants will acquire knowledge about visual structures, visual development, and factors that influence visual function in young children with and without visual impairments. *Visual capacity* refers to the potential that each child has for visual function.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. discuss the importance of vision for typical development.
2. describe typical vision development prenatally, at birth, and during the first two years of life.
3. describe how prematurity and atypical development of particular ocular structures may result in visual disorders that may limit visual capacity and result in atypical visual development.
4. describe physiological and environmental variables that may affect the child's visual function.

Session 3: Visual Conditions in Infants and Toddlers

Introduction

In Session 3, “Visual Conditions in Infants and Toddlers,” of the *Visual Conditions and Functional Vision: Early Intervention Issues* module, participants will learn about the most prevalent visual conditions in infants and toddlers with severe visual impairments and their causes and characteristics. In addition, participants will consider the implications of particular visual conditions for early intervention while gaining skills in accessing resources about particular visual conditions.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. identify the most prevalent visual conditions found in young children with severe visual impairments in the United States and how they differ from those found in adults.
2. identify the three most prevalent eye conditions—cortical visual impairment, retinopathy of prematurity, and optic nerve hypoplasia—in young children with visual impairments. Describe the causes and characteristics of each condition as well as the implications for early development and intervention.
3. discuss the causes, characteristics, and implications of the following visual conditions: structural abnormalities—*anophthalmia*, *microphthalmia*, *coloboma*; *albinism*; retinal disorders such as *retinoblastoma* and *Leber's congenital amaurosis*; *congenital cataracts*; and *delayed visual maturation*.
4. describe the characteristics of and implications of the following conditions that may occur as primary or secondary diagnoses—*strabismus*, *amblyopia*, *glaucoma*, *nystagmus*, and *refractive errors*.

Session 4: Functional Vision Assessment and Developmentally Appropriate Learning Media Assessment

Introduction

Welcome to Session 4, “Functional Vision Assessment and Developmentally Appropriate Learning Media Assessment,” of the Visual Conditions and Functional Vision: Early Intervention Issues module. In this session, participants will acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to conduct appropriate functional vision assessments (FVA) and developmentally appropriate learning media assessments (DALMA) for infants and toddlers. In addition, participants will become familiar with a process by which clinical eye exams, FVA, and DALMA assessment results can be used to develop recommendations and intervention strategies that promote optimal use of vision.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe the rationale and purposes for the functional vision assessments (FVA) for young children with visual impairments.
2. describe the step-by-step process of conducting an FVA with a young child.
3. identify and describe formal and informal tools and procedures that can be utilized as part of the FVA process.
4. describe the importance of, and the procedures used in, assessing various visual abilities as part of the FVA process.
5. describe developmental and environmental issues that can impact interpretation of FVA results.
6. describe the purpose of developmentally appropriate learning media assessments (DALMA) for young children with visual impairments, how to complete such assessments, and how results can be used to plan intervention.
7. recognize that the results of the clinical eye exam, FVA, and DALMA are the basis for developing a comprehensive intervention plan.
8. summarize the results of the FVA and DALMA in a professional, family-friendly report.

Session 5: Using Assessment Results in Intervention

Irene Topor, Ph.D.
L. Penny Rosenblum, Ph.D.
Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Introduction

In Session 5, “Using Assessment Results in Intervention,” of the *Visual Conditions and Functional Vision: Early Intervention Issues* module, participants will acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to use the functional vision assessment (FVA) and/or the developmentally appropriate learning media assessment (DALMA) as the basis for identifying the child’s current level of sensory functioning. The current level of functioning will guide the development and implementation of functional intervention goals. In addition, participants will identify resources and strategies to promote the child’s optimal use of vision within the context of daily routines and naturally occurring learning opportunities to achieve these goals.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. recognize that intervention planning for young children with visual impairments should be based upon results from the functional vision assessment and/or developmentally appropriate learning media assessment; family concerns, resources, and priorities; and assessment results from multiple disciplines.
2. identify developmentally appropriate and functional interventions within the child’s natural environment that facilitate the development of visual skills.
3. describe the relationship between postural stability and optimal use of vision, and describe the use of positioning to facilitate the use of vision.
4. identify environmental modifications that promote young children’s optimal use of vision within the context of daily routines and naturally occurring activity settings.
5. describe the use of cues and prompts as an intervention strategy that may promote optimal vision use for children with visual impairments.
6. describe the TVI’s role in supporting the use of corrective lenses with children with visual impairments.
7. describe the role of the TVI in implementing the recommendations from low vision specialists and in helping children learn how to use optical devices recommended by low vision specialists.
8. describe the relevance of a patching (penalization) program and strategies to support young children in adapting to penalization.
9. identify strategies that support efficient use of vision in children with cortical visual impairments.

Module: **Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility**

Tanni L. Anthony, M.Ed.
Susan Shier Lowry, M.Ed.
Carla J. Brown, M.Ed.
Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Module Overview

Visual impairments can have an immediate impact on the motor development of young children with visual impairments, as well as on other developmental domains that form the foundation for orientation and mobility (O&M). In this module, we describe and promote a developmental approach to intervention that will provide the basis for future orientation and mobility. Our approach is based on the premise that the foundation for O&M skills is built during infancy and early childhood. Therefore, the first 3 years of life are the optimal time to facilitate and promote the sensory, conceptual, and motor framework needed for independent travel.

Session Titles and Authors

Session 1: Foundations of Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility

Tanni L. Anthony, M.Ed., Susan Shier Lowry, M.Ed., Carla J. Brown, M.Ed., and Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Session 2: Sensory Development

Tanni L. Anthony, M.Ed., and Susan Shier Lowry, M.Ed.

Session 3: Cognitive Development

Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D., Tanni L. Anthony, M.Ed., Susan Shier Lowry, M.Ed., and Carla J. Brown, M.Ed.

Session 4: Motor Development and Movement

Carla J. Brown, M.Ed., Tanni L. Anthony, M.Ed., Susan S. Lowry, M.Ed., and Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Session 5: Assessment

Tanni L. Anthony, M.Ed., and Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Session 1: Foundations of Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility

Introduction

Welcome to Session 1, “Foundations of Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility,” of the *Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility* module. In this session, participants will acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to work collaboratively with families, orientation and mobility specialists, teachers of children with visual impairments, and other early intervention team members. In addition, participants will identify strategies for fostering sensory development and organization, cognitive development, and motor development in order to promote safe and independent movement, exploration, and travel in natural environments for infants and toddlers with visual impairments.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. define orientation and mobility (O&M) as it applies to infants and toddlers with visual impairments.
2. describe the history of the field of orientation and mobility and how it relates to infants and toddlers with visual impairments.
3. describe a developmental approach to O&M for infants and toddlers and their families, including family-centered practices, natural learning opportunities, and transdisciplinary teaming.
4. describe components of early orientation and mobility.
5. discuss the roles of orientation and mobility specialists (OMSs) and teachers of children with visual impairments (TVIs) in facilitating sensory development and organization, cognitive development, motor development and movement, and assessment of infants and toddlers with visual impairments.
6. describe the relationship between attachment and mobility and strategies for promoting attachment and trust.
7. discuss the importance of and strategies for fostering independent movement and exploration in natural environments for infants and toddlers with visual impairments.
8. describe the significance of and strategies for providing opportunities for safe movement and exploration.
9. describe various protective techniques for early travel and strategies to encourage their use.
10. describe different types of mobility devices and tools and ways to facilitate their use.

Session 2: Sensory Development

Introduction

In Session 2, “Sensory Development,” of the *Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility* module, participants will acquire knowledge about the seven types of sensory input and how the development of the senses affects orientation and mobility. Participants will also learn about sensory development as it relates to the assessment, planning, and implementation of appropriate intervention.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe why teachers of children with visual impairment (TVIs) and orientation and mobility specialists (OMSs) should know about sensory development in order to assess, plan, and implement appropriate intervention that will facilitate motor development and orientation and mobility development.
2. describe the seven types of sensory input (visual, auditory, tactile, vestibular, proprioceptive, olfactory, gustatory).
3. describe visual development, the relationship between vision and movement, and strategies for facilitating functional vision within natural learning opportunities and daily routines.
4. describe the importance of hearing for children with visual impairments, the development of hearing and auditory skills, and strategies for promoting the optimal use of hearing for orientation.
5. describe the impact of deafness, hard of hearing, or deafblindness on movement, exploration, and the development of orientation and mobility in young children with visual impairments.
6. describe the importance of the sense of touch in the development of movement, exploration, and play in young children with visual impairments and describe ways TVIs and OMSs can assist in facilitating young children’s use of touch, including tool use.
7. describe the proprioceptive and vestibular systems and their role in facilitating movement, exploration, and play in young children with visual impairments within natural learning opportunities.
8. discuss the roles of smell and taste in facilitating development in young children with visual impairments.
9. describe the importance of identifying and providing meaningful sensory experiences that are graded to children's individual needs and tolerance levels.
10. describe the value of assessing sensory abilities and preferences in infants and toddlers with visual impairments.

Session 3: Cognitive Development

Introduction

In Session 3, “Cognitive Development,” of the *Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility* module, participants will acquire knowledge about the potential impact of visual impairments on such areas of cognitive development as body concepts, object concepts, cause and effect, means-end relationships, imitation, environmental concepts, and spatial and positional concepts. Participants will also learn about how these areas of cognitive development are related to motor development and orientation and mobility, and how to facilitate cognitive development within natural learning opportunities and daily routines.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. discuss the relationship of cognitive, motor, and perceptual development and the potential impact of visual impairments on cognitive development and movement during the first 3 years of life.
2. discuss the importance of, and strategies for, developing body concepts for young children with visual impairments and how accurate body concepts are related to cognitive development, motor development, and orientation and mobility.
3. describe the development of object concepts in young children with and without vision, how object concepts are related to cognitive and motor development and orientation and mobility, and how to facilitate concept development within natural learning opportunities and daily routines.
4. describe the development of cause and effect and means-end relationships in young children, how it impacts movement and orientation and mobility, the use of tools, and strategies to facilitate the development of cause and effect and means-end relationships.
5. describe the role of imitation in cognitive and motor development and how visual impairment may affect imitation.
6. describe how children learn about environmental concepts, the potential impact of visual impairments on the acquisition of these concepts, and strategies for helping young children with visual impairments acquire environmental concepts.
7. describe how children learn about spatial and positional relationships, how visual impairments can affect the acquisition of spatial concepts, and strategies to develop spatial concepts for orientation and mobility.
8. describe the impact of an intellectual disability on children with visual impairments as it relates to cognitive skills in orientation and mobility.

Session 4: Motor Development and Movement

Introduction

In this session, participants will acquire knowledge about how visual impairments can affect motor development and movement, particularly in such areas as postural control, goal-directed movement, reaching, purposeful movement, transitional movement, crawling, walking, and fine-motor skills. Participants will also learn how defined spaces, natural learning opportunities, miniroutes, adaptive mobility devices, and other tools and strategies can facilitate motor development and movement in infants and children with visual impairments.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. briefly describe and contrast the following theories of motor development and movement: neural-maturational theories, perceptual-cognitive theories, the dynamic-systems theory, and the ecological theory.
2. briefly describe the processes observed in typical motor development and movement.
3. describe the development of postural control.
4. identify influences of visual impairments on the attainment of postural control in young children.
5. describe the development of goal-directed movement in young children with visual impairments.
6. describe the significance of goal-directed reaching for children with visual impairments and strategies to reinforce the development of reaching.
7. identify how defined spaces assist young children with visual impairment in developing purposeful movement.
8. discuss the impact of visual impairments on transitional movements in young children and methods to develop transitional movement.
9. discuss how visual impairments may affect the development of crawling and how facilitating crawling in young children influences later development.
10. describe the developmental components necessary for young children to learn to walk and how visual impairments, particularly those affecting depth perception, may affect their acquisition.
11. identify ways to facilitate goal-directed movement using natural learning opportunities and individually designed miniroutes.
12. describe the potential impact of visual impairment on fine motor development; fine-motor skills needed for orientation and mobility acquisition, including those required for use of adaptive mobility devices and tools; and strategies for promoting the development of these skills.

13. describe strategies for facilitating motor development and movement of children with visual impairments and additional disabilities.

Session 5: Assessment

Introduction

In Session 5, “Assessment,” of the *Developmentally Appropriate Orientation and Mobility* module, participants will acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to conduct an orientation and mobility assessment, including a routines-based assessment; a transdisciplinary play-based assessment; a sensory assessment; assessments of cognitive, motor, social-emotional, and communication development; and an environmental assessment. Participants will also learn about formal orientation and mobility assessments tools, including those for adaptive mobility devices and tools, and how to prepare an orientation and mobility assessment report for young children with visual impairments.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe the legal basis for assessing infants and toddlers with visual impairments, including assessment of family, concerns, resources, and priorities.
2. describe the process of an orientation and mobility (O&M) assessment, including gathering background information, conducting a routines-based assessment, completing natural observation, and participating in a transdisciplinary play-based assessment.
3. explain how a routines-based assessment can be used to gather initial information for an O&M assessment.
4. explain how naturalistic observations in multiple environments are necessary to adequately assess a young child’s O&M skills and concepts.
5. describe a transdisciplinary assessment and how it can be used as one component of an O&M assessment.
6. describe the process of completing a sensory assessment of young children with visual impairments.
7. describe the process of assessing cognitive development as it relates to orientation and mobility concept acquisition.
8. describe the relevant components of motor assessment, including self-initiated movement.
9. describe the roles of orientation and mobility specialists (OMSs) and teachers of children with visual impairments (TVIs) in assessing children’s social-emotional development as related to self-initiated movement and orientation and mobility.

10. describe the assessment of communication skills and how this assessment is related to early orientation and mobility.
11. describe the process of, and rationale for, completing an environmental assessment.
12. describe formal and informal O&M assessment tools for young children, including assessment for adaptive mobility devices and tools.
13. identify and describe the primary components of an O&M assessment report for young children with visual impairments.

**Module: Communication and Emergent Literacy:
Early Intervention Issues**

Wendy Sapp, Ph.D.
Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Module Overview

Emergent literacy is a developmental process that begins at birth whereby children acquire the skills and knowledge that are the foundation for later reading and writing. For infants and toddlers, thought and language develop concurrently. Communication and language provide the foundation for literacy--the ability to read, write, and otherwise communicate with, or comprehend, written language. Literacy develops from children's oral language and their early attempts at reading (usually based on pictures) and writing (at first, scribbling).

Although most definitions of emergent literacy acknowledge that it begins very early in life, little is known about the development of emergent literacy in infants and toddlers, with or without disabilities. We do know, however, that preschool and school-aged children with disabilities often experience fewer literacy opportunities. We also know that families play a primary role in providing emergent literacy opportunities.

Because there is minimal literature or knowledge to guide emergent literacy recommendations for infants and toddlers with disabilities, we have reviewed the literature that is available for preschool-aged children and children with disabilities. We have used that information, along with recommended, developmentally appropriate, and evidence-based practices for young children with disabilities as the basis for this module. In addition, family-centered practices are an integral feature of this module, because family involvement is the key to effective early intervention. The content of this module has been peer reviewed by university faculty and practitioners throughout the United States and field tested at three universities.

The module begins with an overview of communication, language, and literacy and the potential impact of visual impairments on their development. Two sessions are devoted to describing early communication and language development, facilitating development in this domain, and providing suggestions and strategies for interventions to address the unique needs of children with visual impairments. The fourth session describes emergent literacy and the potential impact of visual impairments on emergent literacy, while the fifth session provides suggestions and strategies for facilitating emergent literacy.

Session Titles and Authors

Session 1: Overview of Communication and Literacy

Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D., and Wendy K. Sapp, Ph.D.

Session 2: Communication Development and the Impact of Visual Impairments

Wendy K. Sapp, Ph.D., and Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Session 3: Communication and Language Interventions

Wendy K. Sapp, Ph.D., Jeanne L. Murphy, M.A., and Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D.

Session 4: What Is Emergent Literacy?

Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D., and Wendy K. Sapp, Ph.D.

Session 5: Interventions to Facilitate Emergent Literacy

Deborah D. Hatton, Ph.D., and Wendy K. Sapp, Ph.D.

Session 1: Overview of Communication and Literacy

Introduction

Communication is an important developmental milestone for infants and young children and is integrally related to literacy development. Literacy includes reading and writing; and without communication and literacy, children are severely limited in their ability to interact meaningfully with other people. In some children, visual impairments present unique and significant challenges to the development of communication and literacy. The purpose of this session is to define *communication*, *literacy*, and other basic terms, and to discuss the potential impact of visual impairments on communication and literacy development.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. define receptive and expressive communication, nonlinguistic and prelinguistic communication, and emergent literacy.
2. describe the relationship of nonlinguistic/prelinguistic communication to social development and language development.
3. describe the concepts of literacy and emergent literacy.
4. discuss the concurrent and interrelated development of communication and literacy.
5. describe the three contexts—communicative, situational, and sociocultural—in which communication and literacy develop.

6. describe how early attachment between children with visual impairments and their caregivers might impact social-emotional and communication development.
7. describe why children must develop concepts about the world in order to develop communication and literacy skills, and why children with visual impairments are often delayed in their development of concepts.
8. recognize that children with visual impairments may not have incidental exposure to literacy events such as opportunities to observe use of print or braille in daily activities, and that they may not have access to appropriate and accessible literacy resources such as braille books and braille writers.
9. describe the potential impact of multiple disabilities on communication and emergent literacy development.
10. describe the role of teachers of children with visual impairments in planning and implementing family-centered, collaborative interventions that promote communication development and emergent literacy in infants and toddlers with visual impairments.

Session 2: Communication Development and the Impact of Visual Impairments

Introduction

Communication skills are essential for children to be able to interact with other people. Visual impairments may directly affect communication by altering the ways in which children communicate, and indirectly through possible delays in other areas of development that are important for communication. The purpose of this session is to provide basic knowledge and skills about typical communication development and the impact of visual impairments on communication development.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe seven levels of communicative competence.
2. describe the development of communication and language in typically developing children from birth through 36 months.
3. define *language* and describe five elements of language.
4. explain the importance of caregiver responsiveness in caregiver-child attachment and communication.
5. describe the importance of concept development for communication and why children with visual impairments may develop concepts differently.
6. describe six modes of nonlinguistic/prelinguistic communication, and explain how visual impairments may prevent children from engaging in typical nonlinguistic/prelinguistic communicative behaviors.

7. describe the potential impact of visual impairments on nonlinguistic/prelinguistic communication, including the development of idiosyncratic communicative behaviors of children with visual impairments and additional disabilities.
8. describe the potential impact of visual impairments, with and without additional disabilities, on language development.

Session 3: Communication and Language Interventions

Introduction

Communication and language are the foundation for emergent literacy. Because visual impairments may impact communication and language development, early interventionists and teachers of children with visual impairments (TVIs) must work collaboratively with families and other team members to facilitate communication and language in infants and toddlers with visual impairments.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. define communication *form* and *function*.
2. describe recommended practices for facilitating early communication and language development.
3. describe the relationship between secure attachment and early communication, and strategies for facilitating attachment and early communication—contingent responsiveness, turn taking, providing choices, following the child’s lead.
4. discuss the importance of concept development for early communication of children with visual impairments and strategies for facilitating concept development in infants and toddlers with visual impairments.
5. describe evidence-based strategies for communication and language intervention.
6. describe strategies for facilitating early communication and language development in infants and toddlers as they move through the seven levels of communicative competence and acquire symbolic communication.
7. explain why some children with visual impairments may develop atypical communication and describe strategies for facilitating communication and for addressing echolalia, pronoun confusion, overuse of questions, and perseveration.
8. define alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) and assistive technology and describe strategies to facilitate communication in individuals who may benefit from AAC.
9. describe the relationship of communication and language to emergent literacy and literacy—that reading, writing, speaking (augmented communication), and listening develop concurrently and interrelatedly.

10. describe strategies and interventions that promote communication, language, emergent literacy (narrative knowledge, vocabulary, listening comprehension), and metalinguistic development (phonological awareness, syntactic awareness).

Session 4: What Is Emergent Literacy?

Introduction

Emergent literacy is the developmental process that begins at birth whereby children acquire the foundation for reading and writing or literacy. Both emergent literacy and literacy evolve from complex interactions involving reading, writing, speaking, and listening and associated attitudes, expectations, and beliefs. The development of emergent literacy begins at birth as communication and language develop within social interactions and continues through every day exposure to literacy activities. Children with disabilities, and particularly children with severe visual impairments and/or multiple disabilities, often have fewer opportunities to acquire emergent literacy skills that are related to later success in reading and writing.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. define emergent literacy as the developmental process that begins at birth whereby children acquire the foundation for reading and writing.
2. describe two important models of emergent literacy.
3. identify six key components of emergent literacy: oral language, phonological awareness, concept development, knowledge of the conventions of print/braille and of print/braille intentionality, alphabetic knowledge, and environmental factors.
4. define oral language, including listening comprehension, vocabulary, and narrative knowledge, and describe how it is related to emergent literacy and literacy.
5. define phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness, as a metalinguistic process that contributes to emergent literacy and literacy.
6. discuss concept development, including the formation of schemas, and how it relates to emergent literacy.
7. describe knowledge of the conventions of print/braille and print/braille intentionality and their relationship to literacy.
8. define alphabetic knowledge and describe its contribution to literacy.
9. describe the relationship between environmental factors, including the communicative, situational, and sociocultural contexts within which literacy develops, and literacy.

10. describe effective early intervention practices for facilitating emergent literacy as collaborative and family-centered, developmentally appropriate, and based on evidence-based and recommended practices to achieve functional outcomes within naturally occurring learning opportunities.
11. describe strategies and interventions to facilitate emergent literacy—play, routines-based literacy, responsive literacy environments, shared storybook reading (especially dialogic reading, storybook preview, and storybook sounds), storytelling, and dialogue and how they facilitate the development of six key components of emergent literacy.
12. describe assessments that can be used to identify, plan, and implement emergent literacy interventions.
13. discuss the potential impact of visual impairments on emergent literacy, the challenge of determining whether children will be print or braille readers, and considerations for providing appropriate adaptations that will facilitate emergent literacy in these children.

Session 5: Interventions to Facilitate Emergent Literacy

Introduction

Because emergent literacy provides the foundation for literacy and because literacy is essential for independence and employment, it is an important functional goal for young children with disabilities. In addition, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA, 2004) requires preliteracy goals that are developmentally appropriate and evidence based. Families play a key role in providing emergent literacy experiences for their children within natural learning opportunities. Early interventionists can support families in providing emergent literacy experiences that meet the unique needs of children with disabilities.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. define emergent literacy and identify the components of emergent literacy: oral language, phonological awareness, concept development; knowledge of the conventions of print/braille and of print/braille intentionality, alphabetic knowledge, and environmental factors.
2. describe recommended early intervention practices for facilitating emergent literacy as collaborative and family centered, developmentally appropriate, and evidence based to achieve functional outcomes within naturally occurring learning opportunities.
3. describe the importance of families and caregiving environments in promoting emergent literacy.

4. discuss the potential impact of visual impairment on emergent literacy and strategies for facilitating emergent literacy in children with visual impairments.
5. describe strategies for promoting emergent literacy in children with visual impairments and additional disabilities, including those who use alternative and augmentative communication systems.
6. discuss emergent literacy interventions including play; routines-based literacy; responsive literacy environments; shared storybook reading, especially dialogic reading, storybook preview, and storybook sounds; storytelling; and dialogue.

**Module: Assessment of Infants and Toddlers With
Visual Impairments**

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Module Overview

Appropriate and meaningful assessment of young children with visual impairments is a complex process that must be individualized for each child. The purpose of this module is to provide the basic knowledge and skills that are required to plan and conduct appropriate assessments for young children with visual impairments. The four sessions for this module are listed below.

1. Legal Basis and Overview of Recommended Practices
2. Multimethod Assessment: Process and Planning
3. Areas of Assessment
4. Writing Reports and Planning Interventions

Session Titles

Session 1: Legal Basis and Overview of Recommended Practices
Session 2: Multimethod Assessment: Process and Planning
Session 3: Areas of Assessment
Session 4: Writing Reports and Planning Interventions

Session 1: Legal Basis and Overview of Recommended Practices

Introduction

The assessment of young children is guided by both legal mandates and professional recommended practices. Part C of *The Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004* (IDEA, 2004) provides guidelines for determining eligibility for early intervention and for the individualized family service plan (IFSP). IFSP requirements for planning and implementing early intervention, and for monitoring progress, help early interventionists comply with IDEA 2004. These provisions influence assessment of infants and toddlers with visual impairments and link assessment to intervention and progress monitoring through the IFSP.

In addition to legal mandates, the Division of Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has provided recommended practices for the provision of services for young children with disabilities (Sandall, Hemmeter, Smith, & McLean, 2005). Included in these recommended practices are strategies for providing authentic and appropriate assessments within the context of family-centered practices. Established in 2003 through the Office of Special Education Projects, United States Department of Education, the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/index.cfm>) identified outcomes for children with disabilities and their families that should also be considered during assessment and intervention planning. Finally, because of the unique needs of infants and toddlers with visual impairments, professionals must be knowledgeable about recommended practices for assessment from the field of visual impairment/blindness. Therefore, professionals must be knowledgeable about the legal mandates that influence the assessment of young children with visual impairments and recommended practices in order to provide appropriate services to young children with visual impairments and their families.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe provisions for the IFSP process from IDEA 2004 that guide assessment and intervention planning, implementation, and progress monitoring for young children with visual impairments.
2. identify and describe the functions of assessment, including identification of disabilities, eligibility determination, intervention planning, and progress monitoring and their relevance for young children with visual impairments.
3. describe the three child outcomes and five family outcomes for intervention and education for young children with disabilities identified by the Early Childhood Outcomes Center and describe their relevance to young children with visual impairments.
4. identify and describe recommended practices for assessment of young children as outlined by the Division for Early Childhood, Council for Exceptional Children, and describe their relevance for young children with visual impairments. Discuss issues associated with recommended practices in assessment, such as validity, reliability, standardization, and norm- and criterion referenced measures.
5. describe the importance of collaborating with families to assure acceptability of assessment and of using converging information from multiple disciplines, measures, and informants in the assessment of young children with visual impairments.
6. describe the importance of equity and authenticity in assessment of young children with visual impairments.
7. describe the importance of congruence, sensitivity, and utility in the assessment of young children with visual impairments.

Session 2: Multimethod Assessment: Process and Planning

Introduction

In this module, we conceptualize assessment in four steps: 1) planning and preparation for assessment, 2) conducting assessments, 3) using assessment results to plan intervention, and 4) using assessment to monitor progress. In Session 2, we focus on the first of these steps, planning and preparation. To adequately plan and prepare for assessment, professionals should a) review records; b) complete interviews with families, caregivers, and other service providers; c) observe children informally; d) select assessment tools and procedures; e) adapt tools and procedures to meet the individual needs of children, and f) determine the logistics of the assessment.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe an assessment process for young children with visual impairments that includes initial planning (reviewing records; interviewing families, caregivers, and other service providers; observing children; selecting assessment tools and procedures; adapting tools and procedures; and determining logistics); conducting assessments (completing family and child measures); using results to plan intervention; and monitoring progress.
2. discuss the rationale for reviewing records from physicians and other agencies as an initial step in planning assessments for young children with visual impairments.
3. describe the importance of, and strategies for, interviewing families and professionals and observing children to plan efficient and effective assessments.
4. discuss strategies for selecting appropriate assessment tools based on recommended practices for assessment of young children with visual impairments.
5. describe potential assessment adaptations for infants and toddlers with visual impairments.
6. discuss considerations related to the logistics (location, time, schedule) of assessment for young children with visual impairments.

Session 3: Areas of Assessment

Introduction

Assessments of infants and toddlers with disabilities are typically used to identify, plan, implement, and monitor interventions. Because early intervention is individualized to meet the unique needs of infants and toddlers and their families, a wide range of assessment tools, strategies and resources may be used. Although TVIs are often asked to recommend the best assessment tool for infants and toddlers with visual impairments, there is no single “best” assessment tool. Rather, professionals and families should carefully and thoughtfully choose from a variety of assessment tools and resources that that are most appropriate for the purpose of the assessment. Potential areas of assessment, assessment tools, and strategies are described in this session.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. describe assessment of families' concerns, resources, and priorities and its importance for facilitating optimal development of young children with visual impairments.
2. describe strategies for observational assessments.
3. discuss the rationale, strategies, and resources for completing sensory assessments of young children with visual impairments.
4. define learning style and describe components of learning style that should be assessed in young children with visual impairments.
5. identify and describe developmental assessments that may be useful for young children with visual impairments.
6. describe functional behavior assessments and other assessments of behavior for young children with visual impairments.
7. identify and describe specialized assessments for young children with visual impairments, including emergent literacy, compensatory skills, biobehavioral states, and developmentally appropriate orientation and mobility.

Session 4: Writing Reports and Planning Interventions

Introduction

Assessment provides the basis for intervention planning, implementation, and monitoring. Therefore, assessment results should be synthesized and presented to family members and caregivers in easily understandable, usable written assessment reports. Assessment reports should summarize background information, the purpose of the assessment, the results of the assessment, and any recommendations from the team based on the results. Reports should be written following all assessments, as well as when children are transitioning out of early intervention services. The intervention team, including family members and caregivers, should be able to use information in assessment reports to identify priorities and functional outcomes and develop strategies for implementing interventions that build on child and family strengths.

Objectives

After completing this session, participants will

1. identify critical components of assessment reports for intervention planning and describe special considerations for describing assessments in written form.
2. describe guidelines for collaborating with families and other team members to prepare intervention plans.
3. describe the process of using assessment results to develop goals and outcomes that address family priorities and concerns and that promote optimal child development.
4. describe guidelines for selecting and implementing interventions.
5. describe the purposes of, guidelines for, and approaches to progress monitoring.