

ONTARIO MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

BLIND, LOW VISION EARLY INTERVENTION TRAINING PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION

Working with infants and young children with visual impairment and their families is a challenging yet rewarding experience. It requires knowledge and skills in a variety of intervention techniques and assessment procedures in addition to working collaboratively with parents, professionals and community partners.

The Ontario Blind, Low Vision Early Intervention Training program consists of three professional learning components:

1. group workshops
2. independent study, and
3. mentoring practicum.

Group Workshops: Participants will come together as a larger group on several occasions to receive face-to-face instruction from leaders in the field of early childhood visual impairment. These workshops will include lectures, group discussions and hands-on activities.

Independent Study: Participants will be required to complete readings and assignments to further enhance and develop their understanding of content related to early childhood visual impairment.

Mentoring Practicum: Participants will be required to demonstrate their ability to apply their knowledge and skills while directly working with young children with visual impairment and their families throughout their first year as an Early Childhood Vision Consultant. During this time each participant will be involved in a mentoring relationship as either the mentor or the mentee; which will be determined by the instructors based on past experience and skill level.

TRAINING LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Upon completing this training program, participants will:

- Articulate key features of family-centered practices and the importance of building partnerships with families, and community professionals.
- Understand the developmental patterns of infants and young children who are blind / low vision with and without additional disabilities based on what is known through research.
- Understand the impact of blindness / low vision in all areas of development in terms of child's unique learning style and sensory development.

- Demonstrate knowledge of medical and visual conditions prevalent in early childhood, and their functional implications in early development.
- Know the procedures in a clinical vision assessment performed by an ophthalmologist and optometrist with young children.
- Knowledge of the role of other service providers [SLP; OT/PT; Social Worker; O&M instructor; Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVIs)] and eye care specialists (ophthalmologists/ optometrists/ optician /ocularist).
- Demonstrate the ability to assess use of all senses, including functional vision, using the components of a Functional Sensory Assessment, to plan effective strategies for facilitating optimal use and development of all senses and to adapt environments to make them accessible for learning and development.
- Demonstrate the ability to use a variety of assessment strategies for use with infants and young children who are blind / low vision with and without additional disabilities (routine based assessment, ecomaps, developmental assessments, interviews, observations etc.) to determine and identify the child's strengths, current level of functioning, and families strengths, concerns, and priorities.
- Ability to facilitate cognitive, social-emotional, communicative, sensory, and motor development, as well as the development of daily living skills, and purposeful movement through appropriate experiential learning and the *adaptive task approach* within daily routines, in order to promote engagement, independence and the development of social relationships.
- Ability to adapt environments, toys and learning materials to make them accessible based on the child's use of all senses.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop, write and implement the Individual Child and Family Service Plan (ICFSP) to meet the strength and needs of children and their families, including use of other professionals and community resources.
- Knowledge of and ability to access appropriate resources (adapted toys, devices, assistive technology) for young children who are blind/low vision.
- Support families in acquiring access to information and resources that will assist them in becoming life-long advocates for their children.

GROUP WORKSHOPS: SESSIONS & CONTENT OUTLINE
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SESSION ONE: Day 1 – July 4, 2007: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
**Working with Young Children with Visual Impairment: A
Developmental Framework**

INSTRUCTORS: Tanni Anthony, Ph.D.
State Consultant Visual Impairment
Colorado Department of Education

Kevin A. Stewart, Ed.D.
Consultant, Blind-Low Vision Program
Ministry of Children and Youth Services

<i>Time</i>	<i>Content Overview</i>
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30 a.m.	Welcome and Introductions
8:45 a.m.	Program. Overview / Ministry Guidelines (Marlene Stein)
9:15 a.m.	Overview of Training
9:30 a.m.	Conceptualizing a Developmental Framework
	Sensory / Perceptual Capabilities and Development
10:15 a.m.	BREAK
10:40 a.m. continued	Sensory / Perceptual Capabilities and Development
12:00 p.m.	LUNCH
1:00 p.m.	Functional Sensory Assessment
2:15 p.m.	BREAK
2:40 p.m.	Functional Sensory Assessment continued
4:15 – 4:30 p.m.	Wrap-up / Readings

SESSION ONE: Day 2 – July 5, 2007: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Family Centered Practices for Young Children with Visual Impairment

INSTRUCTORS: Deborah Hatton, Ph.D.
FPG Child Development Institute
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Kevin A. Stewart, Ed.D.
Consultant, Blind-Low Vision Program
Ministry of Children and Youth Services

<i>Time</i>	<i>Content Overview</i>
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:45 a.m.	Introductions
9:00 a.m.	Family Centered Practices: Implications for Intervention Child and Family Outcomes
10:30 a.m.	BREAK
10:40 a.m.	Ecomaps and the Family Ecology
12:00 p.m.	LUNCH
1:00 p.m.	Individual/Group Activity: Ecomaps and Implications for Intervention Routine Based Assessment (RBA): Theory and Practice
2:55 p.m.	BREAK
3:15 p.m.	Individual/Group Activity: Using RBA to Identify Intervention Goals
4:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Wrap- up / Module Assignment

INDEPENDENT STUDY

UNIT ONE: VISUAL CONDITIONS and FUNCTIONAL VISION: EARLY INTERVENTION ISSUES

Time Frame: To be completed between July 6, 2007 – August 14, 2007

Required Readings:

Topor, I. (1999). Functional vision assessment and early interventions. In D. Chen (Ed.), *Essential elements in early intervention: Visual impairment and multiple disabilities* (pp. 157-206). New York: AFB Press.

SKI-HI Institute. (2003). *Eye conditions: Eye conditions in infants and young children that result in visual impairment, and syndromes and other conditions that may accompany visual disorders*. North Logan, UT: HOPE, Inc.

Erin, J.N., Fazzi, D.L., Gordon, R.L., Isenberg, S.J. & Evelyn, A.P. (2002) Vision focus: Understanding the medical and functional implications of vision loss. In R.L. Progrund & D.L. Fazzi (Eds), *Early focus: Working with young children who are blind or visually impaired and their families* (2nd ed., pp. 52-106). New York: AFB Press.