**Module 1 Lesson 2 Part 1 Descriptive Video Transcript**

**Narrator:** Teaching Children Who Are Deafblind: Professional Development for Educators

Module 1: The Impact of Deafblindness on Learning and Development

Lesson 2: Preparing for Learning

**[On-Screen Text]** Maurice Belote, Former Project Coordinator, California Deafblind Services

**Maurice Belote**: Let me give you an example. You have a birthday party in your classroom. The child who is deafblind might be thinking, why are all these people in our classroom? Why are we sitting around the table? Why is there cake in the middle of the table? Why is that cake on fire? Why are we singing and clapping? Why are we sitting in a circle passing around crumpled up gift wrap? All ideas that would be very well understood by other children. And that's the difference in teaching a child who is deafblind, is being ready to start at the very beginning and teach the child all of these basic concepts.

**[Visual Description]** A woman stands next to a boy. She holds a funnel. The boy holds a measuring spoon next to the funnel.

**Narrator:** In Lesson 1, you learned about the wide diversity of children in the deafblind population, how deafblindness impacts learning, and how it is identified.

In Lesson 2, we’ll focus on how all of this impacts you as a practitioner, whatever your background might be in deafblindness. We’ll discuss strategies you can implement in the home or classroom right away to begin setting the stage for learning.

Before we begin, let’s check what you know.

True or False? …

1. Because children who are deafblind have specific learning goals, it’s important to never stray from your planned learning activities and lessons.
2. You should consider the child’s preferences for materials and activities when making decisions about their learning.
3. The best place to position the primary workspace of a child who is deafblind is in the front of the classroom close to the teacher.

We’ll revisit these questions at the end of this lesson.

Lesson 2 has three learning objectives. After completing the lesson, participants should be able to

1. Describe how deafblindness impacts teaching and lesson planning
2. Observe a child who is deafblind to gather information to inform teaching and learning
3. Prepare the environment to maximize learning for a child who is deafblind

Part 1. The Impact of Deafblindness on Teaching

**[Visual Description]** A woman and a girl sit next to a calendar chart. The woman uses her hands to direct the girl’s attention to the calendar. The girl moves the Thursday label from one section of the calendar to another. The woman then takes the label from the calendar, holds it in front of the girl, and asks what day it is. The girl takes a few seconds to respond. The woman waits patiently, then signs and speaks to the girl.

Woman: Today, is what?

It’s what?

Today is… Thursday, yes.

**Narrator:** Taking the time needed for a child who is deafblind to notice, fully explore, and then process information takes far longer than for a hearing-sighted child.

As you might imagine, being patient isn’t easy! It’s especially a challenge for busy educators who have many other responsibilities, such as preparing detailed lesson plans and scheduling activities.

**[Visual Description]** A boy and a woman use a marker to draw on a piece of paper that is placed on an easel. The woman holds the marker. The boy has one arm on the woman’s arm and one hand touching the tip of the marker.

Not only will the *length* of time spent on learning differ, but working with a child who is deafblind also impacts

* How you approach lesson planning
* How you and others interact with the child
* And how you respond when things don’t go as planned

**[On-Screen Text]** Michelle Clyne, Project Coordinator, Project Reach Illinois DeafBlind Services

**Michelle Clyne:** It can be challenging to plan a lesson, a complete lesson for a child who's deafblind because there's so many things that go into it. So you have to plan your lesson, keeping in mind your learning standards, keeping in mind let's say the child's IEP goals, keeping in mind how you're going to facilitate communication for the child with their peers or with other people who will be interacting with them. It may be different for different groups of people or different individuals. And then you have to have all the materials ready. You're getting everything organized and then boom, you're ready to go. And so you're doing the activity and then, what if something goes wrong, or what if something goes different not just wrong. Say you're in an early childhood environment...you're all outside doing the activity -- an experiment on how ice cubes melt. And this miraculous large shiny beetle goes walking by and your student is just fascinated by this beetle. Do you shift gears? Do you go to that, do you stay with this redirect and stay with the group setting? There's just so many pieces that you have to keep track of simultaneously while you're collecting your data, while you're doing all this. It's a real juggling act but it's one that's really exciting because so many great outcomes can come from every experience the child has.

**[On Screen Text]** Maurice Belote, Former Project Coordinator, California Deafblind Services

**Maurice Belote:** I think one of the foundational components of teaching children who are deafblind is being ready for the teachable moment. And sometimes that's following the child's interest and being ready to seize on that, on that interest at that moment in time. And sometimes it's being ready to just cease anything that happens in the instructional day and being ready to drop what you had planned to do and take advantage of this really remarkable moment that you have to teach something that matters to the child at that moment.

**[Visual Description]** A girl sits at a desk, drawing a picture. She has one hand on the paper and holds a marker in her other hand.

**Narrator:** Remember that the best time to teach a concept to a child who is deafblind is when it’s important and interesting to the child.

**[Visual Description]** A boy who is deafblind is in a classroom with two adults next to him. They are using tactile sign language to communicate.

Another important difference between working with a child who is deafblind and a hearing-sighted child involves the number of people who play a role in their learning. For most children, a whole entourage is involved!

For example, in addition to the classroom teacher or early intervention provider, children who are deafblind may have a teacher of the deaf or hard of hearing, a teacher of students with visual impairments, an orientation and mobility specialist (or O&M), a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, a speech and language specialist, and a nurse.

Ideally, every child will also have an individual with expertise in working with children who are deafblind, such as a teacher of the deafblind or deafblind consultant.

**[Visual Description]** A woman sits with a young girl at a desk. The girl uses a marker to trace letters on a worksheet. The woman points to the letters.

Woman: Good now what letter?

Child: A

Woman: What sound?

Child: A… “a” apple

Woman: What letter?

Child: B, “b” [indiscernible b word]

Woman: Good now do lowercase

**Narrator:** An increasing number of children who are deafblind also have an intervener, a person who provides one-to-one support, helping the child gain access to information and communication as well as facilitate social development and emotional well-being. These and other professionals play an integral role in providing meaningful, appropriate support for a child who is deafblind. And all team members, regardless of discipline, need to work together and share responsibility for the child’s learning and development.

This collaboration works well when the team uses a transdisciplinary approach to teamwork.

Everyone on the team communicates, collaborates, and shares their expertise and ideas with each other: What’s working? What’s not? What to focus on going forward?

And support and feedback are invited and appreciated.

**[Visual Description]** A series of images - A teacher and orientation and mobility specialist are having a conversation in a classroom. The orientation and mobility specialist has a conversation with a different teacher in a school hallway.

For example, suppose an orientation and mobility specialist is preparing to begin working with a child who is deafblind. She might first meet with their teacher to learn about the ways the student communicates and next with their teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing to learn about the child’s functional hearing.

**[Visual Description]** A young man leans back in a chair while communicating using tactile sign with an older man. There is a communication board behind them.

With the transdisciplinary approach, a specialist doesn’t typically remove the child from the classroom or other work area. Rather, intervention occurs where the student is.

Specialists work collaboratively, sharing knowledge and skills across disciplines, to develop and support the child’s learning goals, and to provide access to the general education curriculum.

Let’s take a break and check what you know.

Imagine you’ve prepared a lesson for a child who is deafblind to learn a new skill. You’re just getting started, but something happens closeby that catches the child’s attention. Is it *wrong* to allow the child to follow their interest and explore what’s happening closeby?

Pause the video if you need time to think.

Is it wrong? Probably not. It can be very effective to take advantage of times when something unexpected happens that captures the child’s interest. You might be able to turn this interest into an opportunity to learn something new. Remember: The best time to teach a concept to a child who is deafblind is when it’s important and interesting to the child.

In Part 2 of this lesson, we’ll focus on what to look for when observing a child, such as how they use their senses and what they like and dislike. This information will play a significant role in helping you maximize the child’s opportunities for learning.

**[On Screen text]** National Center on Deaf-Blindness.
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