**Module 1 Lesson 3 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 3: Foundational Teaching Strategies

**[Visual Description]** A woman sits on the floor with a toddler in her lap.

Jennifer Magee has worked for many years in special education and as a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, but when she began working with a 3-year-old child who was deaf-blind, she knew this child was unlike any other.

**[On-Screen Text]** Jennifer Magee, Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Teacher of the Deafblind

**Jennifer Magee:** And I realized what I didn't know and how much more there was to learn. And the crux of it is, I learned that the methodologies used to teach students who are deaf and hard of hearing are really meant for those that have sight, and they're not always adequate. Now, some of them can be, but they're not always adequate for those who are deafblind. And the same thing for the teacher of the visually impaired. They have some great strategies, but the strategies are not always in line with a student who is deafblind, because a student who is deafblind has that dual sensory need, and it's different. Like once you've met one student with, who's deafblind, you've met one student who is deafblind. You know, they're just very unique within themselves. And so I learned how much I didn’t know, and that's when my journey began.

**[Visual Description]** A teacher and a girl use fingernail polish to paint a third person’s nails. The girl has one hand on top of the teacher’s hand and the other on the hand of the third person. She is smiling and watching with her face close to the nail brush and the nail being painted.

**Narrator:** Every interaction you have with a child who is deafblind is an opportunity for learning and connection. This lesson provides practical information and strategies you can use in the classroom, home, or other settings to promote interactions and nurture a positive relationship with a child who is deafblind.

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

True or False?

1. It’s important that you identify yourself to a child who is deafblind before beginning any interaction.
2. Turn-taking is an important strategy that teaches children who are deafblind about the “give and take” of conversations.
3. The hand-under-hand technique should only be used if a child has some usable hearing and/or vision.

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

Lesson 3 has 3 learning objectives. After completing the lesson, participants should be able to

* Describe how to prepare for and initiate an interaction with a child who is deafblind
* Use strategies that engage a child who is deafblind in mutual interactions
* Demonstrate the appropriate use of the hand-under-hand technique with a child who is deafblind

Part 1. Promoting Effective Interactions

**[Visual Description]** A boy in a wheelchair has his feet inside of a box that contains marbles and other objects.

When you first meet a child who is deafblind, the challenge of engaging them in conversation might seem insurmountable. Even more so if the child is prelinguistic. You might be wondering, “How can I possibly have a conversation with this child? Are these interactions even conversations?”

Yes they are! And they form the basis for further conversation and communication development.

**[Visual Description]** A series of images - A young girl wearing gardening gloves sits in the grass planting flowers into flower pots. A young boy who wears a hearing aid, sits on a plastic toy animal. His mother sits behind him, using her hand to support his back, and an early intervention specialist sits in front of him.

Like most children, those who are deafblind learn best by being actively engaged in activities they enjoy and when using materials and objects they like and find interesting.

When working one-to-one with a child -- in early intervention, for example– -- you can purposefully select activities and objects to help the child meet goals, such as fine or gross motor milestones.

**[Visual Description]** A teacher signs to her student. The student receives the signs tactilely, with her hand on top of the teacher’s. They explore a tactile map, again with the student’s hand on top of the teacher’s hand.

You might be working with a child in a busy classroom and need to select and modify materials to make sure the child has access to the general education curriculum -- and can make progress on their educational goals.

**[Visual Description]** A girl sits in a supportive chair. A row of bright tinsel hangs in front of her.

Either way, use materials and activities you know the child prefers. Be creative when adapting and modifying things to the child’s interests.

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

**Michelle Clyne:** A child wasn't participating in their, in practicing writing their letters, which is important, but they just weren't into it. So, to motivate the child, the teacher was being creative and thought about the child's interests, and the child was very interested in football. So instead of using regular worksheets for writing, rote writing tasks, the teacher designed customized worksheets that had the names of different football teams, football players, and then the student became very interested in writing out those letters, because it reflected his interest.

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

**Maurice Belote:** Part of my job on the state deaf-blind project is to go out to schools and provide child specific technical assistance. And a couple of years ago, I was out in a program to see a young boy who was about six or seven. And he was pretty much left alone in the classroom. The parent educator had given him a vibrating worm around his neck that he didn't seem particularly interested in, and he was pretty much ignored. And so I went over and I sat with him and I started playing a finger game with him, and it's sort of based on the Johnny Johnny Johnny Johnny whoops Johnny whoops Johnny Johnny, that game. But what I did was I counted his fingers and then I would swoop down and I did that, over and over and over again, with him. This is a child that nobody thought could learn. People didn't think he could interact. And within about five or 10 minutes he was anticipating the movement in the hand game, and within about 15 minutes he was laughing and clearly excited to play this game.

**[Visual Description]** A young girl sits next to a boy in a wheelchair. She touches his arm as they look at a picture book.

**Maurice Belote:** I believe that all children have the right to know who they're interacting with at school, and school or a classroom can be a very busy active place. And for children who are deafblind, they may be touched all day long and they may not realize who's touching me or they might not even realize that there are different people in the classroom. And this is our way of taking an environment that the child may perceive as chaotic and unpredictable and trying to make order out of that chaos for the child.

**[Visual Description]** A teacher sits in front of a teenage boy who is deafblind. They are communicating using tactile sign language. She introduces the boy to an orientation and mobility specialist. They greet each other using tactile signs.

**Narrator:** It’s essential that you identify yourself to the child before initiating any interaction. Each person who interacts with the child should have a unique personal identifier, or “name cue,” that the child can learn to recognize.

**Michelle Clyne:** So a personal identifier is concrete, and it's something you show to a child before you interact with them. It's part of your greeting ritual. And it's important to do that, so a child knows who you are and starts to develop some anticipation of what you're going to do together. I knew a student who became very anxious when his one-to-one would leave the room. Even briefly or leave him alone briefly. He didn't understand that this was a short goodbye instead of an end of the day goodbye. So she started wearing a personal identifier, a very inexpensive bracelet from the dollar store, and what she began to do was, if she had to leave briefly -- say to use the restroom -- she would have him feel her take it off. And she would give it to him, and he would hold it while she went to the restroom. And when she came back, he would help her put it back on, and that's how he knew that they were going to be back together again working on activities together again. That was the difference between a short goodbye, and the difference between a long goodbye at the end of the day when they had an end of the day routine.

**[Visual Description]** A woman holds a young girl on her lap. She has an object in her hand that she holds in front of the girl.

**Narrator:** No matter the extent of their disabilities, all children communicate. It’s up to practitioners and others to learn how to interpret their behaviors, movements, and messages.

Children who are deafblind need to know they can trust us, that we care about them, and we’re interested in what they have to say

Let’s take a break and review what we’ve learned.

How can we learn what activities and materials are of interest to a child? Is it

a. Prior documentation and assessments,

b. Talking with the family and other educators who know the child,

c. Observation

Or d. All of the above?

That’s right - D - all of the above will help you discover what the child enjoys and is interested in.

This ends Part 1 of Lesson 3. In Part 2, we’ll learn specific strategies to encourage interactions with children who are deafblind.

**[On Screen text]** National Center on Deaf-Blindness  
Developed and produced by NCDB   
Narrated by Shelby Morgan   
Written by Ann Biswas   
Edited by Brian Daigle   
Special thanks to: the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, state deaf-blind projects, families, and educators who shared their photographs and videos with us for this program.   
IDEAS that Work logo. The contents of this video program were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, #H326T180026. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer, Susan Weigert.

© 2022 National Center on Deaf-Blindness