**Module 2 Lesson 4 Part 2 Descriptive Transcript**

**Narrator:**

Teaching Children Who Are Deafblind: Professional Development for Educators

Module 2: Early Intervention for Children Who Are Deafblind

Lesson 4: Preparing for Transition to Preschool

Part 2: Preparing the Preschool Staff

**[Visual Description]** A young boy with deafblindness touches a toy that is on a table in front of him.

Successful preschool transition planning builds trust and provides families, educators, and support staff with the plans and tools required to meet the unique educational needs of a child who is deafblind.

**[Visual Description]** Image of sign that reads, “Hi! My name is Miles. I am deaf-blind (I can’t hear or see.) Touch a foot to say hello!

Because deafblindness is a low-incidence disability, there’s a good chance the preschool staff, including those trained in special education, will have little experience with it.

**[Visual Description]** Series of images - young children who are deafblind in school settings. Some are alone and others are working with specialists.

In fact, there’s a good chance many schools—even entire districts—have never had a child who is deafblind in their school.

Encourage preschool staff to consult with their state’s deafblind project for information and support.

**[Visual Description]** A young boy sits in an enclosed space. Three providers stand outside of the space and talk to the boy.

You as the EI provider and the parents may need to explain to teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators what deafblindness is and how it impacts a child’s ability to communicate, access information, and form social relationships.

**[Visual Description]** A provider works with a child who is holding a mylar balloon. The caregiver sits next to them and shines a flashlight onto the balloon. The provider talks to the caregiver.

You’ll likely need to explain that although *some* educational strategies used with students who are deaf or hard of hearing and *some* used with those who are blind or have low vision will be helpful, *many will not.*

You may need to explain that

* A child who is deafblind has an entirely unique disability that’s dependent on how they use their senses, including any usable vision or hearing and the added impact of other disabilities or conditions.
* That deafblindness limits access to information that's needed for learning, communication, and development.
* And that ensuring a child reaches their full potential requires thoughtful, individualized educational strategies and support.

**[Visual Description]** A provider sits behind a young girl and shakes a bracelet of bells. The child grabs onto the bells and looks up at the provider.

Likewise, the receiving preschool team may need your help understanding the services and accommodations the child requires to fully participate in lessons and activities.

**[Visual Description]** Series of images - young children who are deafblind in school settings working with specialists.

Because of the complex and unique needs of each child who is deafblind, patience and careful collaboration with multiple specialists will be needed. Providing as much detailed information as possible in reports and other materials you share with the receiving team will help smooth the transition for everyone involved.

Importantly, the information you and the family provide about the child will help spotlight personnel needs and lay the groundwork for the development of appropriate IEP goals.

Preschool staff will need information about the child’s abilities, needs, learning style, and more to make decisions about educational planning, instructional modifications, and support.

Much of this will come from assessments or evaluations the preschool team conducts, but they will need to have a good understanding of the child in order to conduct these in ways that allow the child to demonstrate what they know and how they learn.

**[On Screen Text]** Nancy Hatfield, Early Childhood Consultant Deafblindness, Former Director of the Washington State Deaf-Blind Project

**Nancy Hatfield:** There are several ways that you can help support the preschool team as a child starts a transition process. One is by introducing some specialized assessment tools that were developed for children with complex needs, including deaf blindness, and these are tools that will lead to very functional, useful IEP goals in preschool. And another way you can support the preschool team during transition is they'll be setting up their own evaluations of the child that really aren't valid for children with deaf blindness. But you can help them understand the best lighting conditions for the child, the best auditory conditions, what their favorite toys and activities are, what will help them feel comfortable, so that the evaluation can give them as much useful information as possible.

**Narrator:** Appropriate assessment for a child who is deafblind involves careful planning and an interdisciplinary team that includes the family. A variety of factors are involved in assessment, including

* Information from the family,
* Observations of the child,
* Conditions that allow a child to perform at their best, such as environmental conditions that suit the child’s needs, and
* The child’s use of sensory channels, and
* The child’s communication system

**[Visual Description]** A child’s hand is inside of a box that is filled with colorful sprinkles.

Ideally, an assessment of the child includes multiple observations that can reveal how the child uses their functional hearing and vision and as well as their abilities and behaviors, all of which inform educational planning.

You and the family can also gather information in advance to share with the preschool team. Some helpful tools include

* The School Inventory of Problem Solving Skills
* The Communication Matrix
* HomeTalk
* And forms that describe a child’s likes and dislikes and how they communicate

Let’s take a closer look at each of these.

**[Visual Description]** A series of images - a snapshot of the School Inventory of Problem Solving Skills. A young girl plays on the floor with a toy.

The School Inventory of Problem Solving Skills assesses a child’s cognitive skills by observing how they interact with objects. This provides information about how well a child understands their physical environment and whether they know how to solve problems that arise within it. This can help educators plan appropriate activities that match a child’s skills.

**[Visual Description]** A toddler sits in a rocking chair. His mother kneels beside him.

**Boy:** I loveeee you.

**Mom**: I love you!

**[Visual Description]** A series of images - a snapshot of the Communication Matrix. The HomeTalk logo.

**Narrator:** The Communication Matrix helps families and educators understand a child's early communication development, which is critical when determining their educational goals and objectives. HomeTalk, which you learned about in Part 1 of this lesson, helps families think about and describe what they know about their child.

**[Visual Description]** Parents sit with a provider in a classroom setting.

The fourth section of Home Talk is designed to be completed by the family and an early intervention provider. Working together, you consider what appropriate educational goals might be established based on the information in prior sections.

**[Visual Description]** A snapshot of the Likes and Dislikes form.

A form that captures a child’s likes and dislikes can provide detailed information on things like the child’s preferences for food, colors, textures, movements, and toys.

**[Visual Description]** A caregiver sits behind a toddler who is sits on a table. The toddler has a carved pumpkin in front of her.

Typically parents and service providers who know a child well complete the form. The information helps the receiving team create appropriate environments for the child and use materials and activities that will encourage their learning and development.

**[On Screen Text]** Nancy Hatfield, Early Childhood Consultant Deafblindness, Former Director of the Washington State Deaf-Blind Project

**Nancy Hatfield:** It's really important that everybody communicate consistently with the child in preschool, and also be able to understand the child's communications. There are a lot of different ways to provide this information to teams for example, for a child who is still at the very basic levels of communication, you may want to have what’s called a communication dictionary, where you describe the child’s behaviors that the family has learned are communicative. If he does this, this might mean this, so you better check this. Or if he makes this sound, this could mean this. So check this. And you just lay it out. You can make your own template to do that if, if you like.

**[On Screen Text]** Forms that describe how the child communicates.

**[Visual Description]** Screenshots of communication forms.

Another thing that's very important is that as the child is going through their daily routines in preschool, that the same forms of communication are used consistently by all team members. And so you might want to put together a template for communication consistency–or find one online–where you, for example, putting on your shoes routine, for this child it might mean first you show them the shoe and give them time to look at it. And then you might say, “shoes, time for your shoes on.” You might use hand under hand sign at that point. And then you put the shoe on. So whatever is specific for that child in terms of visual cues, tactile cues, the object cues, the sign, that's what you use. And it's important that all team members do it in pretty much the same way.

**[Visual Description]** Series of images - a young boy looks at images on a tablet. A young girl looks at a book. A young girl sits in a chair at home.

**Narrator:** Ultimately the child’s preschool IEP team will interpret results from a number of assessments and, along with the family, use them to inform decisions about the child’s specific educational goals and objectives. As the child’s early intervention provider—and someone who knows this child well—your suggestions and guidance will be appreciated.

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

As an early intervention provider, you may need to help the receiving preschool team understand best practices related to assessment, instruction, and accommodations for a child who is deafblind, as well as how to connect with resources such as their state deafblind project. Why is this important?

Pause the video if you need time to consider.

Because deafblindness is a low-incidence disability, there’s a good chance the preschool staff, including those trained in special education, will have little experience with deafblindness and be unfamiliar with educational best practices. And many schools and districts may never have had a student who is deafblind.

This ends Part 2 of Lesson 4. In Part 3, we’ll discuss what’s involved in preparing a child who is deafblind for the transition to preschool.

**[On Screen text]** National Center on Deaf-Blindness  
 Developed and produced by NCDB  
 Narrated by Shelby Morgan  
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 Special thanks to: State deaf-blind projects, the many young people, families, and educators who shared their photographs and videos with us for this program.  
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