**Module 2 Lesson 4 Part 3 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 3: Preparing the Child for Transition to Preschool

**[Visual Description]** A series of images. Parents wave goodbye to their child who is preparing to board the school bus. A boy sits with his caregiver. In front of him items are organized in lines by color.

Going to preschool is a major life change and an exciting time for the child and family. Throughout the early intervention years, you are working families to promote their child’s communication, learning, and development. As preschool gets closer, you’ll also want to specifically address things that will make the transition to preschool as smooth and enjoyable for the child as possible by

1. Developing skills they’ll need in preschool
2. Expanding on their use of routines
3. Becoming familiar with the preschool setting
4. Using skills they already have in new environments
5. Interacting with new people, including peers
6. Strengthening their communication skills and communicating with new communication partners
7. Finding new things that are motivating or calming

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

**[Visual Description]** A boy sits at a table. He touches a tactile book that is on the table.

“ Developing skills they’ll need in preschool.” Typically the skills and outcomes a child works on in early intervention are based on the family’s wishes.

**[Visual Description]** A toddler sits on the floor with a service provider. A musical toy is hidden in a tote bag. The provider prompts the child to explore the tote bag.

At about age two, begin reexamining them with the family. Talk about which skills will be important for the child to have when starting preschool, and encourage the family to begin focusing more on those skills as well as any supports and modifications that help the child use the skills.

**[On Screen Text]** Sundie Marx, Teacher of the Deaf-Blind, Utah Schools of the Deaf and the Blind

**Sundie Marx:** I try at least within that two years of age, you know, focusing on those outcomes that they're able to use in two different settings, right. Like it's great that a child can drink out of this one cup. But can that child drink out of other cups? You know, because is a preschool going to have that exact cup? Probably not.

**[Visual Description]** A young boy lies on the floor, a service provider sits near him. She signs “diaper change” and hands him a clean diaper to hold. She signs again and takes the diaper from him. She then taps him near his waist.

**Narrator:** “Expanding on their use of routines”

Routines are an essential learning tool for children who are deafblind. They help children understand that things have a beginning and an end and have steps that occur in a particular order. As you learned in Lessons 1 and 2, using routines with object cues and touch cues helps a child learn consistency and structure, and gives them a sense of security in knowing what will happen next. Becoming accustomed to the concept of routines provides a foundation for preschool, where routines are a common instructional strategy.

**[Visual Description]** A series of videos**-** A very young girl navigates her wheelchair in a school hallway. A cane extends in front of the chair to help her navigate. The same child navigates her wheelchair in a classroom.

“Becoming familiar with the preschool setting”

Routines will become more real for parents and the child during visits to preschool that can be arranged prior to the transition.

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

**Nancy Hatfield:** It's really important for the family to visit the preschool even before the child starts preschool officially. It's important for the child, and it's just important for the whole family. Everything's going to be different for that child. And so, even approaching the preschool, what does it feel like, as they’re being rolled to the front door? What will it sound like? What kind of sounds will they encounter? What are, what's it gonna smell like? Everything's gonna be different. And the family could be starting to think about routines. What will be their routine for coming to school and arriving at school and entering the classroom?

**Narrator:** “Using skills they already have in new environments.”

**[Visual Description]** Series of images - young children outside of the home environment. A school, neighborhood, backyard.

Another important strategy to help prepare a child for preschool is to expose them to different places. When possible, get the child out of the house so they’re exposed to new sounds, lights, textures, smells, and other experiences—especially those that are similar to the preschool setting.

**[On Screen Text]** Sundie Marx, Teacher of the Deaf-Blind, Utah Schools of the Deaf and the Blind

**Sundie Marx:** I even recommend like, take your child to like the grocery store when you're able to, because those lights are more like the fluorescent light, you know, and noises coming kind of from everywhere.That's gonna happen more often in preschool, because there's kids gonna yell something or seeing something, you know, and it's different than a home environment where you have pretty much controlled it, so it meets your little one’s needs and desires.

**[Visual Description]** A boy and a girl who both have deafblindness, play together at a park.

**Narrator:** “Interacting with new people, including peers.”

You learned in Lesson 3 about many ways of expanding the child’s world, such as through toddler groups, visits to community centers, and so on.

Not only will exposure to new people help expand their world, but they can start to develop important social skills, which they’ll need in preschool. This is particularly important if the child has no siblings.

**[Visual Description]** A young girl and her provider sit on a bench. The girl signs to her service provider.

**Narrator:** “Strengthening their communication skills and communicating with new communication partners”

**[Visual Description]** A young girl sits at a desk. Her provider sits next to her.

**Sundie Marx:** Really helping to hone in on those communication cues that they're using, but really helping them use it, use them consistently. Because, you know, sometimes we get kind of big in our goals and think, oh, we want them to communicate all these things, which is great, but kind of when I start really honing in, if they're at that age where they're almost transitioning and they're good at a lot of them, but not great at them or not consistent, then I really try to focus on, okay, what are the ones that they're really going to be using in preschool? And let's really focus on getting those communication cues consistent, you know, because that's gonna be way more beneficial because what’s really important in preschool is that they are able to say “more”, that they’re able to say “all done” because those are going to be the most empowering.

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

**Nancy Hatfield:** One of the ways you can help prepare a child for transition to preschool is reminding the family of the importance of the child having different communication partners, and feeling comfortable with, with new communication partners. In the beginning it's, it's starting with the trusted caregiver, the parent usually, and then it may be that they get used to having the grandparent as a communication partner and siblings. You're gradually expanding the number of people that, that child communicates with.

**[Visual Description]** A caregiver stands next to a girl in a stroller.

So, as they get ready to start preschool, this is going to be a whole new group of people that the child will be communicating with. And so, having as much experience with a variety of communication partners is good. And then you'll need to teach the new staff, the new people, how to communicate with the child best.

**[Visual Description]** Series of images - young children holding toys.

**Narrator:** “Finding new things that are motivating or calming.”

Oftentimes children who are deafblind have that one special toy or object that calms them down or can be used to motivate them. When they’re in preschool, they may not be able to bring this toy to school. How can you work with the parents to expand on more things—like the favorite toy—the child can use in preschool.

**Sundie Marx:** So what are other things that are like that toy—or what about that toy do they really like? Do they like the bells on it? Do they like the texture? Whatever it is. But then kind of introducing different toys with that same component, but offering different toys, so that they, okay again can be this is a motivator at home. This calms me down at home, or this, you know, this motivates me to do something else, but what does that look like maybe somewhere else. Can we get this child to not be so focused in on this one thing? But can their options become a little bit greater, so that when they're offered something else in a different setting, it's not so novel and it doesn't throw them off.

**[Visual Description]** Sloan happily interacts in a school environment.

**[On-Screen Text]** Kari Harbath, Sloan’s Mom

**Kari Harbath:** She has been thriving since she started. I mean, she's been given so many opportunities to do amazing things. It's really, it's been amazing to see her thrive in this environment and also it's helping her grow and develop because she's reaching a point where I can't at home, she's too comfortable. I can't keep pushing her. I don't know what to do, you know, like she needs that expert help. And so, seeing her at preschool, and being able to thrive, and the things she's doing. It's been amazing.

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

To help prepare a child for preschool, it’s important to review with the family the outcomes and skills the child is currently working on. At what age should this begin and what should result from the review?

Pause the video if you need time to consider this.

At around age two, you and the family should reexamine the child’s current skills to identify which of these (or possibly new skills) the child will need in preschool. Encourage the family to focus on helping the child learn these skills and use them in different environments.

**Narrator:**

And now, let’s review our pre-lesson questions:

1. Because the transition to preschool is particularly challenging for parents of children who are deafblind, wait to discuss it with them until six months before the child's third birthday.   
   FALSE. There’s no magic age when you should start talking about preschool. Generally the earlier the better though, to help caregivers visualize the changes to come and understand that, with the right planning, collaboration, and support, their child can be successful in preschool.
2. Nearly all receiving preschool teams will be familiar with the services and accommodations a child who is deafblind needs to fully participate in lessons and activities.   
   FALSE. There’s a good chance the preschool staff will have little experience with deafblindness, so you may need to help them understand the services and accommodations the child requires
3. To help ease the transition to preschool, caregivers should expose their child to new environments and increase their experience with a variety of communication partners.TRUE. Yes, you’ll want to expose the child to new environments, and you’ll also want them to experience new communication partners—this will help prepare them for meeting and interacting with a wide variety of people in preschool.

This is the end of Module 2.

**[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.  
 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.  
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