

# The Dakotas Cohort Training in Deaf-Blindness



## About Us:

The Dakotas Cohort: Trainings in Deaf-Blindness was developed by the South Dakota Deaf-Blind Project and the North Dakota Dual Sensory Project, as a joint venture intended to address the training professionals who work with students with combined vision and hearing loss. Teachers and other team members (including therapists, teachers of the deaf, teachers of the visually impaired, interpreters, and parents) are also encouraged to participate in the modules. The ultimate goal is to help students who are Deaf-Blind be successful in their educational and post-secondary endeavors.



An intervener working with a student who is Deaf-Blind.

## The Importance of an Intervener:

The impact of having a combined hearing and vision loss (Deaf-Blindness) is greater than what would typically be seen as adding the disabilities together (Deaf plus Blind), in that the impact is magnified (Deaf times Blind) since neither sensory channel is able to accommodate for the loss in the other sense. Also, children who are Deaf-Blind oftentimes miss the same opportunities for learning that other children receive incidentally or naturally just from being exposed to the many sights and sounds from their environment. Deaf-Blindness can result in a sense of isolation and problems in communication skills development, concepts formation, and overall learning. In the school setting, Deaf-Blindness is considered a disability of access to the visual and auditory information provided in this learning environment. Interveners, one to one para-professionals who have received training in the area of Deaf-Blindness, can provide students with the support needed to help them be successful.

## Intervener Training Modules:

The Open Hands Open Access (OHOA) Deaf-Blind Intervener Learning Modules are a national resource designed to increase awareness, knowledge, and skills related to intervention for students who are Deaf-Blind who are being served in educational settings (ages 3 through 21). The development of the modules is in response to a set of recommendations intended to establish a strong national foundation for intervener training and workplace supports (National Center on Deaf-Blindness, 2012). The module content was created by a diverse group of experts in the field of Deaf-Blindness including state and national Deaf-Blind Program staff, parents of children who are Deaf-Blind, higher education faculty, teachers, educational interpreters, and interveners. Each module includes a variety of accessible videos, photographs, slide presentations, and learning activities. The modules have been guided by an advisory committee, and reviewed by a variety of experts including module field testers, expert reviewers, and experts in module design.

*\*As with any educational resource, the modules themselves do not constitute a formal training program, nor does completion of the modules independently and in isolation from a training program result in one becoming an intervener. For more information regarding a credential for interveners, see: <http://intervener.org/competencies/>.*

**Module Formats:** *There are two ways to participate in the OHOA Intervener Training Modules...**BOTH ARE FREE!***

- 1) Take them through the National Center on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB).** Go to the website at: <https://nationaldb.org/ohoaregister> and complete the on-line form. Once you are given a sign-in credential, you can move through the modules at your own pace.
- 2) Take them with those affiliated with the ND/SD State Deaf-Blind Program as part of the Dakota Cohort.** Fill out the form on the next page and send to your state contact person **prior to May 1, 2015**, the start date of the first module. Prior to the beginning of the first sessions, you will be provided with log-in information and instructions. A calendar has been created with the intention that you will be moving through the module with your fellow cohorts about every two to four weeks. It does not matter what time of day you choose to complete the modules; there are no meetings at specific times. This on-line option provides you with a “host”, who can answer questions, support your understanding of content and technology, and enrich your learning with more information. In addition, you will be provided the opportunity to connect with a variety of Dakota Cohort community of learners, with whom you can share your experiences with and learn from each other. As you complete all activities in a module, you will receive certificates of completions for a standard number of hours.

### **Technology Requirements:**

**Computer + high speed internet = Access!** Platforms used: YouTube and Adobe Connect. This training opportunity will use a range of easily accessible and usable technologies to deliver the modules and for webinar presentations.

**Modules:** Once agreed upon, a secure log-in will be provided to access the modules, which are accessible via any web browser. Required video footage that is part of each module will be accessed through YouTube. Modules are assessable for participants with vision and hearing impairments.



**Introductory Webinar:** This webinar will be presented on Adobe Connect, easily accessible with a free downloadable plug-in. Closed captioning will be available and the session will be recorded for future use.



### **Schedule of Activities and Timelines:**

The training will start with an introductory online webinar to allow participants to meet fellow participants and discuss procedures (schedule, technology, etc.). A webcam is preferred but not mandatory for this first session. Subsequent sessions will be completed independently within the timelines provided. Only one module will be open at a time according to the schedule provided. Individual support for the teams will be provided by Deaf-Blind Program staff. As an outcome of this training, teams may submit a request for additional technical assistance as the need arises.

### **Schedule and Timelines:**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Session:</b>	<b>Time:</b>
5-1-15	<b>Introductions to the Dakotas Cohort</b>	<b>10:00-11:30 am Adobe Connect</b>
5-1-15	<b>Welcome and Orientation</b>	<b>90 min.</b>
5-18-15	<b>#1: Overview of Deaf-Blindness</b>	<b>~ 5 hrs.</b>
6-1-15	<b>#2: The Sensory System, the Brain, and Learning</b>	<b>~ 7 hrs.</b>
7-1-15	<b>#3: The Role of Intervener in Educational Settings</b>	<b>~ 6 hrs.</b>
8-1-15	<b>#4: Building Trusted Relationships and Positive Self Image</b>	<b>~ 9 hrs.</b>

A second cohort of The Dakotas Cohort training will begin in the Fall of 2015. Additional modules will be made available at a later date.



To register for The Dakotas Cohort: Trainings in Deaf-Blindness Modules please complete this application and return it to the contact person listed for your state (see below) by **April 27, 2015**. Online registration via Survey Monkey is available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/G8FVNJ2>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_



Please select which best describes you.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent of a child with Deaf-Blindness | <input type="checkbox"/> Therapist        | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher of the Visually Impaired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paraprofessional                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher of the Deaf              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Just Curious     | <input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter                      |

I agree to participate in these modules with other individuals from the Dakotas Cohort, including parents, paraprofessionals, teacher's therapists, administrators, and others. I acknowledge that in order to receive a certificate of completion for each module as it is completed, Dakotas Cohort staff will support me and confirm my progress in the modules.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have a disability and need an accommodation in order to participate, please contact the Center for Disabilities at (800) 658-3080 one week prior.

### Contact Information:

#### Rose Moehring, Deaf-Blind Program Coordinator

#### Sara Hansen, Training Associate

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#### Sherri Nelson, Program Director

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