

PROJECT VIISA
(Vision Impaired In-Service in America)

A Model In-Service Training Program for Early Intervention/Early Childhood Professionals Serving Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers Who are Blind or Visually Impaired who may have additional disabilities.

**Course I: Serving Infants and Toddlers with Vision Impairments
in Home-Based Settings**

The purpose of this course is for participants to gain and develop skills in understanding the unique needs of infants and toddlers who are blind or visually impaired in a home-based setting. The focus will be on working with these children, as well as in collaboration with the family and other members of the service delivery team. Transitioning from a home setting to preschool will also be addressed. Participants will gain knowledge and skills in observation, assessment, intervention techniques, use of appropriate methods, curricula and materials in teaching skills in all developmental domains, developing the use of all senses, meeting the child's needs in the group setting, socialization, early literacy and orientation and mobility.

The course consists of:

- Six total days of training to be held at the Missouri School for the Blind (3815 Magnolia, Saint Louis, MO 63110). First three days of training November 1-3, 2023 (half day Nov 1, full days Nov 2-3). Final three days of training April 10-12, 2024 (half day Apr 10, full days Apr 11-12).
- Five home study packages with readings and written assignments are encouraged. These assignments will involve observations, hands-on mini-practicum experiences with infants and/or toddlers with vision loss, and reactions to assigned readings.
- Participants may apply for 2 college credit hours after successful completion of the VIISA Course I Training Program. Credit hours are offered through Lindenwood University at a reduced rate of \$150.

If you would like to participate in the Project VIISA Course I, please register by October 4, 2023 by filling out the [VIISA Registration](#).

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Training and materials are provided **free of charge** to participants. Participants are expected to cover any travel expenses associated with attendance.

Participants will receive the Project VIISA *Home Study Assignment Manual* online, necessary course materials, and the curriculum manuals at the first class.

First Classes – November 1-3, 2023

The class will consist of lecture and discussions; observation and application with case studies on video; make and takes, work in small groups; exposure to resources (i.e., materials, curricula, agencies, and personnel); reflection and writing; and sharing of ideas. The topics for the first class are as follows:

- Course Overview
- Introduction to Vision Impairment, Impact on Learning and Development
- Working with Families
- Ocular Disorders and Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI)
- Hearing, Auditory Skills, and Listening
- Visual Development and Functional Vision Assessment
- Use of Touch
- Attachment and Early Communication
- Strategies, Materials, and Modifications

Second Classes – April 10-12, 2024

These classes will be similar to the first, but with new topics. The topics for the second onsite class are as follows:

- Cognition, Play, and Concept Development
- Motor and Early Orientation and Mobility
- Child Care Routines
- Active Learning Environments
- Multiple Disabilities, including Deafblindness
- Early Literacy
- The Senses/Sensory Processing Issues
- Assessment of Infants and Toddlers
- Goals and Interventions
- Transition from Home to Preschool

Home Study Assignments – varied dates

There are nine home study units in the VIISA manual. We recommend that you look over all of the units and read as much as you can. We strongly encourage you to complete one assignment from five out of the nine units. You may complete them in any order you wish. Due dates for the five assignments are listed below.

Class Schedule

First Class *November 1-3, 2023*

Optional Home Study Assignments due dates:

December 2, 2023

January 6, 2024

January 27, 2024

February 17, 2024

March 17, 2024

Final Class *April 10-12, 2024*

Additional Questions? Contact Jane Herder at jane.herder@msb.dese.mo.gov

We hope you will join us!

**Missouri School for the Blind
3815 Magnolia Avenue St. Louis MO, 63110
314 633 1582**