

**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 II: Serving Preschoolers with Vision Impairments  
in Center-Based Settings**

The purpose of this course is for participants to gain and develop skills in understanding the unique needs of preschoolers who are blind or visually impaired in the center-based setting. The focus will be on working with these children in the preschool setting as well as in collaboration with the family and other members of the service delivery team. Transitioning from the preschool to the elementary school setting will also be addressed. The students will gain knowledge and skills in observation, assessment, the IEP process, 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, school readiness, early literacy and orientation and mobility.

The course consists of:

- Three days of virtual training November 18-20, 2020 (half day Nov 18, full days Nov 19-20).
- Five home study packages with readings and written assignments are required and are to be emailed to the instructors. These assignments will involve observations, hands-on mini-practicum experiences with infants and/or toddlers with vision loss, and reactions to assigned readings.
- Final three days of training April 14-16, 2021 (half day Apr 14, full days Apr 15-16). Virtual/In person TBD; if in person, training will be held at the Missouri School for the Blind (3815 Magnolia, Saint Louis, MO 63110).
- Participants may apply for 2 college credit hours after successful completion of the VIISA Course II Training Program. Credit hours are offered through Lindenwood University at a reduced rate of \$150.

**If you are interested in applying for Project VIISA Course II, please submit an application by October 9, 2020 to:**

**Mandy Clayton**  
**Missouri School for the Blind**  
**3815 Magnolia Avenue St. Louis MO, 63110**  
**314-633-1553**  
**BEST METHOD: email [mandy.clayton@msb.dese.mo.gov](mailto:mandy.clayton@msb.dese.mo.gov)**

## **ADDITIONAL DETAILS**

Training and materials are provided **free of charge** to participants. Should the second set of classes be in-person, participants will be expected to cover any travel expenses associated with attendance.

Participants will receive the Project VIISA *Home Study Assignment Manual* on flash drive, necessary course materials, and the curriculum manuals via mail before the first class.

### **First Classes – November 18-20, 2020**

The first series of classes will take place virtually. The class will consist of lecture and discussions; observation and application with case studies on video; 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, Requirements, How to Proceed with the Home Studies and the Practicum, Getting to Know Each Other
- Introduction to Working with Preschoolers with Vision Impairment in Center-Based Settings
- Interacting with People (Language, Social Skills, and Play with Peers)
- Early Literacy Experiences
- Sensory Learning Profile (or Learning Media Assessment)
- Activities of Daily Living
- Keeping the Family Involved

### **Second Classes – April 14-16, 2020**

At the end of the course, a final series of classes with the instructors will take place. While we believe that learning is more effective in person, our primary concern is the health and safety of our participants. Due to the evolving situation regarding COVID-19, decisions regarding the method of delivery (on-site or virtual) will be made at a later date; participants will be notified of the decision well in advance of the class dates. This class will be similar to the first, but with new topics; additionally, you will evaluate the course. The topics for the second onsite class

are as follows:

- Questions About and Discussion of Material Covered Thus Far
- Cognition, Play, and Concept Development
- Motor and Early Orientation and Mobility
- Preschoolers with Additional Impairments
- Assessment and the IEP
- Choosing the Appropriate Elementary School, Placement, and Transition
- Course Evaluation

### **Home Study Assignments – varied dates**

There are nine home study units in the VIISA manual. It is recommended that you look over all of the units and read as much as you can. You are required 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	<i>November 18-20, 2020, Virtual</i>
Home Study Assignments	<i>December 11, 2020</i>
	<i>January 8, 2021</i>
	<i>January 29, 2021</i>
	<i>February 19, 2021</i>
	<i>March 19, 2021</i>
Final Class	<i>April 14-16, 2021, Virtual or at MSB</i>

**Additional Questions?** Contact Mandy Clayton (Missouri VIISA Coordinator) at [mandy.clayton@msb.dese.mo.gov](mailto:mandy.clayton@msb.dese.mo.gov) or call 314.633.1553.

*We hope you will join us!*