

## **Orientation and Mobility Services-Greater Boston**

A program of MAB Community Services

313 Pleasant Street • Watertown, MA 02472 • (617) 972-9103

[www.mabcommunity.org](http://www.mabcommunity.org)

### **How Does Orientation and Mobility Help Individuals, Families and Caregivers?**

Orientation and Mobility training helps blind individuals learn to assess their environment and travel safely within it. The model for MAB's Orientation and Mobility services is a three-tiered approach that involves direct service, indirect or consultative service, and education and advocacy.

**Direct Services** and assessments are provided on an as-needed basis or as outlined in the Individual Support Plan (ISP). Orientation and Mobility Assessments and Functional Low Vision Assessments include evaluation of and recommendations for environment and transportation, as well as sensory, programmatic, and quality of life issues, the need for sunglasses, and more. Program and route planning needs are also addressed as appropriate.

**Indirect or Consultative Services** are geared towards training the support network in understanding the needs of individuals with vision loss and developmental disabilities. Through sensitivity trainings, caregivers and staff have the opportunity to become more empathetic and knowledgeable. With a better understanding of visual impairment and eye disorders, the support network can promote an individual's independence through a safe, usable, more comfortable environment, and appropriate mode of transportation. Training and consultation will be provided for person-specific and general issues.

Training for family, friends, and support staff includes, but is not limited to:

- Low Vision and Blindness Sensitivity Training: Blindfold and vision simulator experiences, do's and don'ts, environmental adaptations, specialized equipment, and resource materials
- O&M techniques and adaptive techniques appropriate for adults with developmental disabilities including sighted guide, orientation, cane/adaptive cane, and trailing
- Asking the right questions at ophthalmology visits
- Appropriate use of eyeglasses
- Assessment recommendations
- Resources on talking books, large print books, web sites, Descriptive Video Service, etc.

The O&M Department also provides education and advocacy through a regular **Clinical Training Series** that helps caregivers understand vision loss and promote enhanced independence for individuals. Check the DMR/DDS training calendar for updates.

Metro Region clinical referrals should be sent by an individual's DMR/DDS Service Coordinator to Michele Reed, COMS, at (617) 972-9103 or [mreed@mabcommunity.org](mailto:mreed@mabcommunity.org).