



Ski Spectacular Instructor Academy

**Hosted by The Hartford Ski Spectacular
December 4-7, 2023**

Clinic Summary Notes

Clinic Topic: Guiding and Teaching Skiers with Low or No Vision-Katherine Hayes Rodriguez

1. The evaluation and assessment of your visually impaired student is vitally important. Your checklist for understanding should include: their Vision (degree, colors, shapes, acuity, range); Cognitive abilities (learning style, development, attitude); and Physical status (strength, stamina, balance/coordination, disability factors).
2. It is crucial to establish an effective communication system for on and off the hill. Discuss attention to voice inflection, types of emergency commands to be used, directional commands that make sense to the student (i.e., clock, grid, verbal, descriptive, auditory).
3. Instructors have a double duty to guide PLUS teach skiing to new or returning students.
4. Guiding Techniques can be practiced before putting the skis on. When walking around the base area, talk about position preference, reference points, clock positioning, sounds that might interfere (crowds, chairlifts, snowmaking).
5. After you get your skis on, review the possible Guiding Positions based on their level of blindness, and comfort: front facing backwards and facing forward, side, rear, distance.
6. Review non-verbal guiding techniques: tip hold, 2-point hold, pole assist, horse and buggy, USARC poles, ski retention device + reins, hold hands, arm in arm. These can be used in conjunction with verbal guiding techniques.
7. Discuss how you will be guiding them during the lesson: : previous techniques they have experienced, voice inflection for different situations, guiding commands, emergency commands, turn preparation, turn initiation, turn completion, direction of travel, regular stop.
8. The chairlift can be a land mine. Utilize safety techniques to avoid issues or problems on the loads/unloads. Discuss the lift line, signs, slow/fast loads and unloads, on/off the chair techniques, and "counts."
9. Discuss how you will guide on varying ski terrain: lanes, double fall lines, flats.
10. Establish learning style of the student and impact on teaching and guiding.
11. Practice varying guiding techniques and give on-hill feedback.