Condition Name: Optic Nerve Hypoplasia

Description: Optic Nerve Hypoplasia is a congenital condition in which the optic nerve does not fully develop. The optic nerve is the cable that relays messages from the eye to the visual brain to be interpreted. When the optic nerve is damaged, vision is disturbed. If a student has Optic Nerve Hypoplasia (ONH) when the eye is viewed by an ophthalmologist the optic nerve head appears unusually small. Individuals with ONH may only have damage to the optic nerve; in other cases it may include neurological difficulties and endocrine abnormalities. ONH is considered one of the leading causes of blindness in North America and can occur in children of all ethnic groups.

Effects on Vision: Restricted fields of vision, Nystagmus and decreased visual acuity. It can occur in one (unilateral) or both eyes (bilateral) and can range from mild to severe; it is not a progressive condition. Students that are born with ONH can have low vision or may be blind.

Educational implications: Considerations and adaptations important in the classroom environment include reducing a lot of visual clutter. Images should be presented in a clear and simple format. Enlarged print with high contrast such as black on white may be recommended. O&M training is recommended.