

District Level: Getting Started



Paraprofessional Orientation: Module I

Region 4

Region 4 Education Service Center



Educated Solutions



Role of Teacher and Paraprofessional

- ◆ The teacher role
- ◆ The paraprofessional role
- ◆ Role clarification and specific job description based on program needs and paraprofessional skills





The Teacher Role

Classroom supervision of paraprofessionals

- Specific, personalized orientation
- Assess paraprofessional's strengths and areas of need
- Use effective teaching techniques with paraprofessionals
- Conduct frequent meetings with paraprofessionals





The Paraprofessional Role

Be active in determining your success

- Keep a positive and cooperative attitude
- Request training and supervision
- Request meetings with the teacher
 - Seek information about students and instruction
 - Provide information about student progress





Role Clarification: Teacher

- ◆ Assume primary responsibility for students' education
- ◆ Diagnose education and support needs
- ◆ Prescribe programs to meet needs
 - Develop goals and objectives
 - Prepare lesson plans
 - Modify strategies and curriculum to meet needs
- ◆ Implement instructional programs
- ◆ Evaluate program effectiveness and student performance
- ◆ Involve parents
- ◆ Consult with other professionals





Role Clarification: Paraprofessionals

Primary responsibility: to assist the teacher as directed, with supervision

- Provide instructional support
- Provide behavior management support
- Provide clerical/technical support
- Provide personal/health assistance to students with disabilities
- Consult with others on team





Role Clarification: Paraprofessionals

Provide instructional support

- Implement teacher-developed lesson plans
- Assist individual students
- Assist in collecting and maintaining data about student behavior and progress
- Score teacher-developed objective tests and maintain appropriate records
- Contribute information for and/or attend IEP/IFSP or other staff meetings



Role Clarification: Paraprofessionals

Provide behavior management support

- Implement teacher-developed behavior management programs in the classroom
- Supervise students and enforce school policies for behavior in non-academic settings
 - Playground
 - Lunchroom
 - Hallways
 - Buses





Role Clarification: Paraprofessionals

Provide clerical/technical support

- Prepare/duplicate materials
- Set up and maintain learning centers and adaptive equipment
- Operate office and/or audio/visual equipment





Role Clarification: Paraprofessionals

Provide personal/health assistance to students with disabilities

- Assist with personal/hygienic care
- Assist with special health care needs (with proper training)





Role Clarification: Paraprofessionals

Consult with other professionals

- Speech/Language Pathologists (SLPs)
- Physical Therapists (PTs)
- Occupational Therapists (OTs)
- Nurses





Role Clarification: Paraprofessionals

Duties a paraprofessional may not perform

- May not be solely responsible for
 - An entire classroom (as a substitute)
 - An entire educational program
 - Diagnosing student needs
 - Developing lesson plans
 - Assigning grades
- May not grade subjective or essay tests
- May not administer or score standardized tests





Work Styles/Team Building

Teacher and paraprofessional should:

- Learn about each other
 - Teaching style
 - Use of teaching material
 - Supervisory style
 - Behavior management strategies
- Learn about other members of the team
- Learn about developing relationships with team





Work Styles/Team Building

- ◆ Structured initial conversation
- ◆ Work style and preferences analysis





Teamwork Skills

Essential skills for being a good team member

- Interpersonal skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Communication skills





Teamwork: Interpersonal Skills

Hierarchy of interpersonal skills:

- The basics (e.g., introducing yourself, giving a compliment, etc.)
- Dealing with feelings (e.g., knowing and expressing your feelings, dealing with someone else's anger, etc.)
- Higher level (e.g., negotiation, dealing with contradictory messages and deciding what to do, responding to failure, etc.)





Teamwork : Interpersonal Skills

- ◆ Dealing with diversity – avoid
 - Stereotyping – believing all members of a certain group are the same in some way
 - Labeling – referring to an individual by some characteristic
- ◆ Use “People First” language – say the person first, then the disability (e.g., the child who is hard of hearing, or the boy with cerebral palsy)





Teamwork : Interpersonal Skills

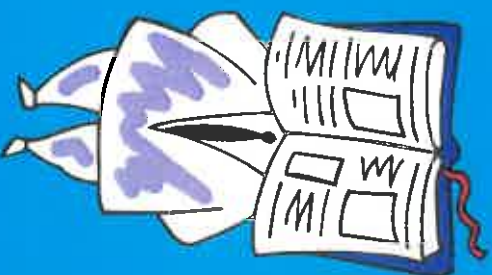
- ◆ Awareness of students' learning styles
- ◆ Preferences or strengths
 - Hearing
 - Seeing
 - Touching
 - Doing
- ◆ Sensitivity to team members' styles and preferences





What's Your Style?

- ◆ Read each item of the survey
- ◆ Circle your best choice for each item
- ◆ Compare results
- ◆ We will discuss the results





Teamwork: Problem-Solving Skills

Conflicts are a normal aspect of work life

- Due to other pressures, education teams may disregard problems with co-workers
- Team members must have effective ways of dealing with different perspectives and personalities when they encounter a conflict





Teamwork: Problem-Solving Skills

Five-Step Problem-Solving Process

1. Identify and describe the problem
2. Define and determine the cause of the problem
3. Decide on a goal and identify alternate solutions
4. Select a course of action
5. Implement and evaluate the solution





Teamwork: Communication Skills

Basic categories of communication

skills:

- Passive / Non-assertive
- Aggressive
- Positive / Assertive





Teamwork: Communication Skills

Sending clear messages:

- “I” messages—have three parts
 - The feeling
 - The situation
 - The reason
- Use active listening techniques
 - Keep an open mind
 - Concentrate
 - Become involved





Defining the Paraprofessional's Job

- ◆ Create a task list
- ◆ Ask paraprofessional to review list
- ◆ Analyze the list
- ◆ Create a personal job description





Training Needs Assessment

Complete the plan for acquisition of new skills needed on the job





Materials and Resources

- ◆ Awareness of a variety of instructional materials
- ◆ Technology
- ◆ Awareness of content standards
- ◆ As directed by a certified professional, prepare and organize materials for instructional and other activities





Disabilities: Legal Issues

Awareness of federal legislation pertaining to special education

- Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Education for All Handicapped Children Act
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)





Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- ◆ Educational service for students with disabilities
- ◆ Broad definition of disability
- ◆ Services provided so student can benefit from instruction





Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Historical Overview

Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
Access to public schools

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990
Access to general education classrooms

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997
Access to general education curriculum

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004
Access to general State and district-wide assessments





Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- ◆ Provides access to a broad range of settings
- ◆ Describes accommodations that must be made to ensure that people with disabilities are integrated into daily life





Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

- ◆ Limits access to student records
- ◆ Parental consent needed
- ◆ Parental rights
 - Review school records
 - Request hearing to challenge information in records





People-First Language





People-First Language

Rephrase each sentence to reflect “people first” language:

1. Two blind students were placed in my 8th grade math class this year.
2. My LD kids have a difficult time with content because of the textbook.



People-First Language

Rephrase the following sentences to reflect "people-first" language:

3. The autistic student in my class is progressing well on her IEP.
4. I have a Down's Syndrome student in my homeroom class.

Adapted from Research and Training Center for Independent Living (1993).



A Student with a Disability

A student evaluated as having . . .

- a specific learning disability
- emotional disturbance
- mental retardation
- a speech or language impairment
- a visual impairment including blindness
- a hearing impairment including deafness
- an orthopedic impairment





A Student with a Disability (continued)

- traumatic brain injury
- autism
- other health impairment
- multiple disability
- deaf-blindness
- non-categorical early childhood (NCEC)





A Student with a Disability (continued)

- ◆ NCEC: may be used for children ages 3 through 5 suspected of meeting eligibility criteria for:
 - autism
 - emotional disturbance
 - learning disability
 - mental retardation
- ◆ Use of the NCEC code is a local district decision





Learning Styles





Characteristics of Auditory Learners

- ◆ Prefer to listen
- ◆ Do not necessarily like to read
- ◆ Talkative
- ◆ Enjoy group interaction
- ◆ Recall details of conversations easily
- ◆ Associate learning with listening
- ◆ Need to discuss possible solutions before making a decision





Teaching Auditory Learners

- ◆ Use hearing and speaking
- ◆ Give oral directions
- ◆ Teach students to talk themselves through tasks
- ◆ Tape record lectures
- ◆ Use jingles, raps, catchy stories, and mnemonic devices
- ◆ Provide worksheets that are easy to read
- ◆ Use oral tests and oral responses





Characteristics of Visual Learners

- ◆ Visually scan situation
- ◆ Facial expressions often indicate mood
- ◆ Think in pictures and detail
- ◆ Vivid imaginations
- ◆ Remember configurations
- ◆ Stare into space when visualizing
- ◆ Have difficulty remembering labels
- ◆ Are impatient with tasks that involve extensive listening
- ◆ Distracted by movement
- ◆ Concentrate intensely when reading





Teaching Visual Learners

- ◆ Use visual materials
- ◆ Teach students to make mental pictures
- ◆ Face students when talking
- ◆ Allow students to read silently
- ◆ Provide visual materials during lectures
- ◆ Model the skills taught (show what it looks like)





Characteristics of Tactile/ Kinesthetic Learners

- ◆ Need to manipulate
- ◆ Use senses (touch, feel, taste)
- ◆ Express through physical movement
- ◆ Gesture when speaking
- ◆ Poor listeners
- ◆ Often fidget when reading
- ◆ Tend to be poor spellers
- ◆ Need to write words to see if they look correct
- ◆ May appear impulsive
- ◆ Prefer activities
- ◆ Prefer stories with action
- ◆ Do not particularly like reading





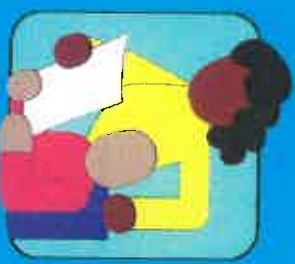
Teaching Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners

- ◆ Use sense of touch
- ◆ Give instructions first, then distribute materials
- ◆ Give specific directions
- ◆ Keep work periods short and varied
- ◆ Use simulations
- ◆ Vary instructional activities and approaches
- ◆ Allow students to trace items
- ◆ Allow students to make materials for you





Communication with Students





Problematic Communication

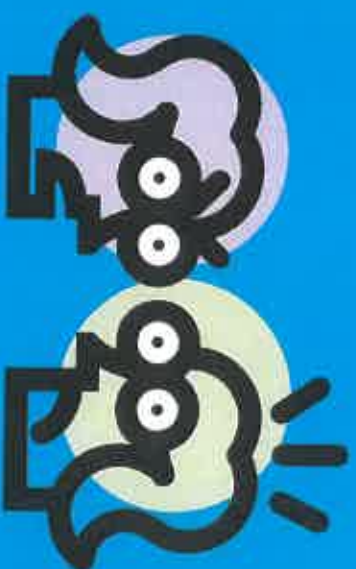
- ◆ Ordering, commanding
- ◆ Threatening, warning
- ◆ Moralizing, preaching (Should/Ought)
- ◆ Advising
- ◆ Teaching





More Problematic Communication

- ◆ Judging
- ◆ Name-calling
- ◆ Analyzing





Positive Communication

- ◆ Active listening
- ◆ Non-verbal communication
 - Posture
 - Eye contact
 - Facial expression
 - Distance
 - Distracting behaviors
 - Voice
- ◆ Convey acceptance





Other Positive-Communication Tips

- ◆ Encourage, do not control
- ◆ Be positive, avoid “put downs”
- ◆ Use student’s name when speaking to him/her
- ◆ Get student’s attention before giving directions
- ◆ Include examples from student’s experiences
- ◆ Reinforce listening behaviors
- ◆ Use age-appropriate language





Supporting Instruction

- ◆ Effective behavior management
- ◆ Effective instructional techniques
- ◆ Data-based decisions





Basic Behavioral Concepts

- ◆ Behavior is learned
- ◆ Any behavior that occurs repeatedly is serving some function for the individual exhibiting the behavior
- ◆ Behavior can be changed
- ◆ When working to change behavior, focus more energy on encouraging responsible (desired) behavior than on trying to reduce inappropriate behavior
- ◆ A comprehensive plan is needed





Student and Paraprofessional Expectations

- ◆ For each job responsibility you have, ask your immediate supervisor to discuss his/her expectations for the students
- ◆ For each job responsibility you have, ask your immediate supervisor to discuss his/her expectations for you





Active Monitoring

- ◆ Circulate, or move about, among the students
- ◆ As much as possible, visually scan the setting in which you are working





Reinforce Responsible Behavior

Always watch for and take advantage of opportunities to give students positive feedback when they are behaving responsibly





Reinforce Responsible Behavior

Effective, positive feedback needs to be:

- ◆ Accurate
- ◆ Specific and descriptive
- ◆ Contingent
- ◆ Age appropriate
- ◆ Given in a manner that is comfortable to you

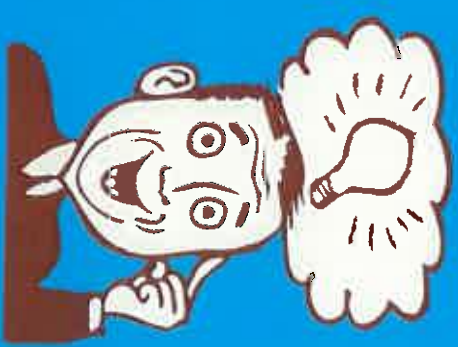




Reinforce Responsible Behavior

When giving feedback, avoid the following:

- The “good job” syndrome
- Making judgments or drawing conclusions about the student
- Calling attention to yourself





Reinforce Responsible Behavior

- ◆ Use a quiet voice
- ◆ Be brief
- ◆ Be somewhat businesslike
- ◆ Avoid pausing and looking at the student
- ◆ Praise more than one student





Reinforce Responsible Behavior

If the student requires a structured reward system, such as tangible rewards or points, implement these systems as effectively as possible





Reinforce Responsible Behavior

- ◆ Continue to provide positive feedback
- ◆ When you use a structured reward system, maintain high energy and enthusiasm for it





Reinforce Responsible Behavior

- ◆ Keep your focus on the students' behavior rather than on the rewards they can earn
- ◆ When using tangible rewards, gradually increase the amount of positive behavior required to get the reward
- ◆ The goal is for the behavior to be its own reward





Correct Irresponsible Behavior

Be professional when responding to inappropriate behavior:

- Don't take it personally
- Give yourself time to think before you respond
- View misbehavior as an opportunity to teach





Correct Irresponsible Behavior

Plan your responses to student misbehavior

1. If the student is unable to behave responsibly, adjust your expectations
2. If the student does not know how to behave responsibly, teach the responsible behavior
3. If the student seems to be seeking attention with the misbehavior, respond with planned ignoring





Correct Irresponsible Behavior

- ◆ Be patient when responding to student misbehavior
- ◆ Be persistent
- ◆ Be “positive” when the student is not engaged in misbehavior (develop a 3 to 1 ratio of positive to negative interactions)





Basics of Effective Instruction

- ◆ Be aware of the components of an effective lesson
- ◆ Maintain student attention on the lesson
- ◆ Reinforce correct responses
- ◆ Correct incorrect responses in a manner that helps students learn the material





Components of Effective Lesson

- ◆ Review previously taught skills/concepts
- ◆ Preview what is to be learned in the lesson
- ◆ Provide instruction on new skills
- ◆ Assess student understanding





Maintain Student Attention

- ◆ Follow the 20-minute rule
- ◆ Maintain instructional momentum
 - Show interest in what you are presenting
 - Don't talk too much
 - Variety
 - Humor
 - Increase enthusiasm





Basic Information-Based Decision Making

- ◆ Understand the concept of “baseline” information
- ◆ Be somewhat familiar with the five major types of information (data) that you may be asked to collect





Basic Information-Based Decision Making

- ◆ **Frequency** – the number of times the target behavior (i.e., the behavior of concern) occurs during a specific time period (session)
- ◆ **Duration** – the total amount of time the target behavior occurs during a specific time period (session)





Basic Information-Based Decision Making

- ◆ **Percentage** – the number of correct (and/or incorrect) responses relative to the total number of responses for a specific assignment or time period
- ◆ **Latency** – how much time lapses before a student responds to a direction
- ◆ **Magnitude or Quality** – rating a behavior on some kind of scale – for example, 0 to 5





Student Evaluation Procedures: The Paraprofessional Role

- ◆ Collects objective, accurate information and provides it to professionals, as appropriate
- ◆ Records information completely and accurately
- ◆ Demonstrates an awareness of the assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation tools used in schools
- ◆ Contributes to the development of students' goals and objectives
- ◆ Participates in team conferences focused on student achievement





Health and Safety Issues

- ◆ Guidelines
- ◆ Universal precautions
- ◆ Seizures
- ◆ Medications
- ◆ Feeding
- ◆ Wheelchair
- ◆ Lifting, handling, transferring
- ◆ Toileting





Guidelines for Providing Care

- ◆ Appropriateness
- ◆ Responsibility
- ◆ Role of nurse or therapist
- ◆ Training limitations
- ◆ Parents
- ◆ Medical instructions





Universal Precautions

- ◆ Treat blood and bodily fluids as infectious
- ◆ Use a barrier
- ◆ Don't eat or touch your mouth while providing first aid
- ◆ Clean up and dispose of waste and needles
- ◆ Wash hands
- ◆ Disinfect surfaces with bleach





If a Student Has a Seizure

- ◆ Remain calm/provide privacy
- ◆ Time seizure and note details
- ◆ Do not restrain or interfere with movements
- ◆ Help the student lie down
- ◆ Cushion head
- ◆ Turn the student on his/her side
- ◆ Clear the area around the student
- ◆ Loosen tight neckwear
- ◆ Do not put anything in the student's mouth





After a Student Has a Seizure

- ◆ Provide privacy and rest
- ◆ Notify supervisor
- ◆ Change clothing, if needed
- ◆ Do not give the student food or drink until he/she is fully conscious
- ◆ Let student know he/she had a seizure
- ◆ Complete seizure report





Seizures: When to Call 911

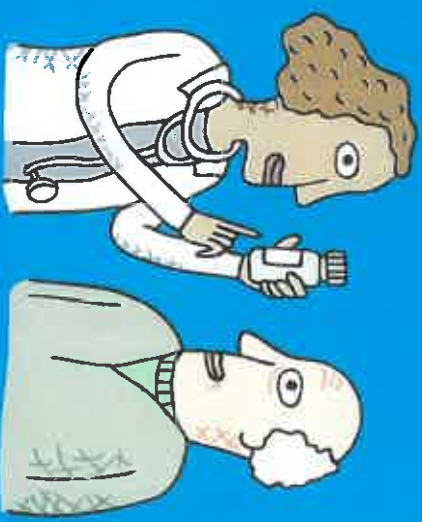
- ◆ Duration, circumstances
- ◆ Frequency
- ◆ Breathing problems
- ◆ Serious injury





Medications

- ◆ State and federal law
- ◆ Responsibility
- ◆ Student possession





Assisting with Feeding

- ◆ Use disposable gloves
- ◆ Wash hands before and after
- ◆ Seat student upright
- ◆ Sit at eye-level
- ◆ Talk to student while feeding
- ◆ Tell student when bite is offered
- ◆ Use metal or adapted spoon
- ◆ Use small amounts of food
- ◆ Make sure food is swallowed before next bite
- ◆ Place food on center of tongue
- ◆ Give a few swallows of liquid
- ◆ Review Heimlich maneuver
- ◆ Learn procedures for feeding a student in a wheelchair
- ◆ Know CPR





Wheelchair Safety

- ◆ Set brakes
- ◆ Place student in an upright position
- ◆ Fasten seatbelt first
- ◆ Fasten shoulder belt next
- ◆ Check feet
- ◆ Discuss destination
- ◆ Set brakes when stopping
- ◆ Inclines, curbs, and gratings





Lifting, Handling, and Transferring

- ◆ Clear both transfer surfaces and movement path
- ◆ Stabilize transfer surface
- ◆ Wear non-skid shoes
- ◆ Tell student what you will do and what they are expected to do
- ◆ Unfasten straps and belts
- ◆ Keep feet shoulder-width apart
- ◆ Bend at hips and knees, with proper back alignment
- ◆ Lift student at center of gravity
- ◆ Hold student as close as possible
- ◆ Instruct student to help as much as possible
- ◆ Use safety devices (gait belt)





Lifting, Handling, and Transferring

- ◆ If student is heavier than 35% of your body weight...
 - Use two-person lift
 - Transfer rather than lift
 - Use adaptive equipment
- ◆ Always transfer rather than lift students who can assist
- ◆ Your personal safety and that of the student are the primary concern
- ◆ Consult with physical therapist or nurse





Toileting

- ◆ Respect privacy
- ◆ Be aware of safety issues (bodily fluids, transfer techniques)
- ◆ Allow student independence
- ◆ Learn how student communicates need
- ◆ Wear gloves, bag and seal diapers or fluid
- ◆ Use proper disposal techniques
- ◆ Wash hands, yours and students





Summary

- ◆ Reiterate welcome
- ◆ Discuss topics covered
- ◆ Reminder to submit paperwork
- ◆ Wrap-up

