



Paraprofessional

Special Education Handbook &

Resource Guide



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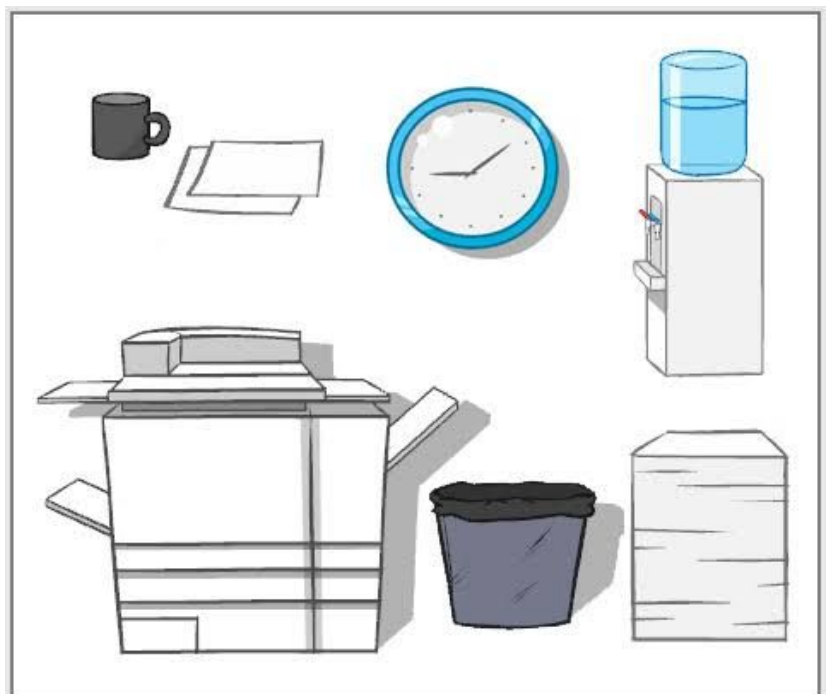
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Norms

- Student needs come first, you are there for them.
- **Relationships** are most important. Take time to create and build them.
- Remember they are **CHILDREN**. Let them learn by their own successes, and at times by their own mistakes.
- Be trauma sensitive, informed, and responsive.
- Provide specific feedback and suggestions.
- Maintain a good sense of humor, (not sarcasm).
- Be proactive, versus reactive.
- Change the environment or situation when issues first arise.
- Be professional. You are a role model at all times.
- Show respect to children, as you would to adults.
- Communicate with supervisors often, follow the chain of command.
- Remember all paraprofessional duties are not the same. Avoid comparing roles or tasks. Avoid gossip or judgement of coworkers or programs.
- Smile, laugh, and enjoy your days.



School Building Items



Resources

Where to find or obtain:

- Office/art supplies/facial tissue:
- Personnel forms:
- First aid supplies:
- Copier & Copier code #:

What to do in case:

- A student becomes ill:
- A student misses the bus:
- A student has a seizure:
- You suspect child abuse: **Listen, take notes if possible, report to child protection within 24 hours.**
- A student needs medication: **Medications have to be given by the Nurse.**
- A student needs to go to the nurse, office: **Depending on the student or situation, you may need to assist or guide to ensure safety.**

“When” “Where” or “Who”:

- When must I be at work?
- Who do I call when I am ill or not able to work that day?
- When is my lunch, breaks?
- When is my workday over?

People to meet and phone extensions:

- Custodian:
- Nurse:
- Bus drivers:
- Principal:
- Secretaries:

Staff

Special Education Teacher:

Paraprofessional(s) they supervise:

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-
-

Special Education Teacher:

Paraprofessional(s) they supervise:

-
-
-

Special Education Teacher:

Paraprofessional(s) they supervise:

-
-
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Speech Language Pathologist:

Occupational Therapist:

Physical Therapist or PI:

School Psychologist:

Mental Health:

Social worker:

Counselor:

Others:

Classroom Policies

Where to put personal belongings:

During whole group instruction, I should:

During small group instruction, I should:

During 1:1 instruction, I should:

The best time to communicate with _____ is:

Ask what the adults' noise level in classroom should be?

Ask about adults' mobility in the classroom:

The person who will handle redirection or behavior issues is:

Classroom Policies (continued)

The procedure for handling aggressive or crisis level behavior issues in the classroom:

The procedure for positive reinforcement:

Dress code:

Communication about students is confidential: when and who can they be discussed with?

Making or receiving personal calls: are cell phones allowed on person during the day?

Other Important Policies:

Emergency Procedures

The school has specific procedures for each type of drill.

During the follow drills, be sure to follow the specific procedures for each student.

Fire Drill:

Lockdown Drill:

Tornado Drill:

Angry or aggressive Parent:

Student Leaves School Property:

Students become Physically Violent:

Staff receives an Injury during a Student Behavior:

Paraprofessional Roles & Responsibilities

- Follow students' IEP Goals and Services.
- Advocate for students in all educational environments; if an IEP is not being followed communicate with your supervisor.
- Follow the Spec Ed teacher's directions regarding students.
- In General Education Classrooms, follow the direction of the teacher (in alignment with IEPs).
- Deliver small group or 1:1 REVIEW of instruction.
- Prepare and organize materials.
- Monitor, redirect, and reinforce student behavior (both positive and negative).
- Collect and record Data for the Spec Ed teacher.
- Communicate about students using only factual/observable information (avoid using opinions of how you think students feel or act).
- Adapt or modify student environments, tools, assignments, tests, and instructional materials to meet needs according to IEPs or developmental levels.
- Provide support in the general education classroom so students feel successful, included, and empowered.
- Support students' development of self-advocacy and independence.
- Assist substitute teachers and other paras with daily routine, and specific student needs.

Special Education Teacher Roles & Responsibilities

- Attend meetings
- Determine student goals (IEP meetings)
- Involve students' parents/guardians: directly communicate regularly
- Communicate expectations to Paraprofessional(s)
- Determine types of instruction, grouping, strategies, and supports for students
- Evaluate student progress
- Supervise paraprofessionals (create their schedule)
- Communicate to chain of command regarding a paraprofessional's performance (when concerns/issues, policy violations, other)
- Establish classroom activities, rules & expectations, create student & classroom schedules, and scheduling of other services students may require
- Establish classroom activities & procedures, rewards & consequences
- Direct Instruction of new material



Special Education Teacher Roles & Responsibilities (continued)

- Modify and adapt curriculum (instruct general education teacher on modifications & accommodations)
- Prepare lessons
- Instruct paraprofessionals on new procedures or systems as they occur, and students they are specifically responsible for
- Establish classroom activities and lesson plans that meet state and local standards
- Write Evaluation Reports, IEPs, and Behavior Plans based on individual student needs determined by the team
- Complete formal testing and assessments required for evaluations or qualification of services
- Teach all new skills and concepts to students (paraprofessional may review skills only previously taught by a licensed teacher, unless they are specifically trained/certified through a program)



Do's & Don'ts

Paraeducators May	Paraeducators May Not
• Be left alone in the class when the supervising teacher is away (yet is in close proximity & available if needed)	• Be used as a substitute for a certified teacher
• Work with individuals or small groups on concepts that have been introduced by the supervising teacher	• Teach completely new skills
• Be given specific instructional tasks	• Be given the primary responsibility of instruction
• Support the inclusion of students with disabilities	• Make decisions on accommodations outside the IEP
• Aid in supervision of students	• Take full responsibility of supervision



Safety Responsibilities

- Assist teacher in maintaining inclusive, learner-centered environments
- Help facilitate inclusion of students with disabilities into general education settings
- Assist arriving and departing students by meeting buses or supervising entries, exits, and grounds
- Supervise students during breakfast, lunch, or recess
- Monitor students during hall passing periods
- Model, prompt, and reinforce appropriate social behaviors in common areas
- Provide physical proximity for students with behavior-focused goals
- Implement Health Plans (as trained)
- Ensure students with disabilities navigate safely during drills or during times of crisis/emergency
- Monitor and report to administration any bullying, or situations deemed suspicious/unsettling if heard, suspected, or observed
- Follow behavior and crisis plans (as trained)
- Paraprofessionals are **MANDATED REPORTERS**: you must report to authorities if you hear or see signs of abuse or neglect

Paraprofessional Duties During Instructional Time

- Supervise guided or independent practice in classroom
- Circulate: answer questions or provide assistance as requested (do NOT give answers)
- Re-teach or reinforce instructional concepts introduced by teachers
- Facilitate students' active participation in cooperative learning groups
- Conduct drill and practice activities (e.g., math facts, vocabulary, study lists, and articulation protocols)
- Tutor students
- Help students select free reading books or appropriate reference resources
- Repeat directions or read tests to students (as directed)
- Read with students

Duties During Instructional Time (continued)

- Read to students (e.g., social studies text, assignments or instructions, etc.)
- Listen to students read
- Take notes or scribe for students (as directed)
- Make instructional aids. (e.g. individual accommodations, games, or learning centers)
- Help students self-manage & implement organizational skills (e.g., clean desks or lockers, sort assignments into notebooks or folders, etc.)
- File, summarize, or otherwise organize student work
- Record grades, enter data, or create spreadsheets that track student progress
- Assist students with Internet & other computer skills

Paraprofessional Behavior Management Duties

- **First and foremost: Ask yourself, "Is this behavior relating to a skill deficit?"**
- **If yes**, your response is to TEACH vs give a consequence (you wouldn't give a consequence to a child for not knowing how to read, you would teach him...the same applies to a child who lack skills in social and behavioral development)
- Assist in behavior management across settings
- Model, prompt, and reinforce appropriate social behaviors
- Facilitate appropriate social interactions among students
- Observe, record, and summarize student interactions, initiatives, etc... (collect this data)
- Prompt students to use learned strategies to assist in self-managing behavior
- Use a positive manner when supervising/reinforcing appropriate student behavior

Play with Me
Laugh with Me
Teach Me



Behavior Management Duties (continued)

- Monitor behavior among individuals, classrooms, or small groups, and as they transition in the building or in the community
- Follow/implement Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) or Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP) (as trained)
- Provide physical proximity to students who are at higher risk for safety concerns to themselves or others
- Work with students to re-teach social skills lessons
- Set up social situations, or give opportunities for students to practice social skills, with your guidance and scaffolding of skills
- Provide students with prompts or cues to employ learned social skills





Ethics & Inclusion

Confidentiality

It's the LAW!

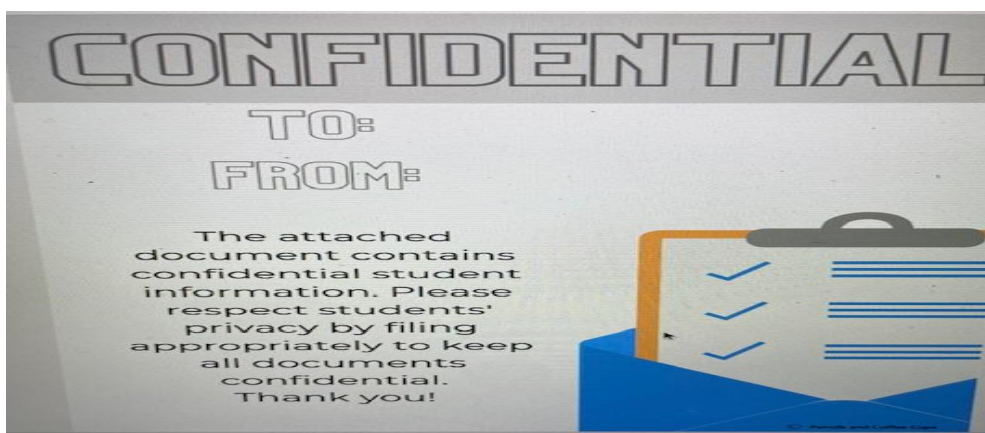
- Under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), parents and students have the right:
 - To privacy of all student records including paper files, computer files, or other records
 - To request and access child's school records at any time



Confidentiality (continued)

Remember:

- Only school personnel responsible for implementation of a student's educational services, or for the student's health, safety, and welfare can access education records
- Keep student information private (YOU can be held personally responsible)
- Lock all private materials in a safe place, do not leave out for others to incidentally access
- Only speak about students *on a need to know* basis, & in a private location (not open spaces like a faculty lounge)
- Do not speak to your family or friends about students
- Do not speak about students in front of other students
- Do not speak to parents/families about other students' disabilities, actions, or performances
- Be mindful of social media! Do not disclose any identifiable information on these platforms



Respecting Diversity

Public schools include many diverse students. Students and staff come from all backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, etc. It is important to maintain an attitude of respect, and to refrain from personal bias regarding an individual's status or choice. We must recognize differences and show an active interest in our individual students. We can model and accept others in ways we hope our students will. Remember: use an open lens of acceptance and help teach respect for all humanity to students.

Language Matters

When working with students with disabilities, it is important to remember: an individual is a *person* first. Judgement or negative statements about a student's disability must be extinguished. Stay mindful of speaking in unbiased terms. See examples on positive reframing:

Positive Framing	Negative Framing
"Student with autism."	"Autistic student."
"The student uses a wheelchair."	"The student is confined to a wheelchair."
"He is deaf and uses sign language to communicate."	"He is deaf and can't talk."

REMEMBER: The words we use make a difference.
Use positive language, and respect differences!

Answering Questions

When a student asks questions about students with disabilities, answer respectfully.

Remember these key pointers:

- Answer the student's question in a positive frame
- Share books, social stories, or other information to help teach about the disability
- If you are unsure of how to answer, ask your supervisor

What's wrong with them?

There are some things that are different than you, and some things that are the same.

Why do they always get to do the easy work? That's not FAIR!

Fair is not always equal. What is important is that you are getting what you need, and they are getting what they need.

They sound funny!

Everyone sounds different. Can you try to figure out what they are saying? Maybe you can help others talk with them now that you understand?

REMEMBER: Often, peers like to be helpers. Encourage students to be helpful, but also emphasize the importance of an individual's independence.

All Students Can Learn

Over years, a paradigm shift occurred in the belief that all children can learn. In the past, many held the belief that children who are disabled do not benefit from education, and are better suited in an institution, or nursing home. We know now that children, no matter the disability, do in fact benefit greatly from education.

All children can learn, and the effects of education are massive in the lives of these students. Children with disabilities can learn skills that allow for a higher quality of life, and have benefits down the road for both themselves and their families. It's imperative to believe all students, no matter the disability, can learn and benefit from education.





Special Education Basics

Special Education Process

Step 1: The evaluation process begins when a student is suspected of having a disability impacting education. A Dr. or mental health provider can recommend an evaluation, but ultimately, a parent or teacher requests an evaluation. A team then determines whether an evaluation is appropriate.

Step 2: An evaluation is conducted to determine if the student is eligible for special education services under federal and state criteria. The student must meet criteria within at least 1 of the 13 disability categories. The disability must have an adverse educational impact and require specially designed instruction.

Step 3: If the student is eligible for special education, an IEP is written to include service time, student goals in all qualifying areas, and necessary accommodations & modifications. The IEP is a legally binding document that guarantees services for the student under special education law. All staff within the school who work with the student are required to follow the IEP.

Step 4: Special education programming is determined for the student to begin receiving services. The student is given specially designed instruction to meet IEP goals. The case manager is responsible for ensuring staff working with the student are informed about needs and the IEP services.

Step 5: The IEP is reviewed annually by the team to ensure progress on IEP goals, and to ensure services and accommodations meet the student's current needs.

Disability Categories

Severely Multiply Impaired

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Blind/Visually Impaired

Deaf/Blind

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Developmental Cognitive Disabilities

Developmentally Delayed

Emotional or Behavioral Disorders

Other Health Disabilities

Physically Impaired

Specific Learning Disabilities

Traumatic Brain Injury

Speech/Language Impaired

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09: D/B (Deaf/Blind)

05: D/HH (Deaf/Hard of Hearing)

02: DCD:Mild-Moderate (Developmental Cognitive Disabilities)

03: DCD:Severe-Profound (Developmental Cognitive Disabilities)

12: D/D (Developmentally Delayed)

08: EBD (Emotional or Behavioral Disorders)

10: OHD (Other Health Disabilities)

04: PI (Physically Impaired)

16: SMI (Severely Multiply Impaired)

07: SLD (Specific Learning Disabilities)

01: S/LI (Speech/Language Impaired)

14: TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury)

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

What is it?

According to MDE (Minnesota Department of Education), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects how an individual processes information and interprets the world. Core features of autism are: persistent deficits in social interaction; communication; and restricted, repetitive or stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests or activities. Each individual with ASD displays a unique combination of characteristics, ranging from mild to severe, requiring individually determined educational and treatment programming. The first signs of autism appear in early childhood and can be detected by an experienced professional as early as 18 to 24 months of age. Early and accurate identification and intervention can change the trajectory for many children on the autism spectrum. Signs to look for may include:

- Communication problems (for example, with the use or comprehension of language)
- Difficulty relating to people, things, and events
- Playing with toys and objects in unusual ways
- Difficulty adjusting to changes in routine or to familiar surroundings
- Repetitive body movements or behavior
- Lack of emotional responses to stimuli or extreme responses to stimuli that do not seem to match the situation.

Instructional Strategies

- Provide directions 1 step at a time. Use verbal as well as visual prompts to assist students in understanding expectations. Some students may need a physical prompt such as pointing to a visual or activity. Be as concrete and explicit as possible with your directions and feedback to the student.
- Find out what the student's strengths and interests are and emphasize them. Tap into those interests.
- Build opportunities for the student to have social and collaborative interactions throughout the regular school day.
- If behavior is a significant issue for the student; seek to understand the meanings of the behaviors and to develop a unified, positive approach to resolving them.
- Have consistent routines and schedules. When you know a change in routine will occur, prepare the student by telling him what is going to be different and what to expect or do.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH)

What is it?

Deafness means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.

Hearing Impairment means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely impacts a child's education.

Possible Signs Include:

- Does not respond to sounds or his or her name
- Speech is delayed
- Does not follow directions, or partially follows directions
- Seems to not pay attention or ignore
- Often asks for directions to be repeated
- Turns volume up on electronic devices

Instructional Strategies

- Provide written directions
- Write announcements, assignments, key terms, formulas, etc on the board or as a handout
- Use Closed Captioning on films
- Preferential seating close to the front
- Use assistive listening devices
- Provide copies of notes
- Support student self-advocacy

Developmentally Delayed (D/D)

What is it?

Children through age 7 may experience developmental delays. When the delay meets certain state defined criteria (as measured by diagnostic assessments) the student may qualify for special education in the following areas:: physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development.

The child is not meeting developmental milestones in

- Adaptive or self-help skills, such as eating, drinking, or dressing
- Personal social skills, such as playing with others or expressing emotions
- Communication, such as talking with others, understanding others, or speaking clearly
- Physical skills, such as running, walking, coloring, or writing
- Cognitive skills, such as knowing colors, shapes, numbers, or letters

Instructional Strategies

- Read aloud often. Children love to hear familiar stories repeated
- Extend and expand the child's communication. For example, if the child says car, your response might be "Yes! That's a red car. That car is shiny and fast." Or, model proper articulation and pronunciation
- Encourage independence by allowing students to complete tasks independently
- Use multiple modalities when teaching
- Consideration of behavioral strategies

Emotional or Behavioral Disorders (EBD)

What is it?

For students to meet criteria and receive special education services in Minnesota under the disability category of Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD), students must demonstrate an established pattern of one or more of the following emotional or behavioral responses:

- A. withdrawal or anxiety, depression, problems with mood, or feelings of self-worth;
- B. disordered thought processes with unusual behavior patterns and atypical communication styles; or
- C. aggression, hyperactivity, or impulsivity.

The established pattern of emotional or behavioral responses must adversely affect educational or developmental performance, including intrapersonal, academic, vocational or social skills; be significantly different from appropriate age, cultural or ethnic norms; and be more than temporary, expected responses to stressful events in the environment. The emotional or behavioral responses must be consistently exhibited in at least three different settings, two of which must be educational settings, and one other setting in either the home, child care or community. The responses must not be primarily the result of intellectual, sensory, or acute or chronic physical health conditions.

Instructional Strategies

Educational programs for children with an emotional disturbance need to include attention to both emotional and behavioral support, as well as helping them to master academics, social skills, self-awareness, self-control, self-esteem and a sense of belonging.

- Support students with a structured environment
- Build Relationships with students first
- Rules and routines that are predictable
- Consistent reinforcement for appropriate behavior
- Answer with questions during defiance or oppositional behaviors
- Behavior management techniques such as positive reinforcement, token economy, contracts, and a cool down area
- Explicit instruction and modeling of social skills and behavior
- Supportive therapies involving music, art, exercise, and relaxation techniques
- Individual and group counseling
- Let students feel heard, self- advocate, and self-assess

Other Health Disabilities (OHD)

What is it?

Other Health Disabilities (OHD) includes a wide range of chronic or acute health conditions, including Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), that can range from mild to severe. Medications, treatments, therapies and repeated hospitalizations can affect a student's ability to learn and function at school. A student with such a condition may be considered for special education under the OHD category. Other conditions could include (but are not limited to): seizure disorders, heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, Tourette syndrome.

Instructional Strategies

Instructional strategies depend on the condition the student qualifies under. Refer to the IEP and Academic Strategies section for more ideas.

Minnesota schools now require schools to implement seizure action plans and training to meet the needs of students with a seizure disorder and who may need seizure rescue medication administration. The statute outlines the requirements when an enrolled student requires an individualized plan, how to recognize, respond and provide medication for seizures. It also describes what is required to be included the seizure action plan:

- At least one employee, at each school site, who is on duty, to respond to the student and implement the seizure action plan.
- That identified employee(s) receive training and a copy of the seizure action plan.
- A school district or charter school must provide all licensed school nurses or, in the absence of a licensed school nurse, a professional nurse or designated individual, and other school staff working with the students, appropriate training materials and resources that comply with this requirement.

Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD)

What is it?

Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD) is defined as a condition that results in intellectual functioning significantly below average and is associated with concurrent deficits in adaptive behavior that require special education and related services.

Instructional Strategies

- Teach one concept or activity component at a time
- Teach one step at a time to help support memorization and sequencing
- Teach students in small groups, or one-on-one, if possible
- Always provide multiple opportunities to practice skills in several different settings
- Use physical and verbal prompting to guide correct responses, and provide specific verbal praise to reinforce these responses
- Adapted equipment—such as a special seat or a cutout cup for drinking
- Assistive technology—such as a word processor, special software, or a communication system
- Adapted materials—such as books on tape, large print, or highlighted notes
- Utilize structure, predictability, and reinforcement

Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

What is it?

Specific Learning Disabilities refers to a disability in 1 or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, that may manifest in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do math calculations or problem solving.

Children with learning disabilities are not “lazy” or “trouble-makers”. Their brains process in a different way. People with learning disabilities generally have average or above average intelligence but have struggles in performance in the particular area(s) they qualify for special education service.

Instructional Strategies

- Break learning into small steps
- Provide regular feedback
- Use visual aids and use of manipulatives
- Model
- Provide lots of independent practice
- Utilize small spaces in order to focus
- Add movement into learning
- Lessen distractions
- Use positive reward systems
- Repetition of skills
- Activation of prior knowledge and connection of real experiences to learning

Speech/Language Impaired (S/LI)

What is it?

Speech or language impairment means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairments, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's education.

Speech Disorders refer to difficulties with speech sounds or voice quality including:

- Articulation (such as a lisp)
- Fluency (such as inappropriate inhalation, exhalation, involuntary repetitions of sounds or words)
- Voice (such as abnormal pitch or loudness)

Language Disorders refers to impairment in the ability to understand or use words both verbally and nonverbally

- Expressive language: difficulty expressing ideas
- Receptive language: difficulty understanding others' ideas

Instructional Strategies

- Assume competence
- Model fluent reading
- Read, read, read
- Use reading strategies
- Use social interaction opportunities
- Encourage reading and writing daily
- Incorporate direct instruction for vocabulary

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

What is it?

Traumatic Brain Injury is an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in an impairment in the brain's functioning that impact cognitive, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem-solving, etc.

Instructional Strategies

- Give students more time to finish schoolwork
- Give directions one step at a time
- Show students how to perform new tasks
- Have consistent routines
- Check to ensure student is learning new skills
- Allow frequent breaks as students may tire more quickly
- Reduce distractions
- Stay flexible
- Maximize student success

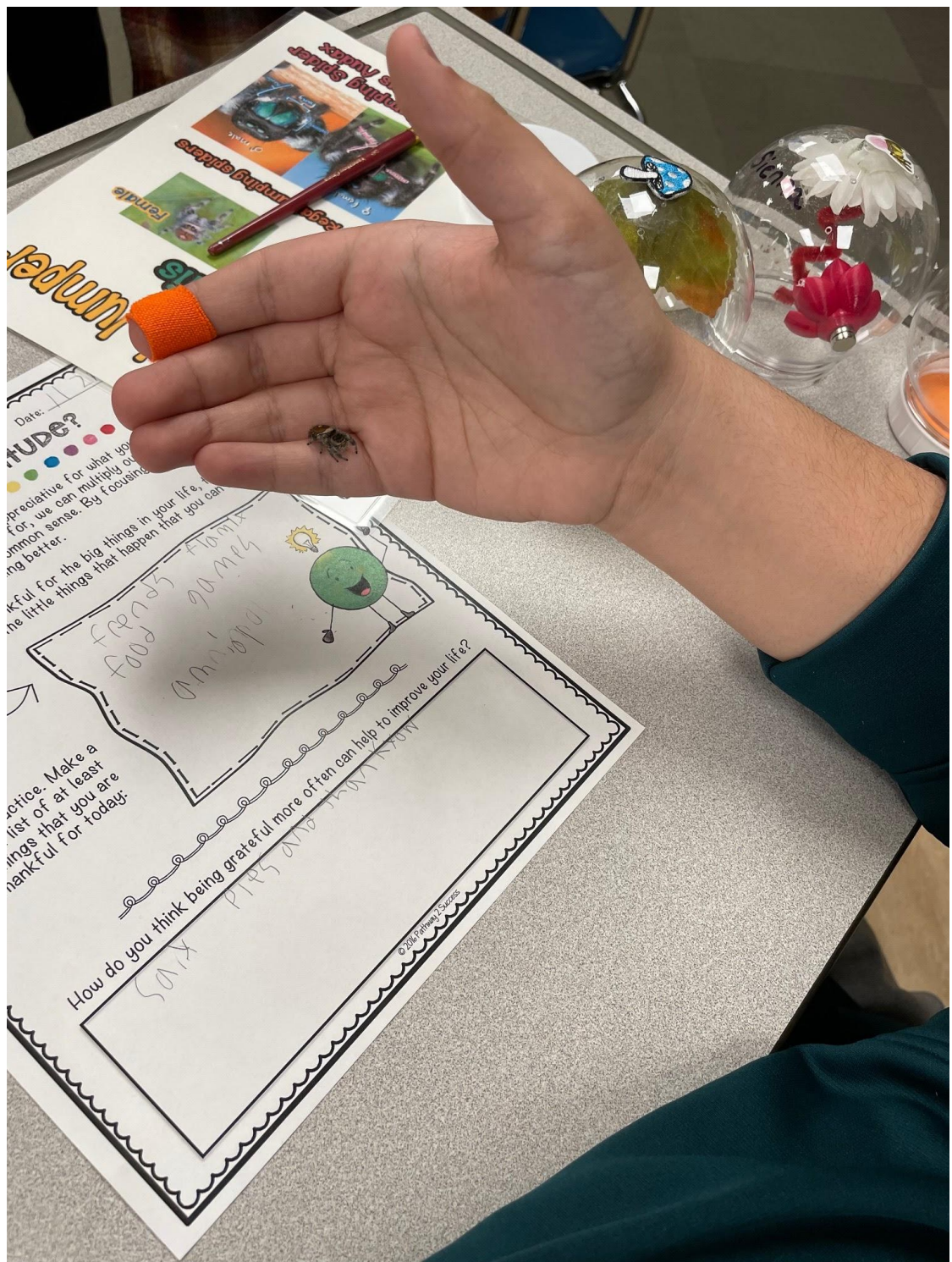
Blind/Visually Impaired (B/VI)

What is it?

Visual impairment, including blindness, means an impairment in vision that adversely impacts the child's education.

Instructional Strategies

- Reserve a seat in the front row
- Keep aisles clear and drawers and cabinets closed
- Consider alternative assignments
- Allow material to be transcribed into Braille or other adaptive electronic format
- Be specific with directions
- Provide hands-on learning
- Use real objects that the student can touch
- Use tactile graphs (such as filling in liquid glue)
- Encourage other students to help when asked, or offer help

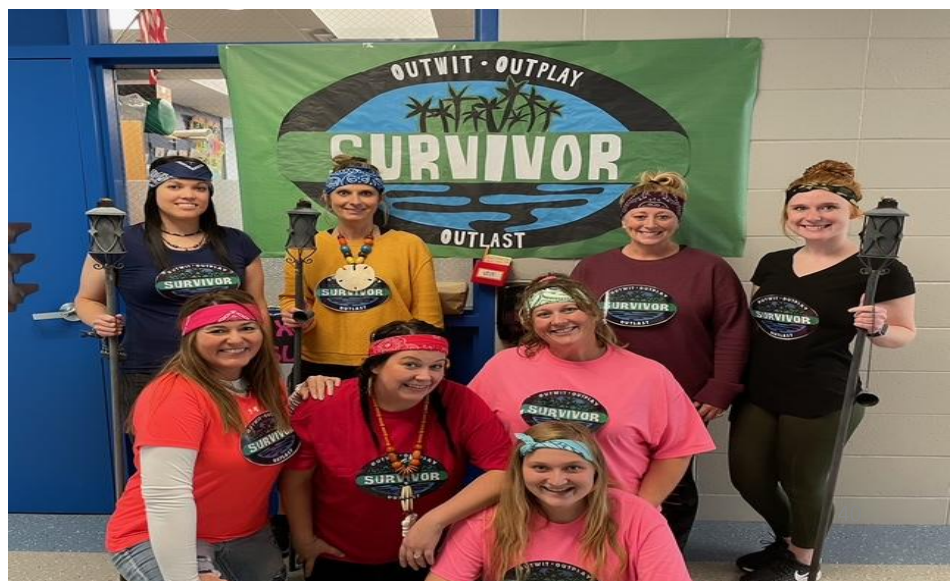


Supporting Instruction

Building Rapport With Teachers

Paraeducators are often working with many teachers and other professionals: general education teachers, special education teachers, elective teachers, and therapeutic specialists. Here are a few tips when working with other professionals:

- Introduce yourself and let them know you are open to their feedback and to help in whatever way they need
- Consult or meet with teachers as scheduled or directed
- Participate by contributing information, ideas, and assistance
- Listen carefully to the directions of teachers
- Engage in solution-finding steps to resolve areas of concern
- Seek advice, instruction, and direction on new or complex tasks
- Provide timely information about the student you are supporting
- Maintain composure and model solution-finding in all situations



Building Rapport With Students

One of the best ways to support students with behavior needs and students with other special needs is to establish a trusting relationship with them. Students who feel safe and confident are more likely to exhibit appropriate behaviors. Here are some tips for beginning a trusting relationship:

- Introduce yourself
- Be excited to see students, genuinely smile and greet them
- Ask questions and validate their interests, ask about their weekend
- Respect student space when needed
- Have an awareness of students feeling singled out
- Check in with students, ask what they need
- Encourage students
- Find positives
- Support a growth mindset
- Avoid negative self-talk
- Hold students accountable
- Give students choices
- Start again each new day
- Invest in a do-over mindset

Remember to have fun, be silly at times, and give students a reason to be successful and want to try.



Leading Small Group REVIEW of Information

Different teachers and different settings will require varying amounts of preparation and review of instruction. Regardless of the amount of preparation and review you will be delivering, it is helpful to understand the basics of best teaching practices. Below is a list of important questions to ask before reviewing a small group lesson.

- Have I reviewed the lesson plan?
- Do I feel adequately prepared to use the techniques?
- Do I know how to begin the lesson?
- Do I know what to do when the students respond appropriately?
- Do I know how to handle inappropriate responses?
- Am I prepared for off-task student behavior?
- Do I have the materials ready?
- Do I know how to use the materials?
- Do I have the teaching area arranged efficiently?
- Do I know how to conclude the review/lesson?

It is important to consult the teacher about anything you do not thoroughly understand.

Supporting Whole Group Instruction

There are many times when the supervising teacher is giving direct instruction. This is a great opportunity for you to support the supervising teacher's instruction by:

- Reviewing the lesson plan including:
 - The objective
 - The activities
 - The materials needed
 - The assessment to measure student learning
 - The plan for feedback
- Preparing materials which may include adapted materials for students with disabilities
- Modeling appropriate behavior, such as
 - Stand at the side facing the teacher
 - Show attentiveness
 - Modeling appropriate responses
- Assist with behavior management
- Take notes to share with students, or for later review and reinforcement

Content Area Instruction

Classroom Support

- Highlighting textbooks
- Being a class note taker
- Maintaining a class notebook with assignments, handouts, materials, etc.
- Preparing adapted materials for students
- Prompting students to respond
- Training a peer partner to assist the student
- Providing follow-up instruction

Small Group or 1:1 Support

- State goal of the lesson
- Review the critical content only
- Review necessary pre-skills and vocabulary
- Follow the basic format of effective instruction:
 1. I Do (Model)
 2. We Do (Guided Practice)
 3. You Do (Independent Practice)
- Follow the three R's
 1. Review
 2. Reteach
 3. Reinforce

Using Prompts to Support Independence

Prompts are used to support the learning process and the completion of tasks. **When using prompts, be mindful of the level and number of prompts, to minimize a student's dependence on your assistance.** Continue to fade prompts until they are no longer needed. Often, we want to help but do not realize how much we are over-prompting, instead of allowing the student greater independence!

Here are the kinds of prompts from most independent to least independent:

Independent prompt – a verbal or written direction to complete an entire task

Verbal prompt – verbal or written direction to complete a step in a task

Pictorial prompt – a picture symbolizing a direction or step

Gestural prompt – a movement symbolizing a direction or step in a task

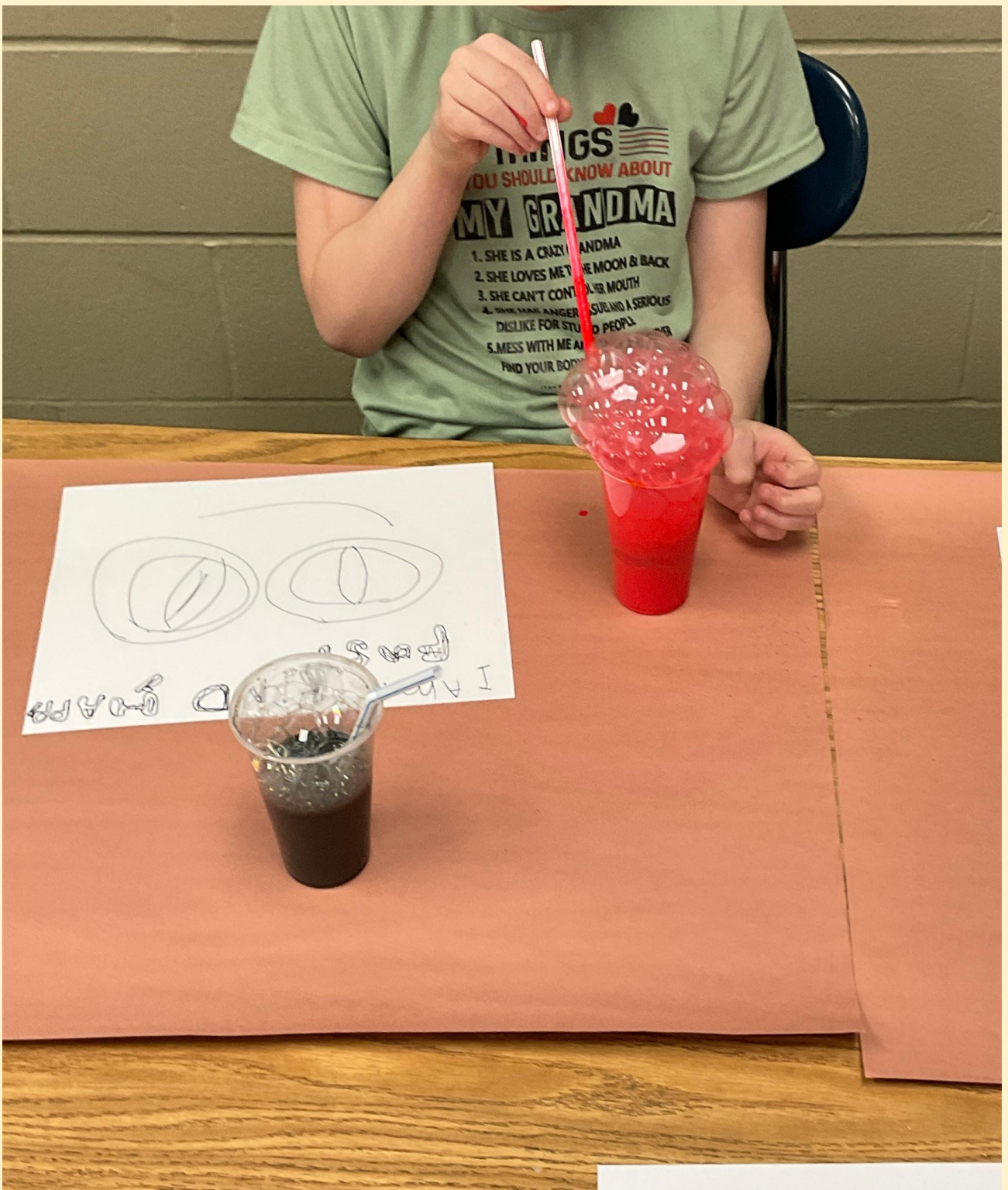
Model prompt – a demonstrated example of a direction or step in a task

Partial physical prompt – brief touching/tapping to initiate a step in a task

Full physical prompt – full physical guidance WITHOUT force to help the student perform the step in the task, such as grasping around a student's hand to aid the motor movement of writing

Using Technology to Support Independence

- Make and use visual aids as directed
- Teach students to use peripherals (e.g., cables for printing from portable keyboards, adaptations to computer equipment)
- Assist students in using portable keyboards, computers, or other devices under direction of the teacher, speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, or technology facilitator
- Monitor the use of supportive equipment (e.g., wiggle seats, fidgets)
- Scribe or transcribe student responses
- Supervise and assist students using Internet tools
- Report concerns about technology equipment to appropriate staff in a timely manner
- Check functioning of assistive equipment (e.g., hearing aid batteries, oxygen tank, and tubing)
- Operate special equipment as trained and directed (program computerized alternative augmentative communicator, adjust hearing aids, use Braille)
- Observe and record student use of adaptive equipment or devices



Behavior Management

Know the WHY

Before ANY behavior can change, we must understand the WHY behind the behavior (function). Behavior is communication, and we need to figure out what a **behavior is trying to communicate**, and how to **meet the student's unmet need**. There is a formal process for figuring out the “why”—it is called a Functional Behavior Assessment, or FBA.

Functional Behavior Assessment

The FBA is a part of the student's evaluation. It is conducted when a student has challenging behavior. **Challenging behaviors are trying to communicate an unmet need**. It is the team's task to figure out the patterns of behavior to determine the unmet needs. Examples of causes of a challenging behavior:

- Attention seeking
- Task is too difficult/ too easy
- Boredom or lack of interest
- Lack of trust
- Desire for freedom and control
- Pleasure or entertainment
- Desire for belonging, competence, or recognition
- Lack of self-confidence
- Over-stimulation
- Under-stimulation
- Pain or discomfort
- Hunger or thirst

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP)

The BIP or PBSP is written after an FBA has been completed to determine the best ways to support the student's unmet needs and reduce challenging behaviors by replacing them with acceptable behaviors. It is the responsibility of all staff members to enforce the BIP or PBSP, including Paraprofessionals, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, and Administrators.

Consistency is imperative.

The BIP or PBSP is comprised of these parts:

- 1. Prevention:** *when the environment is modified to prevent the trigger for the unwanted behavior.*

Identify what triggers a student: you can often reduce or prevent challenging behaviors by managing or avoiding the identified triggers. Sometimes triggers are unavoidable.

- 2. Teaching:** *when a new replacement behavior is taught.*

For example, if the student yells to get what he needs, the student can be taught how to communicate his needs in other ways.

- 3. Response:** *the way people around the student respond to the behavior reinforces the behavior.*

The team makes a response plan for wanted behaviors (positive reinforcement) and unwanted behaviors (ignoring or consequence).

Example Prevention Strategies

- Set well defined expectations
- Have clear consequences and rewards
- Establish a clear routine
- Set easily attainable, daily goals
- Model appropriate behavior
- Use a quiet, calm voice
- Be consistent (*students will take much longer to learn without consistency*)
- Set the student up for success
- Give frequent verbal reinforcement for positive behaviors
- Avoid power struggles
- Give choices
- Compromise (when appropriate)
- Ignore minor behaviors
- Use proximity
- Provide breaks when needed (mental & physical)
- Reduce the difficulty of a problematic task
- Change the environment
- Provide predictability
- Provide visual cues & aids
- Build rapport with students

Create a Positive Classroom Environment

Classrooms that are highly motivating have fewer behavioral disruptions. Students who are motivated care about what they are learning and are actively engaged. This creates a meaningful and personal learning environment, leaving no room for disruptions or behavioral problems. However, students who feel unmotivated, bored, disengaged, or who see the work as pointless, are much more likely to cause behavior problems in the classroom. Instructional staff and supporting staff must keep the classroom engaging and motivating.

Components of a positive classroom environment:

- Trust is established
- Fear is minimized
- Risk taking on academics or unknown tasks is safe and encouraged
- Students understand the purpose of the learning task
- Students see the life application
- Students make learning choices that are meaningful and significant to them
- There are opportunities for increased student responses
- All students are regarded with equity and perceived as capable
- Students are encouraged to persist through challenges
- There are opportunities for projects, activities, and hands-on learning
- An excitement for learning is fostered
- Cooperative learning is encouraged
- Individual accomplishments are emphasized more than winning
- Student interest is tapped into
- There is opportunity for student directed learning
- All domains of learning are integrated: cognitive, physical, emotional
- A “Yes” culture is enforce: “yes”, you can get a drink when you finish your work, or “yes”, you can have a break when the teacher is done talking

State Clear Expectations

When you ask a student to do something, or state an expectation, explain how it should look and frame it as a positive (*in terms of what the student should do vs what the student should not do*).

Be as clear and specific as possible (*the more direct and concrete you are, the less likely there will be confusion or a misbehavior*).

Begin with the positive examples (*the “do’s”*), then it’s ok to give non-examples (*the “do not’s”*).

Be as clear as possible in what the expectation is!

Positive, Clear Messages	Negative, Unclear Messages
Stay in your seat with your hands and feet still	Don't get out of your seat
Keep your hands and feet to yourself	No kicking or hitting
Your assignment is due before recess	You won't get recess if you don't finish
Use walking feet	Don't run
Refer to visuals of rules or expectations and restate them	Follow the rules

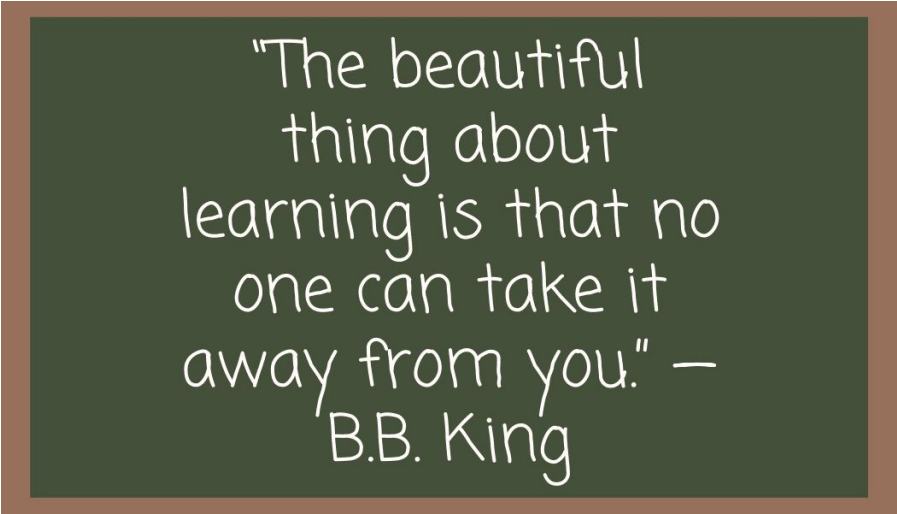
Giving Specific Praise

It is important when praising students to be very specific about the positive behavior you observed.

Avoid phrases that are vague or do not emphasize the effort required to complete a task, such as: “Good job!”, “You are so smart!”, or “You are so talented”.

Rather, use this example: “Thank you for waiting in line patiently without talking to your peers and keeping your hands to yourself.” Or, use this one: “I see you worked hard on your assignment to complete it. I know it was difficult for you, but you stuck with it and asked for help when you needed it.”

The more specifically you describe the behavior, the more likely it will be repeated and generalized in multiple settings. It tells the student exactly what they did well and increases the chances of it happening again. It is also more believable and genuine.



“The beautiful
thing about
learning is that no
one can take it
away from you.” –
B.B. King

Teach Replacement Behaviors

Staff members may wonder whether a student “can’t” demonstrate a behavior, or simply “won’t” (*assuming he is intentionally choosing to demonstrate the undesired behavior*).

Here is another common presumption: “since he demonstrated the skill in that situation, he certainly proved he has the skill and is choosing to behave this way”.

NO: we must **always** assume the student has not learned the skill, and that we must **TEACH** the behavior.

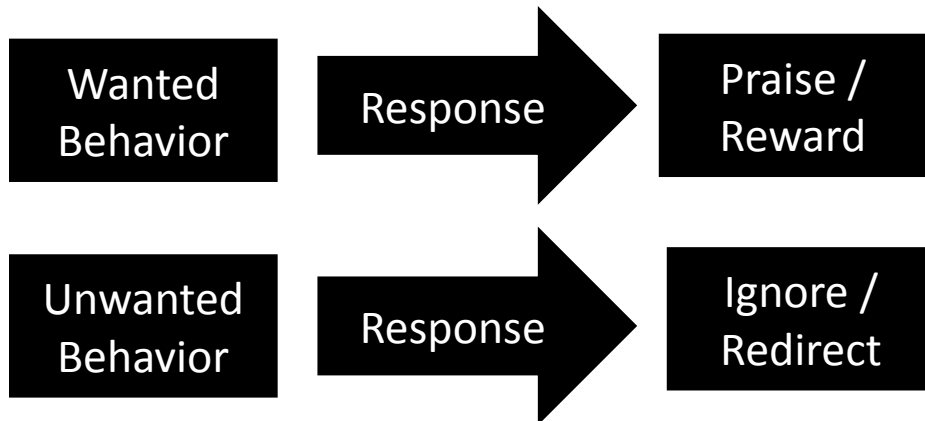
Teach students these skills:

- Taking a break (pre-taught for place, time, and expectations)
- How to self advocate (moving seats, needing movement, feeling anxious, etc.)
- Social interacting
- How to ask for help
- How to self-regulate, or use coping tools (chair raises, fidgets, breathing, grounding, hand squeezes, etc.))
- Practice skills in multiple environments
- Teach students to ignore distractions

ALWAYS positively reinforce when an appropriate behavior is demonstrated!

Example Response Strategies

Teams need to plan response for both wanted, and unwanted behaviors. For example:



- Always follow through: whether rewards or consequences
- Use a quiet, calm voice
- Be mindful of what the behavior is communicating
- Intervene before the behavior escalates
- Be sensitive to the feelings of the student
- Distract or redirect the student
- Prompt the student
- Allow cool down time
- Problem solve with the student, offer suggestions and facilitate discussions
- Hold the student accountable
- Validate what the student is saying
- Avoid humiliation

Rewards

Using rewards (reinforcers) to motivate students must be specific to what motivates an individual student. The supervising teacher determines reinforcers to use with each student, based on informal assessment.

Paraprofessionals play a critical role: based on a student's response to a reward, you are able to observe whether it's successful in promoting a desired behavior. This observational data supports whether the reinforcer should be continued.

Reward systems take time, and must be implemented with fidelity & positive reinforcement. All staff must be consistent in implementation.

Behavior that receives reward will be repeated.

Behavior that is repeated becomes habitual.

Examples of reinforcers:

Tangible (food or objects)

Token Reinforcers (tokens, points, "money")

Social Reinforcers (praise, extra time with special friend or teacher, or other adult)

Escape Reinforcers (reduced assignment, breaks, computer time, game time)

As the desired behavior increases, reinforcement should gradually decrease.

Redirection

Use redirection when there is an unwanted behavior that cannot be ignored.

Start with the *least intrusive method* for redirection: **IGNORING**.

Nonverbal redirections:

- Increase proximity
- Use visual gestures such as pointing to wanted task
- Touch student's desk
- Eye contact
- Model what is to be expected

Verbal redirections:

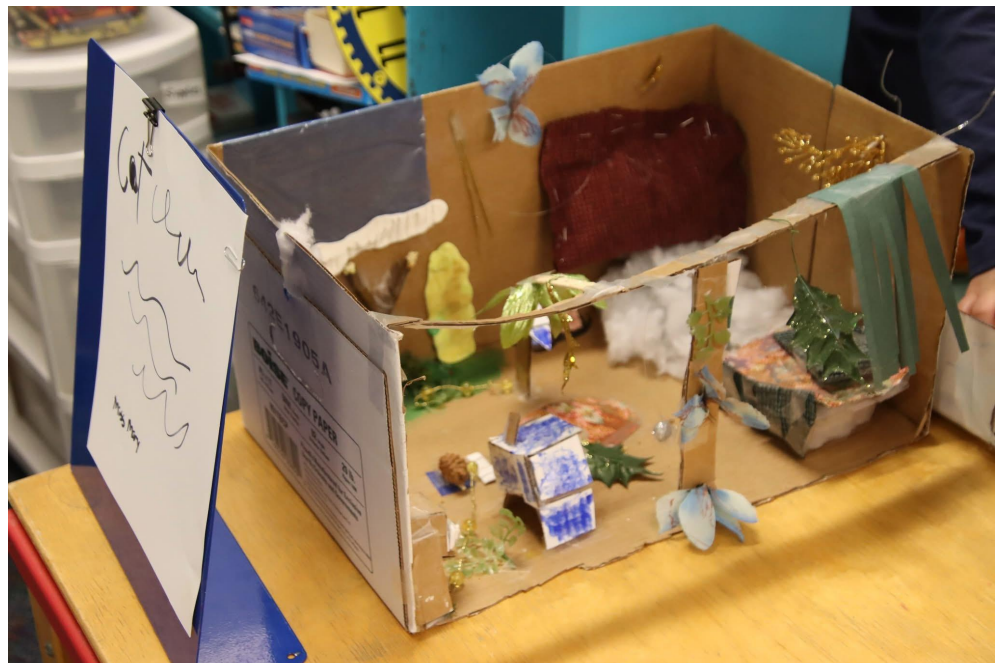
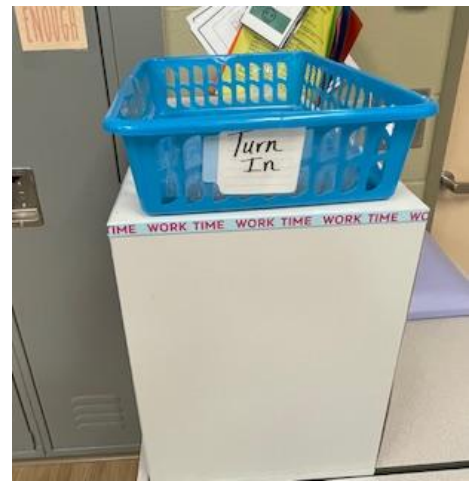
- Whole group redirection
- Proximal praise (praise students who are making good choices)
- Private or quiet prompts
- Offer choices
- Use “first-then” or “first- next” directives
- Give student a timeline in which they must make a choice
- Thank student when an appropriate choice is made
- Hold students accountable if an inappropriate choice is made:
 - 1) Reminder of classroom expectations (or individual plan)
 - 2) consequence if noncompliance
 - 3) provide time to process and choose

De-Escalation

There are times when students enter a state of crisis. The rational part of their brain shuts off and the “fight or flight” part of their brain is accessed. This is the time to remember that students essentially have no access to the language part or communication part of their brain. The team should clearly identify what these observable signs are, and what the exact response should be in these situations. The goal is to diffuse physical aggression and angry outbursts.

Steps for De-Escalation

- Remain calm and use a quiet, even tone voice with as little verbal command as possible.
- Listen to what the student is saying. For example, use active listening to respond to the student’s concerns “I hear that you are saying.... “
- Validate the student’s feelings. For example, “I can imagine that might make you feel...” “I can understand why you might feel that way...” “That sounds like a really difficult thing to deal with...”
- Offer choices and clear consequences. For example, “If you ____ (State the Expectation), I would be happy to continue this conversation. If you choose not to, we will need to end this conversation.”
- **Remember the rational part of the brain is not engaged. You must work to bring the student back into a calm state before rationalizing and reflecting.**



Academic Strategies

Organization of Materials

- Put multi-piece projects in an envelope
- Keep extra materials handy (like spare pencils)
- Provide non-verbal cues for material management
- Have student restate the expectations of materials needed

Organization of Binder

- Binder Self-Check Checklist
- Encourage use of one large binder with dividers
- Have pocket folders as dividers
- Use color coding to organize materials by subject
- File papers in binder immediately
- Hole punch all papers
- Assign notebook buddy to help track

Note Taking Strategies

- Provide a copy of notes from an adult or peer
- Offer student the 'fill in the blank' style of note taking
- Encourage student to listen, then to verbally summarize

Textbook and Reading

- Offer the text be read aloud by adult, peer, or audio
- Summarize each paragraph together
- Outline the text together
- Offer lower reading level
- Read questions before reading
- Ask about prior knowledge
- Highlight/underline
- Teach students to read headings, vocabulary, key words, graphs, charts, indexes, glossaries, and review summaries
- Pre teach vocabulary
- Role play
- Ask questions before, during, and after reading
- Use pictures to support comprehension
- Relate reading to personal experiences or present-day analogies

Worksheet Strategies

- Provide page numbers for the answers
- Present questions in the order material was presented
- Highlight or underline key words, phrases, concepts
- Provide a word bank or vocabulary list
- Assign a peer helper or cooperative grouping

Test Taking Strategies

- Offer extra time
- Read directions and test aloud
- Prompt recall of information by using question strategies
- Simplify questions
- Allow oral responses
- Provide open book or open note tests
- Provide formulas on math or science tests
- Provide a word bank or vocabulary list
- Allow retakes
- Chunk test into sections to be completed across various times
- Chunk matching items into smaller sections
- Offer fewer multiple choices
- Provide a break time

Homework Strategies

- Reduce workload
- Allow extra time
- Use a timer
- Record due dates in agenda
- Break down long term or extended projects
- Create a checklist
- Set alarms on phone or computer as reminders

Staying on Task

- Eliminate or reduce distractions
- Shorten or chunk tasks
- Offer break when a specific task chunk is complete
- Reward on-task behavior
- Provide small checklist
- Offer various, engaging activities
- Use student's interests to encourage engagement
- Include movement
- Provide quiet space to complete task

Impulsivity Strategies

- Teach self-monitoring and self-regulating skills
- Give positive feedback more frequently than negative feedback
- Teach student verbal or motor responses to use while waiting
- Use visual reminders such as pause buttons or prompts to raise hands

Movement Strategies

- Provide scheduled movement breaks
- Consult with the Occupational Therapist
- Offer opportunities to sharpen pencil, drink water, etc.
- Set a limit for the amount of time 'out of seat'
- Provide fidget tools
- Use hands-on materials
- Provide students with "heavy work" (ex. loaded backpack, moving a pile of books, deliver a ream of paper to another teacher, etc.)

Memory Strategies

- Section study time into smaller units
- Hands-on instruction
- Link information to prior knowledge
- Highlight and color code material
- Repetition of basic skills
- Allow use of memory aids such as calculator or multiplication chart
- Use memory strategies like mnemonics



Accommodations & Modifications

Accommodations

Accommodations are adaptations or supports which allow students access to the general education grade level curriculum. It does not change the curriculum or level in which it is presented; **it changes the condition** by which the student completes the task for the grade level curriculum. When a student's disability affects their access to grade level curriculum, an accommodation is given to allow access and demonstrate their learning successfully.

For example, if has student a reading disability and they are to take a test on comprehension. The student's accommodation may be to have the test read aloud to them. Since the measurement of the test was comprehension, the test itself does not change and they are still being measured by grade level standards using an accommodation that helps them measure their abilities as their same age peers.



Modifications

Modifications are adaptations to the curriculum which alters the goals and objectives for the student with a disability to provide them access to learning at the level appropriate for their IEP goals. **It changes the curriculum**, content or the performance expectations compared to their non-disabled peers. Modifications are used to provide learning access points for students with disabilities to have equal access to learning.

For example, if a 5th grade student reads at a 1st grade level, they may read a 1st grade level curriculum instead of the 5th grade level curriculum, to allow them to learn at the reading level that they can access.



Paraprofessional's Responsibility

- Participate in ongoing communication with teacher before making any changes in student's instruction
- Review IEP and talk with case managers about students accommodations and modifications. The Spec Ed Teacher should be made aware of issues that arise with accommodations and modifications in other settings.
- .
- Accommodations and Modifications stated in the IEP are a student's legal right. It is not your role to decide if a student should or should not have access to them, or whether you choose to provide them. It's a legal right for student success.
- .
- Clarify modifications or accommodations with teacher before class, not in front of students or peers.
- Communicate modifications or accommodations to the student in private, not in front of peers.
- Establish ongoing modifications or accommodations with the teacher, for example: the student always completes the off items in math, or the student always writes answers as phrases rather than sentences, etc. .

STUDENT
data tracker

Student's Name	Date																
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Data Collection

Recording Data

It is imperative to collect data as instructed by the supervising teacher. Students' IEP programming is dependent on the accuracy of the data collected. It is the responsibility of the supervising teacher to create the data sheets, provide adequate instruction for collecting data (including when, how frequently, what type of data, what codes are used, how the data will be compiled and summarized), and then to analyze the data to make adjustments to instruction. It is the paraprofessional's job to collect the data accurately, ask questions when the data collection system is not clear, make suggestions for revisions if appropriate, and advocate to the supervising teacher if the amount of data collection becomes overwhelming and takes away from the primary role of facilitating learning with students.

Observational Data

Observation is the systematic watching of student and recording the objective behaviors in order to make better educational decisions. It should be done for a specific reason and outcome. It should be done over a period of time, in a variety of settings, and be as objective as possible. This means it should not include personal bias or guessing about motivation, but rather stating exact observation of what was seen or heard. It must be observable and measurable.

Types of Data Collection

ABC Data	A chart that records antecedents, behavior, and consequences
Anecdotal Records	Narrative format
Prompting Codes	When a behavior occurs, indicates the level of prompting
Log	A List of behaviors or tasks completed in order
Behavior Chart	A chart that tracks wanted behaviors
Checklist	A list of tasks marked when met
Frequency	How often and when a behavior occurs
Duration	How often and how long a behavior occurs
Percentage	Percent accuracy
Trials	Indicates whether the student completed the required task when an opportunity is given
Tallying	Tally marks for how often a behavior occurs
Observation	Objective summary of observed behaviors

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