Essential Features of an Effective Paraprofessional of Students with Autism

Mayra Ruiz Camacho, PhD., BCBA.

Who's here?????

♦ Elementary
♦ Middle
♦ High School
♦ 1:1
♦ Floating
♦ Other?

Agenda

8:30-9:00	**Feature 1:** Understanding Autism
9:00-9:30	**Feature 2:** Assuming your role in the multi-disciplinary team
9:30-10:00	**Feature 3:** Maintaining an effective relationship with the teacher(s)
10:00-10:30	**Feature 4:** Demonstrating ethical practices
10:30-11:30	**Feature 5:** Supporting instructional planning and implementing modification strategies
11:30-12:30	*lunch*
12:30-2:30	**Feature 6:** Preventing and reducing challenging behaviors
2:30-3:30	**Feature 7:** Promoting age-appropriate social interactions

---

Feature 1: Understanding Autism

❖ Autism is a *Lifelong* pervasive developmental disorder that is generally evidenced before the age of 3 years and primarily affects:
  ❖ Social interactions
  ❖ Language
  ❖ Behavior
❖ "Pervasive" vs "Specific" Developmental Disorders

Social Skills

♦ Lack of emotional understanding of others
♦ Lack of understanding of personal belongings
  ♦ "theory of mind"
♦ Lack of eye contact
♦ Expresses emotions inappropriately
♦ Approaches or talks to strangers-personal space issues
♦ Undress or expose self in public

Language

♦ Monotone or flat speech
♦ Verbal/Non Verbal
♦ Questioning as a form of communication
♦ Say things that are inappropriate or have no meaning- Neologisms
♦ Argumentative or Stubborn
♦ Repetitive Speech or Echolalia

Behavior

- ♦ Perseveration/ Repetitive behavior
- ♦ Routines
- ♦ Strong attachments to objects
- ♦ Apparent lack of fear

Behavioral Deficits and Excesses Associated with Autism (Webber, 2002)

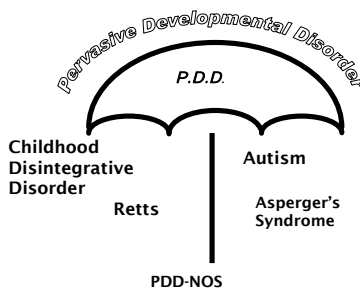| Behavioral Deficits	Behavioral Excesses
– Inability to relate to others – Lack of functional language – Sensory processing deficits – Cognitive deficits	– Self-stimulation – Resistance to change – Bizarre and challenging behaviors – Self-injurious behaviors

---

An "Umbrella Category"

Pervasive Developmental Disorder

P.D.D.

Childhood Disintegrative Disorder

Retts

Autism

Asperger's Syndrome

PDD-NOS

Autism is NOT a Mental Illness

Autism is NOT a Disease

Aperger's vs Autism

- ♦ Unlike other PDD's, in Asperger's Disorder, there is no clinically significant <u>delay</u> in cognitive development or in the area of language.
- ♦ Here, the child may learn to speak at a normal age and typically acquires a command of grammar.
- ♦ They may, however, show marked peculiarities in language.
- ♦ Children with this disorder may invent words, use pronouns incorrectly, or repeat words or phrases over and over in a stereotyped manner.
- ♦ The content of speech is often overly pedantic, often consisting of long one-sided discussions about the child's favorite topic.

Autism **SPECTRUM** Disorder

DIAGNOSIS

- ♦ Is based on observable behavior
- ♦ There is no medical test to diagnose autism or related disorders
- ♦ Diagnostic Evaluation Tools
  - – DSM-IV
  - – Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (CHAT)
  - – Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (Lord)
  - – Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS)
  - – Autism Behavior Checklist (ABC/ASIEP)
  - – Gilliam Autism Rating Scale (GARS)
  - – Parent-Child Observation/Interview (ADI-R)
  - – Peer-Child Observation (video/live)

Some Facts About Autism

- 1 in ??? Individuals
- Rates appear to be on the rise
- 4 times more prevalent in boys than girls.
- There are no racial, ethic, or social differences among students who have autism.

Long term Prognosis

♦ Typical lives with supports
♦ Early and accurate diagnosis and intervention
♦ Professional services
  - Speech
  - OT
  - Behavior

Many children with these disorders do not score well on standard tests (IQ, etc.).

However, many children with these disorders show scattered strengths in intellectual functioning (memory, visual problem solving) that make test scores invalid.

Some children with autism and Asperger's Syndrome score above average on intelligence tests (some in the genius range).

DIAGNOSIS OF THESE DISORDERS IS INDEPENDENT OF INTELLECTUAL ABILITY.

Feature 2: Assuming your role in the multi-disciplinary team

♦ Administrators
♦ Classroom Teachers
♦ Therapists
♦ Parents
♦ Advocacy groups
♦ Student
♦ Paraprofessional

Guidelines for Educational Paraprofessional Certification

♦ On January 8, 2002, a federal law (*No Child Left Behind Act of 2001)* was enacted which requires <u>all</u> instructional paraprofessionals at schools receiving Title I funds to meet specific "certified status" requirements by school year end 2006.

♦ In order to meet the requirement to become a "certified" paraprofessional, there are two (2) options:
  - *Option #1:   You must have either completed at least two years of study (at least 60 semester hours) from an institution of higher education, or have obtained an Associate's degree, or higher. If you have a foreign degree, you must have it translated into English, and have the credits evaluated. For information on having foreign transcripts evaluated.* <u>www.naces.org</u>.
  - *Option #2:   You must have passed the ETS Parapro test with a score of 464 or above. All paras and program assistants are eligible to take the exam; however, Title I can only pay the exam fee for those in Title I schools. If a passing score is not obtained, Title I will pay the test fee if the test is retaken.   For non-title I paras and program assistants, your cost to take the exam is $40.00. The test is offered in paper/pencil testing sessions and on-line format.* <u>www.ets.org/parapro</u>

Test Name	ParaPro Assessment		
Test Code	0755		
Time	2½ hours		
Number of Questions	90		
Format	Multiple-choice questions; use of a calculator is not permitted		

Content Categories		Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
I.	Reading Skills and Knowledge	18	20%
II.	Application of Reading Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction	12	13%
III.	Mathematics Skills and Knowledge	18	20%
IV.	Application of Mathematics Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction	12	13%
V.	Writing Skills and Knowledge	18	20%
VI.	Application of Writing Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction	12	13%

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

♦ Knowledge of the **techniques and procedures** used in working with targeted student population. Ability to **relate and communicate effectively** with students, teachers, and parents. Ability to **plan and/or implement instructional activities**. Ability to **operate or learn to operate a variety of technology and equipment**. Ability to **perform clerical responsibilities**. Ability to **cooperate and work as a member of a team**. **Physical ability** if required by job assignment.

♦ Knowledge of the **techniques and procedures** used in working with targeted student population.

– Assist the teacher in preparing for changing curriculum to meet the needs of students with diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, learning styles, and special needs.

– Maintain expertise in assigned area to fulfill position goals and objectives.

– Participate successfully in the training programs offered to increase skill and proficiency related to assignment.

♦ Ability to **relate and communicate effectively** with students, teachers, and parents.

– Use classroom management techniques conducive to an effective classroom environment.

– Work closely with teacher(s) or other professionals to create a quality instructional environment.

– Meet and deal effectively with staff members, students, parents, administrators, and other contact persons using tact and good judgment.

– Exercise service orientation when working with others.

– Exhibit interpersonal skills to work as an effective team member.

♦ Ability to **plan and/or implement instructional activities**.

– Assist the teacher(s) in preparing materials, teaching aids, bulletin boards and equipment for direct instructional activity, including locating, copying, collating, distributing, and/or grouping materials supporting instructional activities planned by the teacher.

– Examine short- and long-term unit plans prepared by the teacher and anticipate the need for specific supplies and materials.

– Lead small group activity, following appropriate training, planned by the teacher in an atmosphere where students are actively engaged in meaningful learning experiences.

– Provide instructional assistance as planned or coordinated by the teacher or administrator.
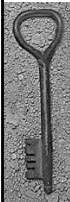

♦ Ability to **operate or learn to operate a variety of technology and equipment**.

– Programming and use of communication devises

– Assisting with the input of data into spread sheets/Excel

– Development of visual supports

– Knowledge about low tech and high tech devises (their fucntion)

♦ Ability to **perform clerical responsibilities**.
  – Manage time efficiently.
  – Assist in maintaining the security of records, materials, and equipment.
  – Check objective tests and mark errors but not assign a grade.
  – Assist the teacher in completing requirements for grade reporting, scheduling conferences, and recording results.
  – Perform assigned clerical and bookkeeping duties.
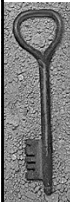 – Prepare and maintain requested/required reports and records.

♦ Ability to **cooperate and work as a member of a team**.
  – Assist in assessing student progress as directed, including proctoring the administration of tests, marking papers, and maintaining confidential records.
  – Assist in evaluating program effectiveness; seek and suggest ways of continuous improvement.
  – Assist, as assigned, in the collection of assessment data from a variety of sources and in compiling and organizing data for review by the teacher.
  – Assist the teacher in the enforcement of classroom rules and the maintenance of appropriate records.

♦ **Physical ability** as required by job assignment.
  – Organize space for specialized instructional programs and coordinate the arrangement of equipment, desks, tables, chairs and activity areas as directed by the teacher.
  – Provide student supervision before, during, and after school while they are loading, riding, and unloading buses, on the playground, in the cafeteria, in a learning or practice situation, following appropriate training, as assigned.
  – Maintain a clean and orderly environment for students.
  – Escort or transport students to and from classrooms, clinic, cafeteria as required.
  – Assist students with personal hygiene, health and safety issues, or grooming if required.
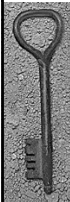
Feature 3: Maintaining an effective relationship with the teacher(s)

♦ Recognize the role of the teacher as supervisor
♦ Express differences of opinion only when students are not present
♦ Establish communication and a positive relationship with the teacher
♦ Discuss concerns about the teacher or teaching methods directly with the teacher
♦ If issues are not resolved then discuss concerns only with the teacher's supervisor
♦ Do not discuss teacher problems with students, other teachers, paraeducators or parents
♦ Follow the behavior management approach as established by the teacher

Characteristics of a Collaborative Team

♦ Establish procedure and mechanisms for interactions and decision-making (ex. Team meeting expectations)
♦ Share and allocate resources to assist students to attain their goals
♦ Use procedures and mechanisms designed to maintain a balance between completing tasks and maintaining constructive working relationships
♦ Evaluate their function as a team

Collaborative Team Strategies for Success

√ Regularly schedule meeting times
√ Assigning tasks to be completed prior to next meeting
√ Time limit to meetings
√ Written agendas
√ Keeping meeting minutes
√ Sharing established roles
√ Encouraging face-to-face contact
√ Celebrating team success (student success)
√ Accept, respect, and appreciate differences in others

When providing/receiving feedback…

♦ Think before speaking
♦ Get to the point
♦ Be an active listener
♦ Acknowledge the other's feedback/response
♦ Consider the other's perspective
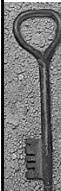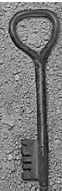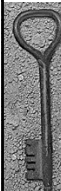♦ Summarize or restate points
♦ Ask for clarification

Feature 4: Demonstrating ethical practices

♦ Paraprofessionals are faced with ethical issues on a daily basis, including confidentiality, record management, and the demands placed on them by teachers.
♦ Ethical standards help us to become aware of the correct course of action with regard to a variety of perspectives other than our own.
♦ Paraeducators are expected to be as fully as prepared as possible to function ethically, as well as legally, in the school environment.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

♦ Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.
♦ Parents and students have the right to examine their school records
♦ Access to personally identifiable information is strictly controlled (i.e. student name, personal characteristics, or any information that can be used to identify the student)
♦ Prior written consent of parents or student is required
♦ **FERPA considers Teaching Assistants to be an extension of the faculty member.**

Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida

♦ The educator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
♦ The educator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
♦ Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.

1. **Obligation to the student requires that the individual:**

   – Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
   – Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
   – Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
   – Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
   – Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
   – Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
   – Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
   – Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
   – Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.

2. **Obligation to the public requires that the individual:**

   – Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
   – Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
   – Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.
   – Shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
   – Shall offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.

Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.

3. Obligation to the profession of education requires that the individual:

– Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
– Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
– Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
– Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
– Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.
– Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgments of colleagues.

– Shall not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.
– Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.
– Shall not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
– Shall provide upon the request of the certificated individual a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
– Shall self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to appropriate authorities (as determined by district) any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal, administrative or judicial, investigatory or adjudicatory. In addition, shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendre for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.

– Shall not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida and other applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.
– offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.
– Shall report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
– Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
– Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission.
– Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.
– Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.

Professional Responsibilities

♦ Demonstrate initiative in the performance of assigned responsibilities.
♦ Follow attendance, punctuality and other qualities of an appropriate work ethic.
♦ Ensure adherence to good safety standards.
♦ Model and maintain high ethical standards.
♦ Keep supervisor informed of potential problems or unusual events.
♦ Use effective, positive interpersonal communication skills.
♦ Respond to inquiries and concerns in a timely manner.
♦ Serve on school/district committees as required or appropriate.
♦ Follow federal and state laws as well as School Board policies, rules and regulations.
♦ Demonstrate support for the school district and its goals and priorities.
♦ Prepare or assist in the preparation of all required reports and maintain all appropriate records.
♦ Demonstrate initiative in identifying potential problems or opportunities for improvement.
♦ Maintain confidentiality regarding student information and school/workplace matters.
♦ Participate in cross-training activities as required.
♦ Perform other duties as assigned.

Relationship with Students and Parents

♦ Discuss a child's progress, limitations, and/or educational program only with the supervising teacher in the appropriate setting
♦ Discuss school problems and confidential matters only with appropriate personnel, and only when students are not present
♦ Refrain from engaging in discriminatory practices based on a student's disability, race, sex, cultural background or religion
♦ Respect the dignity, privacy, and individuality of all students, parents, and staff members
♦ Present yourself as a positive adult role model
♦ Use behavior management strategies which are consistent with standards established by the local school district and classroom teacher
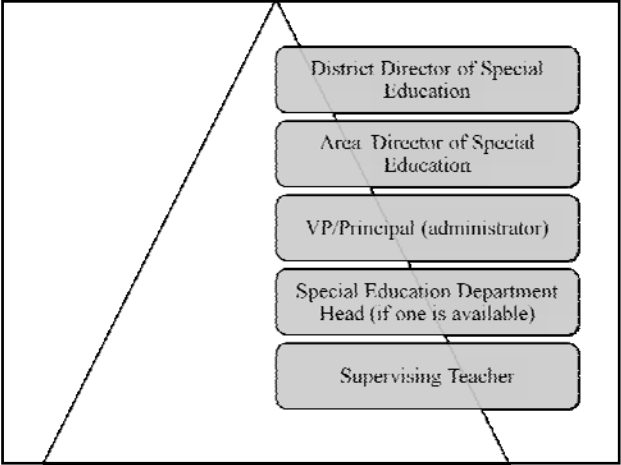

Refrain from…

♦ Airing school problems and confidential matters, including personalities, outside of school circles
♦ Discussing administrative, interdepartmental and interschool problems in the presence of pupils
♦ Gossiping about problems with those who cannot assist in the solution

Chain of Responsibility

♦ The rule of thumb is to always contact the person that you have the concern with. Try to work out the problem. If the person is unwilling to resolve the problem, then work through the chain of command until the problem is solved. Ethically, you should always try to work out the problem to the bet of your ability before involving coordinators or administrators.

District Director of Special Education

Area Director of Special Education

VP/Principal (administrator)

Special Education Department Head (if one is available)

Supervising Teacher

Feature 5: Supporting instructional planning and implementing modification strategies

♦ Paraeducators should know the components of the educational program for the student(s) with whom they work, including:
– The student's annual goals and objectives
– The extent of the student's participation in the general education curriculum,
– The "supports" to be provided for the student.
♦ Having an understanding of the parts of a lesson plan will also be helpful

IEP

♦ **Dates/Exceptionalities/Factors/Domains**
  – **Curriculum/Learning**
  – **Social/Emotional**
  – **Independent Functioning**
  – **Communication**
  – **Health Care**
♦ *IEP Meeting Date*
♦ *Primary/Secondary Exceptionality(ies)*
♦ *names and position of all the other team members*
♦ *Notes*
♦ *The Student Desires to*
♦ *The Parent's Concerns for the Child's Education are as Follows*

♦ *Special Factors*
  – **Need for positive behavior intervention or strategies**
  – **Need for assistive technology devices and services**
  – **Need for Specially Designed PE**
  – **Braille needs of blind/visually impaired**
  – **Language Needs for Limited English Proficient**
  – **Communication needs, also language for deaf**
  – **Need for Adaptive PE**
  – **Need for Extended School Year**
  – **Need for Special Transportation Services**
  – *Special Factors Additional Information*
♦ *Is this a Transition IEP?*
  – "yes" if student is age 15+ years
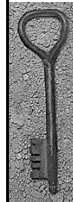♦ *Transition Services Activity Areas*
♦ *Diploma Track*

Transition IEP

♦ **Instruction/Training/Education**
♦ **Related Services**
♦ **Self Determination/Self Advocacy**
♦ **Community Experiences**
♦ **Employment**
♦ **Post-School Adult Living**
♦ **Daily Living Skills**
♦ **Functional Vocational Evaluation**
♦ **Transfer of Rights**

Goal Page(s)

- **Domain**
- **PRESENT LEVEL of performance**
- *Strengths*
- *Effects of Exceptionality*
- **Goal(s)**
  - **Objectives:** Students participating in an alternate assessment must also have 2 short term objectives for each goal.
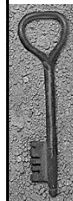- *Title/Position of Person Responsible*

Other areas in the document

- **Special Education Services** every goal on the IEP must have an ESE service that indicates what service will be provided to support the goal. A student has a goal under the Independent Functioning Domain for organizational skills, what service will the IEP team indicate to address that goal? Strategies for Learning? Assistance in organizational skills by a support facilitator? Etc.
- **Related Services** (i.e. Special Transportation, OT, PT, Mental Health Service, etc.)
  - *Frequency – Minutes/How Often*
  - *Location*
- **Supports/Accommodations /***Personnel Supports*
- **Supplementary Aids/Services**

Other areas in the document

- **Assessment**
  - **Not Applicable, there are no state or district-wide assessments for this grade level**
  - Student will participate in state and district-wide assessment program(s) **without accommodations.**
  - Student will participate in state and district-wide assessment program(s) **with the following accommodations.**
  - **Student will participate in an alternate assessment**
- *Participation in Regular/Vocational Education*
  - Amount
  - Purpose
- *Placement*
- *Comments/Signature*

Accommodations Vs Modifications

- **Accommodations are changes to how students are expected to learn (instruction) and how they demonstrate what has been learned (assessment).**
- **Modifications are changes in *what a student is expected to learn and demonstrate.***

Lesson Plan Components

- **Materials**
- **Lesson Objective**
- **Introduction to the Lesson**
  - *Attention*
  - *Objective*
  - *Prior Knowledge*
  - *Rationale*
  - *Expectations*
- **Instruction**
- **Guided Practice**
- **Independent Practice (evaluation)**
- **Summarize the Lesson**
- **ESOL and ESE Strategies**

Effective Instructional Strategies

- √ Modeling
- √ Class discussions
- √ Opportunities for practice
- √ Guided discovery
- √ Specific praise
- √ Technology
- √ Manipulatives
- √ Visual supports
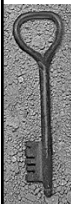- √ Using games
- √ Corrective feedback

Learning Environment

♦ Make sure the learning environment contributes to maximizing student attention on the learning task(s) at hand. You can do this by minimizing distractions, maintaining eye contact, periodically checking (or asking questions) to find out if the material is being understood. If the student is not paying attention, try another way or check with your supervisors about other ideas.

Making Corrections

♦ There are many responses that you may use to help a student succeed at a task after making an error:
- Indicating "try again"
- Expanding on the information provided
- Simplifying the problem
- Asking leading questions
- Modeling the correct responses
- Modeling then doing
- Simplifying the model
- Providing physical assistance (the lest amount necessary)

LUNCH
Please be back in
ONE hour!!!!

Feature 6: Preventing and reducing challenging behaviors

"If a child doesn't know how to read, *we teach*."
"If a child doesn't know how to swim, *we teach*."
"If a child doesn't know how to multiply, *we teach*."
"If a child doesn't know how to drive, *we teach.*"
"If a child doesn't know how to behave, *we*……....
……….*teach? ………punish?*"

"Why can't we finish the last sentence as automatically as we do the others?"
Tom Herner (NASDE President, Counterpoint 1998, p.2)

Process of Positive Behavior Support

Step 1: Establishing a team and identifying goals of intervention

Step 2: Gathering information (functional assessment)

Step 3: Developing hypotheses

Step 4: Designing behavior support plans

Step 5: Implementing, monitoring, evaluating outcomes, and refining plans
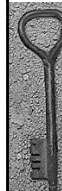
Potential Team Members

- Parents/Family
- Teacher
- Assisting Teacher/Paraprofessional
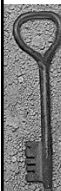- Therapists
- Administrative Staff
- Other

Identify a Behavior to Measure

- What _challenging_ behavior is interfering most with the student's learning or the learning of others?
- What _positive_ behaviors are you trying to increase?
- Make sure it is _observable_ and _quantifiable_.

Guidelines for Behavior Selection

- Functional
- Age-appropriate
- Realistic
- Goal behavior or prerequisite behavior
- Socially valid
- Likely to generalize and be maintained in the natural environment

Observable

What can you see/measure?
- Is noncompliant
- Completes assignments
- Responds to greetings
- Throws toys
- Is lazy and unmotivated
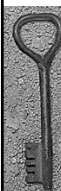- Is nice to peers

Operational Definitions

Define the behaviors so that they pass the "stranger test" – what, exactly do they look like? Provide clear parameters, as well as non-examples.
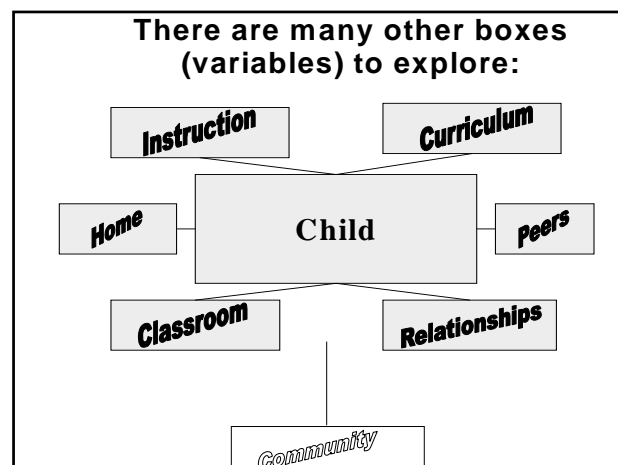
– Mark has a bad attitude
  - What is _____ doing for you to say that he/she is _____?
  - What can you OBSERVE/MEASURE?
  - Needs to be specific, observable, and measurable
  - NO assumptions, NO opinions
  - Dimensions of Behavior
    – Topography: what does the behavior look like
    – Locus: when, where does the behavior occur
    – Force: intensity manifested through the behavior (strength)
    – Rate: how often does the behavior happen
    – Duration: how long does the behavior last.

Example: "Self-Injurious Hitting" = The student hits himself on the head with an open hand. Each instance is separated by the hand lifting off of the head. Does not include closed-fisted punches to own head, or any kind of hits to others.

Step 2: Gathering information (functional assessment)

- Description of behavior: use measurable terms
- Setting: where does the behavior occur
- Frequency: how often does the behavior occur?
- Intensity: how significant is the behavior? (disruptive, product)
- Duration: how long does it last once it starts?
- Previous Interventions: What have I or others tried? How did it work?
- Educational impact: how is this behavior affecting the students' academic progress?

There are many other boxes (variables) to explore:

Instruction

Curriculum

Home

Child

Peers

Classroom

Relationships

Community

FBA part 2 (function)

- Antecedents/Consequences: what happens right before/after the behavior
- Family issues: : any significant events that are happening in the child's life at the moment? (death of loved one, divorce, abuse)
- Communication need: what is the student trying to communicate with this behavior?
- Curriculum/instruction/environment: how is this playing a role on the behavior?

Step 3: Developing hypotheses

- Description of the problem behavior
- Predictors of the problem behavior
- Purpose of the behavior
- Maintaining consequences

- **Behavior Hypotheses** - Purpose of the behavior, your best guess about why the behavior occurs

---

- Function of Behavior
  - Get something
  - Escape/get rid of something
- Is there a pattern of events or behaviors that consistently precedes the occurrence of the behavior?
- Is there a pattern or events or behaviors that consistently follows the occurrence of the behavior?
- Can the student be taught an alternative, appropriate behavior to accomplish the same function?

Hypothesis Statement

Jackson avoids the demands of activities that he finds difficult (structured language-based activities, sharing objects, interactive play) by resisting or withdrawing. If pushed to participate, Jackson will react by throwing objects, screaming, or stating "shut up." When Jackson resists, adults will often give up or allow him to leave the activity. Jackson's aggressive behavior (throwing, screaming, saying "shut up") seems to be maintained by escape

---

Step 4: Designing behavior support plan

- Must be linked to functional assessment
- Must include all components
- Must "fit" with the abilities, routines, and values of caregivers
- Must have "buy-in" from the team

writing the objective/goal

- Your goal/what the student will be doing when the desired change has been achieved.
  - Fair pair: replace the "problem behavior" for one that is more "socially acceptable" but has the same/similar function.
  - Objective Components
    - The learner
    - The target behavior
    - The conditions under which the behavior is to be displayed
    - The criteria for acceptable performance

  - Tom will decrease tapping his pencil from an average of 30 minutes for class period to a maximum of 5 minutes without verbal prompts on 4 out of 5 consecutive days.

Triggers	Behaviors	Maintaining Consequence
Circle time begins; child asked to sit	Pulls away, cries, hits **Function:** Escape	Adult lets him leave
Preventions	**New Skills**	**New Responses**

Components

- **Prevention Strategies - Ways to make events and interactions that predict problem behavior easier for the child to manage**
- Replacement Skills - Skills to teach throughout the day to replace the problem behavior
- Responses - What adults will do when the problem behavior occurs

---

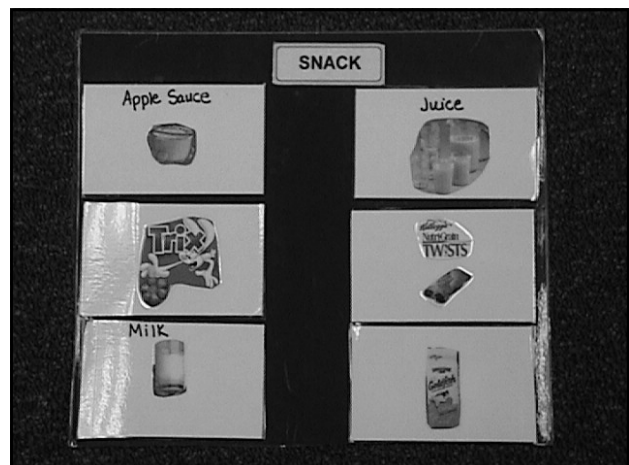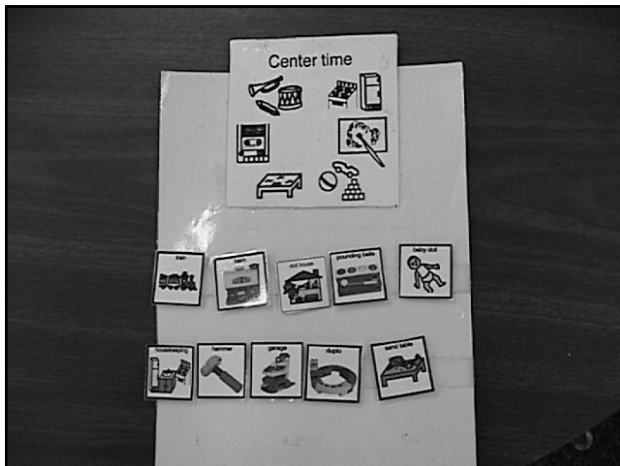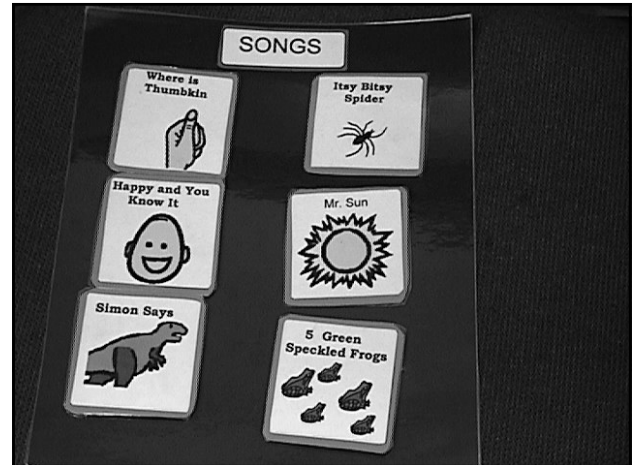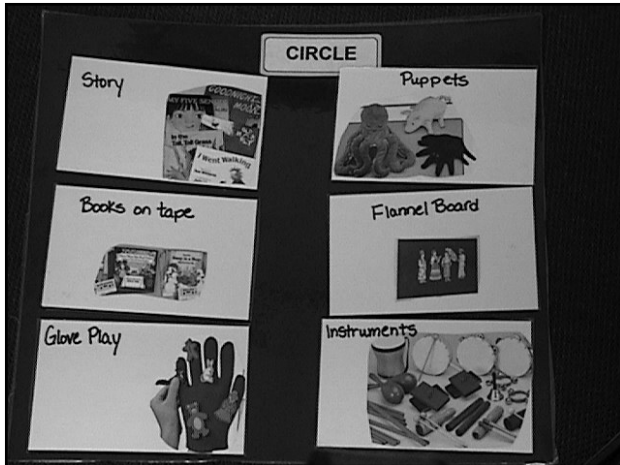| Triggers	Behaviors	Maintaining Consequence
Circle times begins; child asked to sit	Pulls away, cries, hits **Function**: Escape	Adult lets him leave
Preventions	**New Skills**	**New Responses**
• Choice •Visual activity schedule •Manipulatives •Intermittent praise		

Prevention Strategies

- What can be done to make problem behavior irrelevant (how can the environment be changed to reduce the likelihood that problem behavior will occur)?
- Do the selected procedures fit in the natural routines and structure of the classroom or family?

Prevention: Choice

- Choice can be offered using photographs, visuals, or actual objects
- When used as a prevention strategy, choices must be offered explicitly and personally to the child
- Choices should represent options of desirable activities or materials
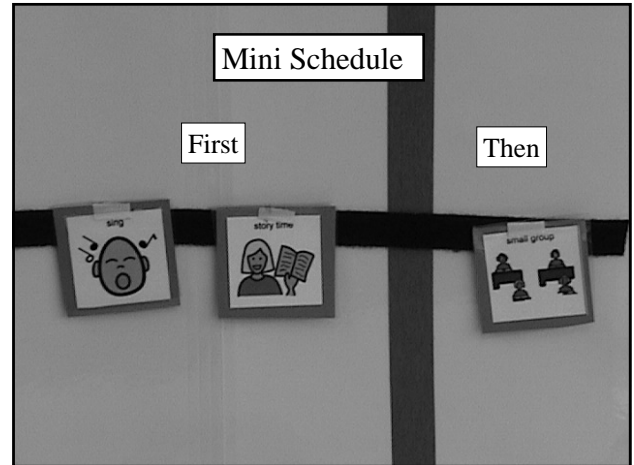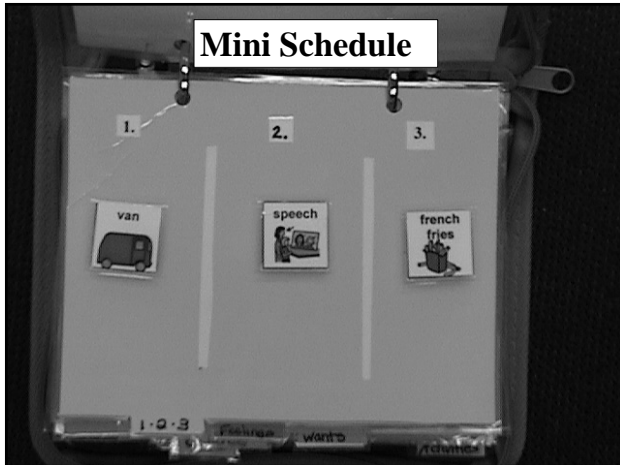

Prevention: Safety Signal

- Make eye contact and gain the child's attention
- Provide a warning to the child (e.g., 5 more minutes or 3 more times)
- Give the child several countdowns (e.g., 2 more times, 1 more time, all done)
- State the ending activity and activity to follow ("5 more minutes, then clean-up")
- Use visuals, photos, or object to represent next activity

Safety Signal

Prevention: Visual Schedule

- Use photos or line drawings
- Depict the major activities or steps of an activity
- Assist the child in removing the visual once the activity is complete

Mini Schedule

Mini Schedule

First   Then

Prevention: Visual Activity Analysis

- Provide visuals of the steps used within an activity (e.g., art project)
- Child can use the visuals to complete activity independently
- Some children may need to remove each visual when steps are completed

---

Activity Analysis Using Clip Art

Washing Hands

1   2   3   4   5

Wet hands.   Get soap.   Wash hands.   Dry hands.   Throw away.

Prevention: Visual Guidance

- Provide visuals for children that highlight boundaries
- Use feet for line-up (each child stands on a set of footprints), carpet squares for circle time, mats for block structures

---

Visual Guidance
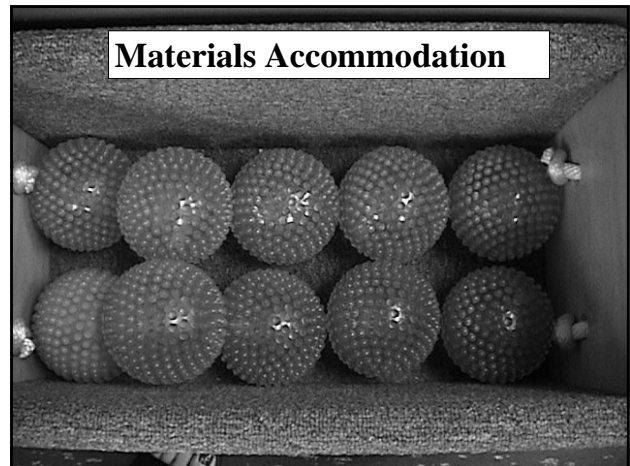
Activity Turn Taking Cue

Prevention: Activity Arrangement

- Arrange activities so that child understands steps
- Have all materials accessible to eliminate wait time
- Demonstrate activity before prompting child to begin
- Break down activity to accommodate differing developmental levels
- Use partial participation, promote the participation of children who may only be able to do one part or one step

92

Prevention: Materials Accommodation

- Arrange activities to provide accessible materials and decrease child frustration
- Provide enough materials for # of children in activity; provide same materials (same color, same type)
- Provide adapted materials (e.g.,roller paints, special scissors)

93

Materials Accommodation

Prevention: Scaffolding Interactions

- Move into play situation
- Interpret need of child with challenges (e.g., "Billy, do you want to build?")
- Assist the child with turn-taking or peer entry ("Joey, can Billy build on the Lego table?")
- Continue with questions or instructions until children begin playing. Try to be minimally intrusive; only do what is necessary
- Move out of situation as soon as possible

Escape (e.g., activity, demands, social interaction)
PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Modify task length, modify expectations
- Modify materials
- Modify instructions, modify response mode
- Break task down
- Provide choice
- Modify seating arrangements
- Reduce distractions
- Provide activity schedule

- Select reinforcer prior to activity
- Incorporate child interest
- Use timer
- Self-management system
- Provide peer supports
- Add manipulatives
- Provide visual supports
- Follow least preferred with most preferred

Obtain (e.g., attention, object, activity)
PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Modify task length, modify expectations
- Modify materials
- Modify instructions, modify response mode
- Provide more frequent attention/reinforcement
- Activity schedule
- Contingency for activity completion
- Schedule time with adult or peer
- Schedule access to desired object/event

- Choice of activity, material, and/or partner
- Peer support
- Provide frequent offers of assistance
- Promote active participation
- Add manipulatives
- Incorporate child interests
- Use timer, alarm to delay reinforcement

97

Components

- Prevention Strategies - Ways to make events and interactions that predict problem behavior easier for the child to manage
- **Replacement Skills - Skills to teach throughout the day to replace the problem behavior**
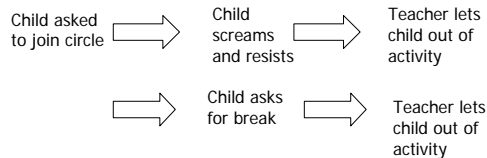- Responses - What adults will do when the problem behavior occurs

---

Triggers	Behaviors	Maintaining Consequence
Circle times begins; child asked to sit	Pulls away, cries, hits	Adult lets him leave
	Function: Escape	

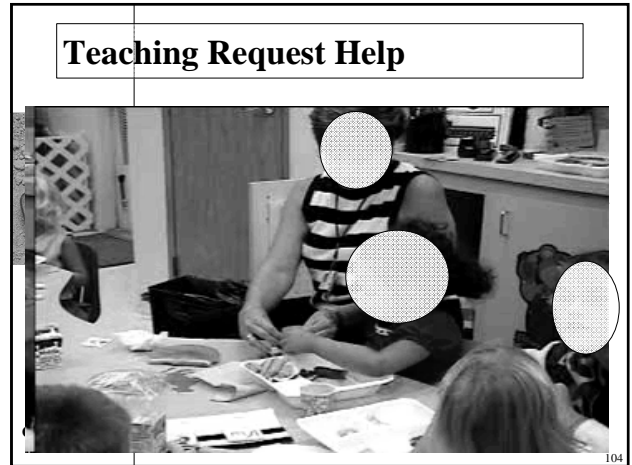| Preventions	New Skills	New Responses
• Choice •Visual activity schedule •Manipulatives •Intermittent praise	•Request "all done" •Increase duration of engagement	

Replacement Skills

- Teach alternative behavior to problem behavior
- Replacement skills must be efficient and effective (i.e., work quickly for the child)
- Consider skills that child already has
- Make sure the reward for appropriate behavior is consistent
- Teach replacement skills during time the child is not having problem behavior; teach throughout the day

---

Behavior Equation

Child asked to join circle → Child screams and resists → Teacher lets child out of activity

→ Child asks for break → Teacher lets child out of activity

Replacement Skills Picture Cues

I need to calm down.
I can……

look through viewmaster

squeeze balls

train

Replacement Skills Cue Cards

Teaching Request Help

104

Social Stories

- Social stories provide a script for the child about social situations and expectations
- The story is written from the child's perspective
- The story includes descriptive, perspective, and directive sentences
- The story must match the child's symbolic and receptive communication level

Social Skills Instruction

- Determine skill to be taught, be specific (what does the behavior look like?)
- Ensure that opportunities to teach and practice the skill are available
- Decide on method of instruction (e.g., role play, prompt and praise, etc.)
- Teach skill
- Provide opportunities to practice skill
- Reinforce skill use in natural contexts

Self-Management

- Identify an observable behavior that child will self-manage
- Visually display behaviors for the child
- Provide instruction to the child on the targeted skill
- Give child a mechanism to monitor engagement in the behavior through a checklist or chart
- Provide positive attention to the child for engaging in the behavior and using the self-monitoring system

I Can Be a SUPER FRIEND!

Created for Tim by Lisa Grant & Rochelle Lentini
2002

I like talking and playing
with my friends
at school.

Sometimes, I want to play
with what my friends are
playing with.

When I play, I sometimes feel like taking toys,
using mean words, or hitting and kicking.

My friends get sad or mad
when I hit, kick, use mean
words, or take toys.

I can join my
friends and play nicely.

I can take
turns nicely.

CUE CARDS

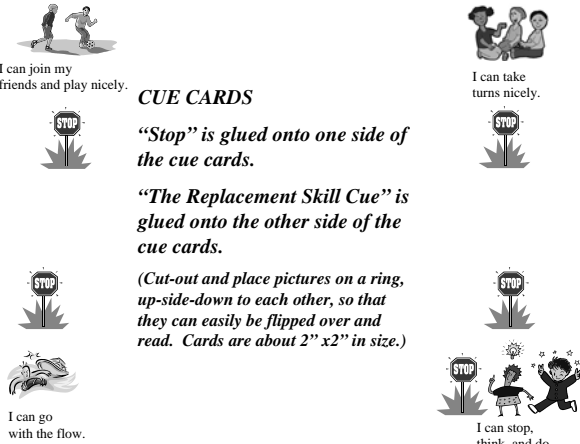*"Stop" is glued onto one side of
the cue cards.*

*"The Replacement Skill Cue" is
glued onto the other side of the
cue cards.*

*(Cut-out and place pictures on a ring,
up-side-down to each other, so that
they can easily be flipped over and
read. Cards are about 2" x2" in size.)*

I can go
with the flow.

I can stop,
think, and do.

I CAN BE A SUPER FRIEND

I can join my friends and play nicely.   _____

I can take turns nicely.   _____

I can go with the flow.   _____

I can stop, think, and do.   _____

DATE: _____

SKILLS MATRIX

Time/Activity	request teacher attention	colors	counting	recognize name	
Arrival	hug hello				
Planning	want turn				
Centers	show me play w/ me				
Clean-up Washing Hands	help me				
Snack	want more				
Outside Play	want help show me play w/me				
Washing Hands					
Small Group	show me want turn				

Escape (e.g., activity, demands, social interaction)
REPLACEMENT SKILLS

• Request break
• Set work goals
• Request help
• Follow schedule
• Participate in routine
• Choice
• Self-management

Obtain (e.g., attention, object, activity)
REPLACEMENT SKILLS

- Follow schedule
- Participate in routine
- Self-management
- Request help
- Teach delay of reinforcement
- Request attention
- Choice

Behavior Support Plan Components

- <u>Prevention Strategies</u> - Ways to make events and interactions that predict problem behavior easier for the child to manage
- <u>Replacement Skills</u> - Skills to teach throughout the day to replace the problem behavior
- **<u>Responses</u> - What adults will do when the problem behavior occurs**

Triggers	Behaviors	Maintaining Consequence
Circle times begins; child asked to sit	Pulls away, cries, hits	Adult lets him leave
	Function: Escape	

Preventions	New Skills	New Responses
• Choice • Visual activity schedule • Manipulatives • Intermittent praise	• Request "all done" • Increase duration of engagement	• Anticipate "all done" and cue • Redirect to "all done" & release • Praise for sitting longer

---

Response to Problem Behavior

- Select procedures that will make problem behavior ineffective
- Make sure rewards for appropriate behavior equal or exceed rewards for problem behavior

118

Escape (e.g., activity, demands, social interaction)
RESPONSES TO PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

- Redirect/cue to use appropriate "new replacement skill" and then allow escape
- Cue with appropriate prevention strategy
- State "exactly" what is expected
- Offer alternatives

- Use "wait-time"
- Praise/reinforce when replacement skill is performed
- Respond in a way that does NOT maintain problem behavior

Obtain (e.g., attention, object, activity) RESPONSES TO PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

- Redirect/cue to use appropriate "new replacement skill"
- Cue with appropriate prevention strategy
- State "exactly" what is expected
- Offer choices

- Use "wait-time"
- Praise/reinforce when replacement skill is performed
- Respond in a way that does NOT maintain problem behavior

Safety-net Procedures

- If a child is in danger of harming himself or others, you must first be concerned about safety
- You may hold a child or remove a child from the situation to keep children safe
- Safety-net procedures may be planned for children who have a history of dangerous outbursts
- Safety-net procedures only keep children safe, they do not change behavior.
- Safety-net procedures are only appropriate when there is also a full behavior support plan or intention to develop a plan

121

Support Plan Development (cont.)

- Review plan ideas; eliminate pieces that don't fit or are difficult for team to do
- Review entire plan; emphasize that each column is necessary
- Repeat process for other routines, settings, or behavior functions

Behavior Support Plan Development Tips

- Develop plan using plain language
- Develop mini-plans for difficult routines
- Make sure plan will fit with routines/activities/values of family/teaching staff
- Develop action plan of who will produce what components needed to implement the plan
- Design components that are easy to use, easy to remember
- Plan must accommodate competing demands on teaching staff/family

Effective Teaming

- All team members (staff/family) participate in plan development
- All help with development of plan components/material creation
- All follow through with implementation
- All monitor, give feedback, and make amendments to the plan

Summary

- Behavior support plans are developed by a team
- The support plan must include prevention strategies, replacement skills, and new ways to respond to problem behavior
- Behavior support efforts are ongoing, and outcomes must be monitored

125

Feature 7: Promoting age-appropriate social interactions

♦ Inclusion
  - LRE: the general education class (with support) is the first option considered, regardless of disability type or severity
  - An inclusion class should have a proportional percentage of students with disabilities as those in the local population
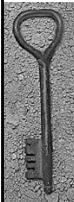 - Peers should be of the same age

Benefits of Inclusion

For the Students

- A stronger sense of belonging and expanded opportunities to develop relationships with other students
- A wider array of role models
- Increased interaction and communication opportunities which help students gain sensitivity and acceptance of all students
- A greater emphasis on student strengths as opposed to deficits and limitations
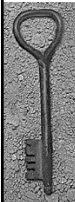- More extensive repertoire of age appropriate activities

For the Teacher

- A decreased sense of isolation
- More opportunities for refection and self-assessment
- Shared responsibility
- Opportunities to model acceptance of human diversity
- Opportunities to learn and model how to cope with change
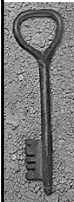- Opportunities to encourage students to participate in solving curricular challenges

Environmental Adaptations

- Simple changes can be made to furniture and materials in order to assist in accessibility
- Modifications to the physical facilities such as hallways, ramps, and bathrooms may be needed
- Grouping students in diverse ways will help promote understanding and acceptance of diversity
- Paraeducators promote positive social interactions, interdependence, and friendships within diverse groups of students
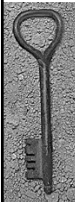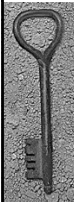
Curriculum Adaptations

- To the maximum extend possible adaptations should:
  - Be chronologically age-appropriate
  - Promote active participation and interaction with students
  - Build on student's strengths
  - Be status enhancing and promote positive self-esteem
  - Not be overly intrusive
  - Natural supports are important

Facilitating or Hindering Interactions

- There are many ways that paraeducators can facilitate relationships and communication among students. Many people think that social interaction and friendships happen naturally, but these are skills than can be learned. Relationships are important because they can:
  - Enhance learning
  - Create a sense of belonging and acceptance
  - Increase interest
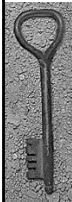 - Provide for various kinds of support and help

Enhancing Interactions

- Know and honor your student's preferred way)s) of communicating
- Use natural experiences to foster communication whenever possible
- Model good communication skills (how to listen, how to give feedback, and how to use age-appropriate language
- Remember not to interfere with the general educator's relationship with the student
- Involve classmate as communication partners

- Welcome all students, including those with disabilities, in encouraging ways. Talk to them, greet by name, and acknowledge their strengths
- Model friendship-making skills by helping students find opportunities or activities that bring people together, helping them to present themselves in a positive way to others, and practice how to initiate conversations and find common interests
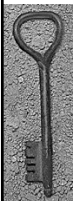- When supervising group activities, have students do as many things as possible in divers groups

Problems to Avoid

- Interfering with ownership and responsibility by the general educators
- Separation of students with disabilities from their classmates
- Dependence on adults
- Interfering with peer interactions
- Limitations on receiving competent instruction
- Loss of personal control
- Loss of gender identity
- Interference with instruction of other students

To avoid excessive proximity

- Try not to do things for students that they may be capable of doing themselves and try to assist in a way that allows for "partial participation with support" to the extent possible
- Strive to support as much autonomy as possible in the students you work with
- As the student learns new skills, it is also important to fade the amount of assistance provided
- For students with communication disorders, allow sufficient time for them to respond when a request is made and avoid speaking for the student
- Use the les intrusive reminder, cue, or prompt to encourage the student to complete a task

Essential Features of an Effective Paraprofessional of Students with Autism

Feature 1: Understanding Autism

Feature 2: Assuming your role in the multi-disciplinary team

Feature 3: Maintaining an effective relationship with the teacher(s)

Feature 4: Demonstrating ethical practices

Feature 5: Supporting instructional planning and implementing modification strategies

Feature 6: Preventing and reducing challenging behaviors

Feature 7: Promoting age-appropriate social interactions