

Paraeducator Practices

Paraeducator Practices

A Newsletter for Paraeducators and Their Teachers
Educational Equity for All



August 2015

Paraeducator Symbol



*Just as the extra pair of wings enables the dragonfly to accomplish astounding aeronautic gymnastics, paraeducators have become the extra pair of hands that allows teachers to truly support and **MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR EVERY STUDENT***

Social Supports: Just say no to Velcro!

Paraprofessional proximity can

- Interfere with ownership (gen ed teacher sees student as “your”, NOT theirs)
- Separate students from classmates
- Create dependence on adults
- Limit competent instruction
- Cause a student to feel as though they have no personal control
- Interfere with the instruction of other students
- Interference With Peer Interactions

[http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/parasupport/JRCE2006v20\(4\).pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/parasupport/JRCE2006v20(4).pdf)

The golden rule for adult support in inclusive classrooms is to support others as you would wish to be supported.

HOW DO YOU PROVIDE SUPPORT?

Consider for a moment that the school system paid someone to be with you— supporting you 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. Now, imagine that you had no say over who that support person was or how she or he supported you. Or imagine that someone regularly stopped into your place of employment to provide you with one-on-one support. This person was present for all your interactions, escorted you to the restroom, and at times supported you by touching your back or shoulder or by manipulating your hands, head, or other parts of your body. This support person might also give you oral directions for upcoming tasks.

ASK YOURSELF. . . .

- Would you become more independent or more dependent?
- How would this support change your relationships with your peers?
- Would you notice a loss of privacy or freedom?
- Would this person’s presence affect your creativity?
- At times, would you feel self-conscious about having someone supporting you?
- What if you asked him or her to move away from you and he or she did not?
- What would happen if you did not want him or her to touch you?
- What would you do?
- Do you think that you might develop negative behaviors?

Now consider how your presence affects the students whom you support.

FEATURED IDEA OF THE MONTH



Don't Limit Me!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gaSx44pEvk>

Here are a few tips to help keep confidentiality from becoming a problem:

- Be careful with whom you share information. Is that person directly involved with the student's education?
- Don't point out or label children in public, outside of school, as "your" students.
- Avoid using names if you are asked about your job.
- Suggest that questions about a student are best directed to the teacher.
- Be careful not to distort, exaggerate or confuse information.
- Never use information about a student as gossip or as a joke.
- Focus comments on student strengths and be positive
- No matter who asks you a question about a student, if you don't want to answer or are unsure whether you should answer, don't. You do this gently and politely.
- Be direct and honest: "I'm sorry—I can't say".
- Develop a workable response to questions about student information.

Intellectual disability is not a psychiatric or mental health problem. A person is said to have an intellectual disability if, by the age of 18, they have three indications being:

- significant difficulty with intellectual functions such as reasoning, problem solving and academic learning
- an IQ below 70, with clinical judgement required to interpret the IQ test
- significant difficulty with daily living skills, including looking after themselves, communicating and taking part in activities with others.

http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/intellectual_disability

WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

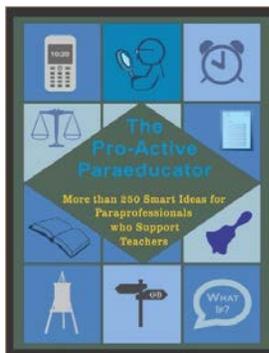
<https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/sid/>
<https://www.mentalhelp.net/articles/effective-teaching-methods-for-people-with-intellectual-disabilities/>
<http://www.specialeducationguide.com/disability-profiles/intellectual-disability/>



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Independent Study Modules: Teaching Students with Disabilities <http://www.fl-pda.org/independent/>

20 hours This course enables educators to develop, increase and demonstrate knowledge and skills for providing effective instruction for students with disabilities. Content and activities focus on federal and state requirements for identification and provision of services to students with disabilities and comparison of the development and characteristics of children with disabilities to children without disabilities. Emphasis is on how to develop a universally designed and differentiated environment by identifying models of support for assisting students with disabilities in accessing the general education curricula and by implementing effective instructional methods (e.g. explicit and systematic instruction, scaffolding, modeling, visual supports, and manipulatives) in order to meet individual student needs.



The Pro-Active Paraeducator: More than 250 Smart Ideas for Paraprofessionals who Support Teachers **Kindle Edition** by [Betty Y. Ashbaker](#) (Author), [Jill Morgan](#) (Author)

Hundreds of smart ideas for supporting student learning and behavior in the schools, offered by seasoned paraeducators and teachers. Tips, hints and actions to take to proactively prevent problems before they begin! Topics include promoting positive behavior, effective use of time, meeting needs of the learner, and being part of the instructional team. Written for paraeducators, paraprofessionals and others who support teachers



Accommodations and Modifications

Accommodations and modifications are types of adaptations that are made to the environment, curriculum, instruction, or assessment practices in order for students with disabilities to be successful learners and to actively participate with other students in the general education classroom and in school-wide activities.