Foundations of Special Education

July, 2010

Roles and Responsibilities of Paraprofessionals

Section A

Core Training

PRE-TEST

- CIRCLE PRE-TEST
- PRINT NAME
- COMPLETE TEST
- REVIEW TEST
- WRITE SCORE AT THE TOP

Background Information

- 1950's = Postwar shortage of teachers
  Bay City, Michigan School District

- 1960's and 1970's

- 1975
  Education for All Handicapped Children's Act (P.L. 94-142

Background Information

- Paraprofessionals are becoming an integral part of every school building working with students, teachers, administrators, and the community

Activity One

- Major job functions of the principal

  - provide instructional leadership
  - allocate resources/budget
  - identify areas for school improvement
  - help establish school wide goals
  - encourage collaboration with staff and parents
  - public relations
  - manage student behavior
  -

Activity Two

- In your small groups, discuss the roles and responsibilities of the Teacher

Activity Two

- **Roles and Responsibilities of the teacher**

  - ➢ organize the classroom environment
  - ➢ write lesson plans
  - ➢ assess students
  - ➢ provide instruction
  - ➢ curriculum development and implementation
  - ➢ interacting with Parents
  - ➢ other administrative tasks

Activity Three

- **Tasks performed by paraprofessionals**

In your groups

Identify tasks you perform in your classrooms or school buildings

Paraprofessional Tasks

- ✓ Assist in data collection and assessment to determine student progress

- ✓ Collaborate with instructional team

- ✓ Implement curricular modifications

- ✓ Assist in remediation of academics and social behavior

- ✓ Other duties as assigned

The Teacher and Paraprofessional Team

- **In groups:**

- Look at handout A2 – determine whether each task is the responsibility of the teacher, the paraprofessional, or both.

Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals are:

- Members of a team
- Liaisons for families
- Work under the supervision of certified staff

Issues Impacting Education

- The role of the paraprofessional is becoming more important as our nation's schools are impacted by changes in society.

Activity Four

- Respond to:

How has school changed since you were a student?

What current issues are having an impact on schools?

5 to 10 minutes discussion

Schools are faced with:

➢ Culturally and linguistically diverse student population

➢ Violence

➢ Alcohol and other drug use

➢ teen pregnancy

Schools are faced with:

➢ School reform and restructuring

➢ Funding cuts and reallocations

➢ Federal and state legislation

➢ Range of skills, abilities, interest, and aptitudes of students

Instruction Methods and Strategies

In your groups

- identify how instruction has changed in the classroom.

- Discuss Co-Teaching and the Inclusive Environment.

Inclusion & Co-Teaching

"An inclusive school is a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports, and is supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his or her educational needs met".

(Stainback & Stainback)

Legal, Ethical, & Professional Standards

Section B

- ❖ Confidentiality

- ❖ District Policies

- ❖ Regular Attendance & Work Hours

- ❖ Directions of Teachers & Supervisors

Existing Laws

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), 2004

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)

- Paraprofessionals must meet one of these requirement by January 2006:

1. Completed 2 years of study at college
   level

OR

 2. Obtained an associate's degree

OR

Met a rigorous standard of quality that can be demonstrated through a formal State or local academic assessment

(ParaPro Assessment)

**must demonstrate ability in reading, writing, and mathematics at readiness and school age level.
Cut off score is 457

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- **The Rehabilitation Act was passed in 1973. The act is a civil rights statute which provides that: "No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States...shall, solely by reason of his/her handicaps, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."** B1

Section 504

Protects the rights of individuals with disabilities.

Section 504

Under Section 504, a person with a disability is one
who:

    has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (e.g. walking, seeing, hearing, learning, working, performing manual tasks, and caring for oneself);

    has a record of such an impairment; or

    is regarded as having such an impairment.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

IS DESIGNED TO REMOVE BARRIERS WHICH:

■ PREVENT QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FROM HAVING THE SAME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO THEM AS PERSONS WITHOUT DISABILITIES

■ ADA DOES NOT:

- *   ESTABLISH QUOTAS

- *   GUARANTEE EQUAL RESULTS

■ *   PROVIDE PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT

OVERHEAD B2

25

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)

The IDEIA includes the following components:

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

**Free meaning without charge to parents

**Appropriate referring to an individualized education program based on each student's needs

**Public expense, supervision, and direction

**Education for all students with disabilities at the preschool, elementary, and secondary levels.

B3

- **<u>Comprehensive, Nondiscriminatory Assessment Procedures</u>**

  Before assessing a student, parents must be informed in their native language and written consent for the testing must be received.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- **Once it is determined that a child has a disability and requires specialized instruction, an IEP is developed.**

- **The IEP:**
  - Serves as a vehicle for communication between parents and professionals
  - Sets forth in writing a commitment of resources necessary to enable a child with a disability to receive special education and related services
  - Serves as an evaluation device for use in determining the extent to which the child is progressing towards meeting the stated goals and objectives

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The IEP contains the following:

- Statement of the child's present levels of educational performance

- Annual goals and short term objectives

- Statement of the special education and related services to be provided

- Extent to which the child will participate in general education program

- Projected starting date and anticipated duration of services

- Statement regarding transition services (at no later than 16 years of age)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Parent Involvement

- Parents are involved in the IEP process. They must be afforded the opportunity to attend the IEP meetings. The school district must take the following steps to ensure that one or both of the parents are presents at the meeting:

- Scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed upon date, time, and place

- Inviting parents to the meeting at least 7 days in advance unless the parents and district agree to an earlier date

- Arranging individual telephone conference calls with parents if they cannot attend the meeting

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

- The educational team is responsible for writing a meaningful IEP and making placement decisions within the least restrictive regulation.

Handouts B6, B7, B8, B9

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)

Transition Services

- IDEA includes a statutory provision. A statement regarding needed transition services must be included in the IEP if the student is at least 16 years of age. Transition is defined in the IDEA as:

- "a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome- oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post secondary education, vocational training, adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation."

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Procedural Safeguards

- **IDEA guarantees fairness in providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) through ensuring the following rights:**

  - **examination of school records**
  - **independent evaluation**
  - **surrogate parent**
  - **notification in native language of parent**
  - **impartial due process hearing**

Placement Options

- Regular class with indirect service

- Regular class with some direct instruction, more than 80% of the day

- Regular Class 40%-79% Instructional day in general education

Placement Options

- Some or no instruction in regular class with a minimum of 40% of instructional day in special education

- Some or no instruction in the regular class and school based day treatment

- No instruction in regular class with services provided in a special day school facility

Placement Options

- Services provided in a residential school

- Services provided in a hospital program

- Services provided at home

Categories of Disabilities

IDEIA identifies disabilities the following categories:

- **Autism**
- **Deaf-blind**
- **Hearing impairments**
- **Mental retardation**
- **Multiple disabilities**
- **Orthopedic impairments**
- **Other health impairments**
- **Emotional disturbance**
- **Specific learning disabilities**
- **Speech and language impairments**
- **Traumatic brain injury**
- **Visual impairments**
- **Non-categorical (3-5)**

Handouts B4 (3pages)

Activity Seven:

As a group discussion

Review the major differences
 between the IDEA and Section 504

Activity Five

- **As Group**:

List suggestions for becoming a more successful paraprofessional

Review A5 as group after discussion

Team Approach

Teams include:

- Parents
- Teachers, both general education and special education
- Counselors
- Therapists
- Administrators
- Students

Communication

- All members of a team must be willing to share information, ideas, and points of view.

- Communication requires skills in sharing and receiving.

Cooperation

- Cooperate means to operate together

- We work together when we look for ways to support and complement others

Coordination

- As we work together, we organize our contributions to maximize the effectiveness of each other's work.

- We share the responsibility.

Collaboration

- We work together to complete a task.

Consistency

- Along with reduced duplication of services, all team members share common goals and a plan of action, allowing them to work effectively, both alone and together.

Confronting problems, Compromising, and Consensus decision making….

- Members of teams recognize that problem identification and problem solving are fundamental responsibilities.

Caring and Commitment

- Professionals care and feel commitment, not only to the students, but to the other individuals they are working with, within the school.

The Ten C's of Teamwork can remain just a bunch of words, or they can be realities that provide the foundation for working as a assistant in the school setting.

Activity Six

■ **In groups:**

Each group identifies 3 to 5 things everyone has in common.

Each person has 2 tasks:

1. Suggest things group has in common
2. Tell what is true for him/her

Activity Six continued

- Group succeeds when all members say "yes" to the proposed items

- Once found common links

Name your group

Activity Six continued

■   Oral response by group:

1. How did the group go about it's task?

2. Did leaders emerge?

3. How did leaders behave?

4. Which group was loudest, most serious, fastest, slowest?

5. How did you respond to group?

Teamwork Problem Solving
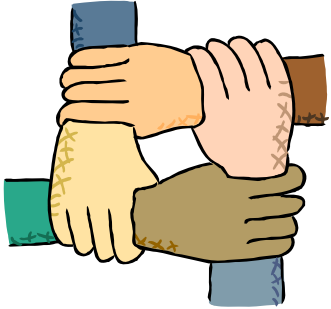
Personal behaviors may even impede teamwork

.Leadership styles

•Competition

•Interpersonal Conflicts

Activity Seven

- List some barriers that can affect problem solving and positive teamwork.

Barriers to Teamwork

- Specialized educational preparation

- Role ambiguity

- Status differential

- Certain team members may be perceived as being more or less competent based on their professional status.

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Barriers to Teamwork

- Authority and power structure
- Leadership styles may dictate effectiveness of team.
- Group dynamics must be addressed in team work.
- Team members need to develop strategies to address the differences in individuals so the team can be successful
- Sharing information is the goal
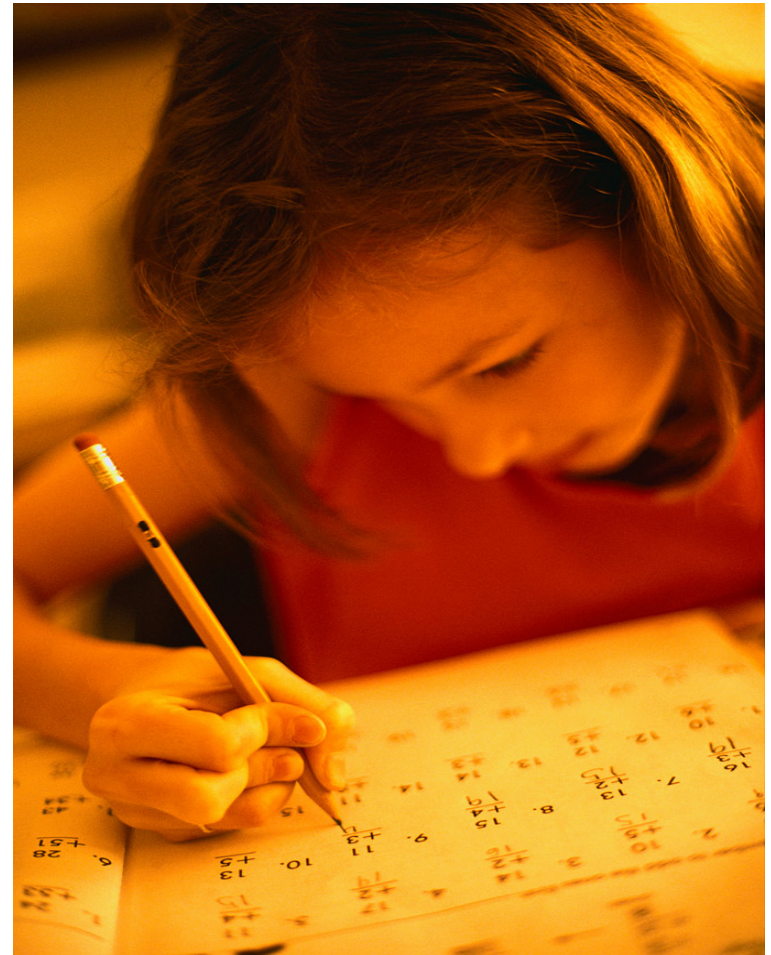
Activity Eight

In groups:

Respond to the question:

Inclusion of students with disabilities
in regular school programs can be
successful if _____?????

10 minutes

Child Identification and Assessment Procedures

■ Review Handout B10 and B11

Confidentiality

- **Activity Ten**

Complete B12 – True / False questions
 regarding confidentiality

Review as a group

The Arkansas Code is very specific in terms of
confidentiality (Arkansas Code ANN 6-41-218)

Instructing Students with Disabilities

Section C

Core Training

Human Development

- Terminology

- Handout C-1

- Review as group

Principles of Human Development

- **Paraprofessionals need to understand the principles associated with typical or "normal" human development when working with children and youth with disabilities.**

- Reference Handout C-2

Activity Eleven

- **As Group**:

  Identify the typical behaviors associated with <u>physical</u> development from infancy to adulthood.

Activity Eleven

- **In small groups**:

  Each group pick out a domain and identify typical behaviors in the area of development.
  1. Cognitive (thinking)
  2. Self-help
  3. Communication
  4. Social/emotional

10 minutes

Instruction

Paraprofessionals need to be comfortable providing individual and small group instruction.

Individual instruction = 1 to 1

Small group = 2-6 students at a time

Large group = entire class (very rare)

Instruction

Paraprofessionals can be used to reinforce a <u>previously</u> learned skill through opportunities for practice, repetition, and drill.

Paraprofessionals are not the person to teach a "new" skills. That responsibility is reserved for the teacher.

Group Instruction

- Handout C-3

- Facilitating learning in group instruction

Strategies

- Involve all students in the group

- Acknowledge that students have preferences

- Encourage students to make their own choices

- Provide time to work independently

- Reinforce or compliment often

Strategies

- Adapt materials and methods to the needs of the group

- Do not plan separate activities for group members

- Identify students' individual needs and adapt materials and methods to meet those needs

- Encourage cooperation

Strategies

- Encourage communication
- Provide experience using the "real" thing
- Provide real life situations
- Establish a routine
- Use natural consequences

Strategies

- Use good positioning to promote normal muscle tone, stability, balance, and a sense of security about one's own body

- Use appropriate verbal prompts, gestures, modeling, and demonstration techniques

- Eliminate distractions

Activity Twelve

- **In groups**:
  Respond to these questions:

  What techniques have you used to involve all students in your group?

  What techniques have you used to encourage communication and cooperation?

  10 minutes

Activity Thirteen

- Handout C-4

- Self Evaluation

   Complete the self evaluation

   Review responses

Guideline for
Small Group Instruction

- **Preparation**

- **Appropriate Attitude**

- **Delivery Skills**

- **Record Keeping**

Adaptive Strategies

- Often, students with disabilities need adaptations or changes to be made in curriculum, teaching techniques, materials, testing procedures, and behavior management to be successful.

- Handout C-5 - Review

Activity Fourteen

- Adaptation Planning Process

  Read Handout C-6 – to given these circumstances…

In Groups decide:

1. Instructional Arrangement
2. Teaching Format
3. Environmental Conditions
4. Curricular Goals
5. Instructional Materials
6. Personal Assistance

Activity Fourteen

Compare responses to the adaptations given.

*Decisions about making adaptations are made in conjunction with the classroom teacher and other professionals involved in a student's Individual Education Planning process

Menu of Modifications

- Handout C-7

  - Modifications are for the general education setting
  - Modifications are so the student can be successful with the general education curriculum
  - Modifications are a part of an Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Positive Behavioral Supports

- Definition and Rationale
- Goal
- Core components
- Levels of PBS
- Implementation and your role
- Benefits of PBS

The Well Managed Classroom

Is where appropriate behaviors occur at a high frequency –as defined by the teacher

The Goal:

Increase the behavior we want to see and decrease the behaviors we do not want to see

Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS)

- Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) involves the application of behavior analysis to achieve socially important behavior change. PBS occurs:
  - (a) at the prevention level for all students in a school;
  - (b) at the strategic intervention level for students who are not responding, from a social-emotional and behavioral perspective, to the prevention level; and
  - (c) at the intensive service or crisis-management level for students who need multi-faceted and/or comprehensive behavioral or mental health services.

(ADE-SEU Rules and Regulations, Section 2.00, 2008)

PBS definition cont.

- PBS involves a planned and collaborative school-wide approach with a goal of:
  - establishing positive and supportive school environments that teach and reinforce students' pro-social behavior,
  - holding students positively accountable for meeting established behavioral expectations, and;
  - maintaining a level of consistency throughout the implementation process.

  This goal is accomplished by using positive behavioral programs, strategies, and approaches.

  (ADE-SEU Rules and Regulations, Section 2.00, 2008)

Rationale for PBS

- Problem behavior is the single most common reason why students are removed from regular classrooms. Even though students with extreme problem behavior represent only 20% of school enrollment, they can account for more than 50% of behavioral incidents.

Cohn, 2001

Rationale cont.

- Harsh punishment and zero tolerance policies have not been effective at either improving behavioral climate in schools, or preventing students with problem behaviors from entering the juvenile justice system.

- Three years after being excluded from school, almost 70% of these youth have been arrested.

Cohn, 2001

Goal of PBS

- To enhance student academic achievement and behavioral development (Project ACHIEVE)

- To eliminate challenging behaviors and replace them with pro-social skills.

According to IDEA'97, PBS is the recommended form of intervention for dealing with challenging behavior in children with disabilities.

What does PBS do?

- Helps parents and school staff create and maintain a safe, supportive learning environment, promote positive life skills and reduce negative behaviors so that all children can succeed in school.

- PBS addresses both individual behavior and environmental factors and focuses on building skills rather than punishment

cont.

- May address issues such as bullying prevention, social skills development, resilience building, and discipline.

- Focuses on creating and sustaining school-wide, classroom, and individual supports that make problem behavior less rewarding and exhibiting desired behavior more functionally effective.

Core Components of PBS

(Project ACHIEVE, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports)

- Leadership team that guides the implementation of PBS strategies
- A set of core behavioral expectations for all students in the school
- Consistency among staff, parents, and students in maintaining the expectations and employing PBS strategies
- Expectations are taught across all areas of the school.

Core Components cont.

- Hierarchy of consequences for problematic behavior

- Procedures for maintaining PBS strategies school-wide

- Data is collected on the use of PBS procedures and the impact on behavior

Levels of PBS

(Project ACHIEVE, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports)

- **School-wide (Primary) Intervention**
  - ❑ Preventive approach
  - ❑ Focus on positive school climate and culture that supports and promotes positive student behavior
  - ❑ All components of school are involved in the preventive efforts

Levels cont.

- ## Classroom (Secondary) Intervention
  - Targeted at those students who do not respond to the school-wide support system
  - Focus on the students who have a higher incidence of problem behaviors
  - Small group instruction in social skills or problem solving

Levels cont.

- ## Individual (Tertiary) Intervention
  - ❑ Targets severe, disruptive behaviors
  - ❑ Requires intensive, **individualized** interventions
  - ❑ Includes functional behavioral assessment
  - ❑ May include IEPs or individual behavior support plans

Implementation of PBS

- Based on historical behavioral theory: behavior occurs because it is reinforcing to the student (i.e., student gets something positive by engaging in behavior OR student escapes something negative by engaging in behavior

- Focus on the outcomes and contexts of behavior in order to determine the function that behavior serves, make the problem behavior less effective, and make the desired behavior more functional.

Implementation cont.

- **Functional behavioral assessment**
  - ❑ Not only for manifestation determination
  - ❑ Indicates antecedents, consequences, and frequency of challenging behaviors
  - ❑ Identifies other variables
  - ❑ Critical to success of intervention

Implementation cont.

- Collaborative effort among parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, school support staff

- Fidelity of implementation is necessary to maximize outcomes

- PBS plans are individualized and data-based
    - Procedures for monitoring, evaluating, and reassessing

Your Role as Paraprofessional

- Learn the PBS language and system
- Use consistency in implementation
- Report concerns, comments, and questions
- Attend PBS professional development
- Support teachers and students through on-going reinforcement of system
- Report data

Benefits of PBS

- Support for both disabled and non-disabled students
- Effective in promoting positive behavior in students and schools
- Schools using a system-wide program report increased academic engagement
- Reduced office discipline referral of 20-60%

Cohn, 2001

Benefits cont.

- Dramatic improvements in school culture/climate resulting in long-term effects on lifestyle, functional communication skills, and problem behavior in individuals with disabilities

- 90% reduction in problem behavior in over half of the studies; cessation of problem behavior in over 26% of the studies

Cohn, 2001

References and Resources

- Arkansas Department of Education, Special Education Unit Procedural Requirements and Program Standards; Eligibility Criteria and Program Guidelines for Children with Disabilities, 2008. www.arksped.k12.ar.us

- Cohn, A.M. (2001). *Positive behavioral supports*. NASP Online Resources. www.nasponline.org

- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports www.pbis.org

- www.projectachieve.info

- U.S. Department of Education. (2000). *Applying positive behavioral support in schools: Twenty-second Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disability Act.* Washington, D.C.: Author.

Post Test

- Circle Post Test
- Write name
- Complete Test
- Review Test
- Write score at top of page

Handout C-9

Positive statements
to use with students

CLOSURE

As you complete this training on you should be able to recall the following topics:

1. Understanding paraprofessionals their roles

❑ **Roles and responsibilities of the teacher**

❑ **Tasks performed by paraprofessionals**

❑ **Responsibilities of the teacher and paraprofessional team**

CLOSURE

2. Laws other than IDEA that affect teachers and paraprofessionals

❑ **IDEIA, 2004**

❑ **Section 504**

❑ **Americans with Disabilities Act**

CLOSURE

3. Team approach Information concerning what paraprofessionals need to know to be successful

❑ **The ten "Cs" of teamwork:**
Problem solving skills needed by all
How to get started with your paraprofessional
Small group instruction
Information specific to Early Intervention and Early Childhood

CLOSURE

4. Inclusion

    Hopefully we have provided useful information on the successful working between you and your paraprofessional team.