

Preparing and Supporting Paraprofessionals for Their Instructional Responsibilities

Presented by Regina M Moreno, Ed.D
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This presentation ...

- A review of the research literature related
 - supervision,
 - preparation
 - on-going management

of paraprofessionals working with students with disabilities who receive related services.

Distinction in Team Roles

(Pickett, A. L. and Gerlach, K.,2003)

- Licensed Related Service/Therapist
 - a. Assess, develop implement, modify plans
 - b. Collaborate, coordinate with teachers, parents and other related service personnel
 - c. Provide supervision, on the job training to Para therapist
 - d. Provide supervision, on the job training to classroom paraeducators

Distinction in Responsibilities

(Pickett, A. L. and Gerlach, K.,2003)

- Specific tasks are assigned to pare therapist and/or classroom paraprofessionals
 - Prescribed plans
 - Written instruction
 - Weekly or daily protocols

Distinction in Responsibilities

- The paraprofessional is to provide tasks that are consistent with their level of knowledge, training, experience and the "established scope of practice" (p. 180).
- Receive on-going feedback and evaluation
- Participate in annual performance evaluation with administrators

As Identified by AOTA, APTA, and ASHA ...the Para-therapist or Para educator

- Knowledge of
 - Typical growth and development
 - Developmental and acquired disabilities
 - Educational service system
 - Chain of command
 - Infection control, universal safety precautions, dealing with emergencies
 - Appropriate behavior management
- Effective
 - Communication
 - Effective human relations skills
 - Leadership and Advocacy skills

As Identified by AOTA, APTA, and ASHA ...COTA, PTA SLPA's

- Professional and Ethical conduct
 - Continuing professionals development
 - Accurate reporting
- Demonstrate
 - Provision of effective instruction
 - Demonstrate safe service provision (*e.g. lifting, positioning, transferring, oral motor, fine motor, feeding, care of hearing devices*)
 - Observation and documentation skills
 - Ability to use assistive technologies

Research suggests

- Para-therapist is not permitted in all states
- Each state decides what roles the paraprofessional can perform
- Fewer than 50% of states have standards or guidelines in place for employment, duties, training or supervision of these employees (Ashbaker & Morgan, 2006)

Paraprofessionals work daily with students with disabilities in public school

- Average age is 40
- Female
- Work in elementary schools
- Forty percent work part-time
- Majority work with students with severe disabilities (multiple disabilities)
- Spend a significant amount of time performing physically strenuous roles

Paraprofessionals who work daily with students with disabilities in public schools

- Professionals working with students eligible for special education services and who are appropriately trained and supervised be allowed to assist in the provision of special education and related services ... (IDEA I, 2004).
- There is not indication as to what constitutes appropriate training or supervision (Ashbaker & Morgan, 2006).

Paraprofessionals work daily with students with disabilities in public school

- As instructional personnel - require more training than those who do not perform teaching tasks (French, 2003)
- But receive little to no training upon being hired and are expected to be trained on site by the supervising teacher (Ashbaker & Morgan 2006)

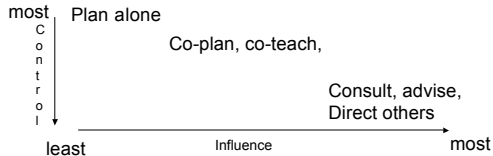
As Identified by AOTA, APTA, and ASHA ... paraeducators who work with students with developmental disabilities

- All of the previous
- General education curriculum
- Special education curriculum
- Instructional strategies across contexts and learning priorities as defined by related service provider, special education teacher and the general education teacher
- Any or all building level initiative, and policies
- All other duties, as assigned

Practicing within specified roles as an itinerant service provider when working with paraprofessionals

(Ashbaker & Morgan, 2006; French 2003)

- Supervising and directing the work a paraprofessional can maximize the the degree of influence on many students but can also decrease the degree of control over specific daily events (French, 2003).



Mid-level Executive Role

- Consult with colleagues
- Plan
- Evaluate
- Direct the work of others
- Many aspects of licensed related service personnel's role that require professional functions that cannot be delegated

Seven Executive Functions of Paraprofessional Supervision

- Orientation of paraprofessionals
- Planning for paraprofessionals
- Scheduling for paraprofessionals
- Delegating tasks to paraprofessionals
- On-the-job training and coaching of paraprofessionals
- Monitoring and feedback regarding the work of paraprofessionals
- Managing the workplace

Seven Executive Functions of Paraprofessional Supervision

Slide 18 to 23 are adapted from Nancy French's 2003

"Managing Paraeducators in Your School"

Executive Function 1 - Consulting Educator/Specialist

Orientation

- Get acquainted Introduce and clarify roles
- Identify work style of the individual paraprofessional
- Conduct a skill analysis of the individual paraprofessional and assess readiness for responsibilities
- Explain the immediate and long-term responsibilities related the individual student need
- Explain the immediate and long-term expectations for teaming, intervention methodologies/strategies, training and supervision
- Explain the immediate and long-term expectations for accountability on student progress

Executive Function 2 - Consulting Educator/Specialist

Planning

- Developing and explaining student IEP goals and objectives,
- Prescribe adaptations, assistive technologies, materials
- Design the intervention (includes specialized instructional strategies, correction strategies, identify decision rule, systems for support, how to fade prompts (if relevant)
- Develop safety protocol and emergency/crisis procedure
- Design the data systems and review for clarity
- Coordinate with supervising classroom teachers

Executive Function 3 and 4 - Consulting Educator/Specialist
<p><u>Scheduling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify how often you will consult with classroom teacher - Identify when and how often to apply the intervention - Identify when or how often the paraeducator can expect the consulting related service provider to visit - Identify how often data is to be taken or how often/when to document relevant information <p><u>Delegation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-coordinate with supervising licensed personnel for paraeducator tasks - Co-coordinate with supervising licensed personnel for paraeducator training needs - Co-coordinate with supervising licensed personnel for paraeducator training needs

Executive Function 5 - Consulting Educator/Specialist
<p><u>On the job training, coaching</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify who needs training - Identify skills needed to address (.eg teaching, use of technologies) - Identify when and the format the training will occur - Identify who will train, where and condition in which the training will occur - Identify criteria an desired outcome(s) of the training event - Identify how the the training will be documented and accounted for - Identify how the follow up will be conducted and what is the desired outcome

Executive Function 6 - Consulting Educator/Specialist
<p><u>Monitoring and feedback</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor the effectiveness of the assigned task - Provide timely, professional and relevant feedback - Offer positive support - Ensure the delivery of the assigned services are as prescribed - Ensure that the supervising teacher is up to date on things - Ensure that related service visits/consults are documented - Assess and evaluate student progress - Adjust student program as needed and inform ALL parties

Executive Function 7 - Consulting Educator/Specialist
<p><u>Managing the work environment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Serve as a leader in your field - Serve as a role model for paraeducators - Advocate for needed resources related to student program needs - Advocate for needed resources related to personnel needs - Collaborate with intra-team communication effort - Address problems in a systematic, collaborative manner with desired outcomes

Clarify With Those You Work With ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is on the core team • Who is on the formal team • What contexts will the interventions be addressed • Who is the paraprofessional's formal, direct and informal supervisor • Who plans for the paraeducator on a daily basis • Who assures for paraeducator accountability and student performance • Who provides paraeducator training • Who provides paraeducator evaluation

Legitimate Paraeducator Task Categories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection and reporting • Activity preparation and follow up • Team participation and membership • Clerical Work • Supervision of groups of students • Delivery of instruction when supervised • Health and related personal services • Other tasks as appropriate

Considerations

- Set clear objectives
- Identify the appropriate person for the task
- Train the necessary personnel
- Assign appropriate task in adherence to the role
- Get input from paraeducators
- Set timelines, follow up dates
- Specify decision making member and degree of authority

Four levels of authority

- Full paraprofessional takes full responsibilities for decisions
- Touch base- takes action and makes decisions and reports back
- Approval needed - requires approval prior to taking action
- Immediate direction - Do what is asked

Example of plan sheet

Objective:	Criteria
Location and times	Who
Purpose of the lesson	
Student's current level of performance	Degree of independence (prompt level)
Supports needed	Key Instructional strategy
Correction Procedure	Reinforcement Procedure
General sequence of events	Data system

Effective Training Formats

(French, 2003; Joyce and Showers, 1980)

	Learn, understand	Demonstrate when asked	Apply on the job
Present theory	85%	15%	10%
Demonstrate and Model	85%	18%	10%
Opportunity to practice with low-risk feedback	85%	85%	15%
On the job coaching	90%	90%	90%

Monitoring Performance

- Observation techniques
 - *Unfocused: Simultaneous events - general happenings and instructional dispositions (document /feedback)*
 - *Focused: Pre-planned, formal, itemized (document and analyze, feedback)*
- Guidelines for Feedback
 - Performance*
 - Specificity*
 - Frequency/consistency*
 - Professionalism and Honestly*
 - Factual rather than opinion*
 - Standards rather than interpersonal comparison*
 - First hand rather than hearsay*

Meeting

- Preplanned
- Consistent
- Agendas
- Timelines
- Document outcome/note
- Encourage multiple voices
- End on good note

Thank you

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